“We Are Moral": How a Team Moral Identity Influences the Functions and Outcomes of a Team

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ABSTRACT

“We Are Moral": How a Team Moral Identity Influences the Functions and Outcomes of a Team

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This dissertation introduces the construct of team moral identity, which refers to a team's shared sense of self that considers morality as a central, distinctive, and enduring characteristic of the team. Drawing from ethical theory, I delineate the construct into two forms: conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented identity. By incorporating literature on collective identity literature, the IPESO (Input Process Emergent State Outcome) framework, and self-verification theory, I propose several critical antecedents and consequences of team moral identity. In a series of empirical studies, I develop a scale to measure team moral identity, establish its construct validity, and test several of the proposed relationships within the theoretical model. This work yields several significant results. Most notably, this dissertation demonstrates that team moral identity has a substantial impact on team functions and outcomes, including those with moral and non-moral implications, such as team conflict, team engagement, team creativity, team performance, and team moral behavior. Ultimately, this dissertation contributes to the literature and offers numerous practical implications.

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Dedicated to my cherished family, friends, and mentors, who have offered me unwavering support throughout this remarkable journey. To you, I extend my love, profound gratitude, and deep respect.

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Teams have become increasingly indispensable for organizations seeking to address complex business problems (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). As the significance of teams in modern organizations continues to grow, scholars have explored numerous factors contributing to desirable team processes and outcomes (Bell, 2007; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). However, despite recent findings highlighting the importance of moral concepts within teams (Chen, Treviño, & Humphrey, 2020; Dasborough, Hannah, & Zhu, 2020), the moral aspects of teams have received relatively little attention. Research suggests that morality is a crucial factor in evaluating a team, as it serves as the foundation for social reputations and organizational support from upper management (Leach, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2007). Consequently, the fields of moral psychology and behavioral ethics call for more research adopting a team-based perspective on morality, which promises to yield numerous theoretical and practical insights about the social psychological functions of teams in organizations (Ellemers & van den Bos, 2012).

In response to these calls, this dissertation focuses on the moral identity of teams. Moral identity is generally defined as a sense of self organized around a set of moral traits (Shao, Aquino, & Freeman, 2008). Although this construct was initially defined at the individual level, I provide theoretical reasons and motivations for extending it to the team level. First, despite the increasing importance of coordinating collaborative moral actions and engaging in moral decision-making within work teams, there is a lack of research on their potential predictors (Chen et al., 2020). This dissertation contributes to the literature on behavioral ethics and moral psychology by proposing team moral identity as a critical antecedent to a team's moral actions and decision-making processes, thereby expanding the theoretical focus of the behavioral ethics to the team level. Second, as mentioned earlier, identity scholars have called for more research

on the process of positive team identity construction at macro levels of analysis, as collective identities, including teams, can explain organizational phenomena that exist at different levels of analysis (Dutton, Roberts, & Bednar, 2010). Lastly, the collective identity literature posits that collective identities have distinct structural and functional characteristics compared to individual social identities (Pratt, 2003; Whetten, 2006). Thus, examining the unique attributes of team moral identity in relation to individual moral identity and other forms of collective identity can deepen our understanding of identity phenomena in general.

This dissertation consists of four interconnected chapters. In Chapter 1, the focus is on introducing and discussing the concept of team moral identity. Chapter 2 then proceeds to develop the conceptual foundation of team moral identity and presents a theoretical model outlining its antecedents and outcomes. By integrating theories of moral-self, collective identity literature, and the IPESO (Input Process Emergent State Outcome) framework, the dissertation suggests that a team's readiness to recognize moral values, narratives reflecting commitment to moral values, and collective motivation to distinguish themselves using moral attributes (i.e., moral attentiveness, moral language usage, and ethical team purpose) contribute to the emergence of team moral identity. The chapter also explores how the content of each antecedent can differentially predict each dimension of team moral identity, specifically conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity. Additionally, this dissertation examines the importance of considering the prevalence and developmental stage of a team as critical contextual factors that moderate the relationships between these antecedents and team moral identity. Finally, the dissertation investigates how conduct- and outcome-oriented team moral identity influence both moral and non-moral team outcomes, including team moral behavior, team status, team task performance, team extra-role performance, and team turnover.

In Chapter 3, the focus is on validating a measure of conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity and testing several of the relationships proposed in Chapter 2. The validation process begins with Study 1, where existing measures of individual moral identity and the collective identity literature are utilized to deductively create a measure of team moral identity. The scale's psychometric properties are then examined using samples of U.S. working adults and undergraduate students.

In Study 2, the focus is on confirming the factor structure of the measures using separate samples of working adults. Additionally, the study aims to test the incremental concurrent validity of conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity on traditional team process variables, specifically team engagement, task conflict, relationship conflict, and process conflict. The results indicate that both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identities are positively related to team engagement. However, only the conduct-oriented team moral identity is negatively associated with team relationship and process conflict. These results remain significant even after accounting for adjacent phenomena such as three forms of ethical climate (i.e., caring, rule, and independence climates) and team identification.

In Study 3, a quasi-field study is conducted involving 584 undergraduate business students organized into 119 teams enrolled in a strategic management course. The students participate in a team case competition called the Business Strategy Competition, where they are required to propose a novel business strategy to address a management problem faced by a participating organization. Using a survey study, the factor structure of the measures is confirmed once again. The study then proceeds to test the effect of two forms of team moral identity on relevant team processes, including task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict, and team engagement. Additionally, team task performance is rated by external judges.

The results indicate that both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity are positively related to team engagement. Furthermore, conduct-oriented team moral identity is negatively associated with both relationship and process conflict and positively associated with team task performance rated by external judges. On the other hand, outcome-oriented team moral identity is negatively related to task conflict.

In Study 4, an online experiment is conducted involving 121 student teams to examine the predictive validity of the two forms of team moral identity across three different team-level outcomes: team task performance, creative performance, and moral performance. The results, based on a problem-solving experimental task, reaffirm the hypothesized relationships between team moral identity and team-level outcomes. Specifically, student teams assigned to the conduct-oriented team moral identity (TMI) condition generate more ideas compared to those in the outcome-oriented TMI condition. The ideas generated by students from the outcome-oriented TMI condition are evaluated as more creative than those from the control condition. Furthermore, the ideas created by students from both TMI conditions are evaluated as more moral compared to those from the control condition.

In Study 5, the model is tested using data collected from work teams in a field setting. A field survey study is conducted in a chain of pharmacies located in an East Asian country. A total of 290 team members and 90 team leaders from 90 pharmacy branches participate in the study. The results confirm some of the hypotheses: both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity (TMI) are positively associated with team engagement, and conduct-oriented TMI is negatively related to relationship conflict. However, direct evidence supporting the relationship between TMI and team outcomes is not found. Nevertheless, it is discovered that

both forms of TMI are positively associated with objective team performance through the indirect effect of team engagement.

In Chapter 4, the findings of this dissertation are summarized, and the theoretical contributions to the literature are discussed. The chapter also addresses the potential practical implications and contribution to the management practice.

This dissertation makes several significant contributions to various literature domains. Firstly, by asserting the existence of moral identity at the team level, it demonstrates that moral identity can have substantial effects on workplace outcomes that go beyond individual employees. This extension of moral identity from the individual to the team level offers a more comprehensive understanding of how collective moral values can influence various aspects of team dynamics, decision-making, and performance. Drawing primarily from the behavioral ethics and collective identity literature, the dissertation focuses on the moral performance of teams as a key outcome. It also examines team processes and outcomes such as engagement, conflict, and team performance, which have been predominantly explored in the context of collective identity. By delving into the emergent process of team moral identity, this dissertation provides insights into the intricate mechanisms through which morally-driven teams can contribute to positive outcomes within organizations. Additionally, it helps bridge the gap between individual and collective perspectives on morality, paving the way for further research and potential intervention strategies aimed at fostering moral teams and promoting moral team-level outcomes.

Another significant contribution of this dissertation is the recognition that the implications of team moral identity can vary depending on the content of the collective identity that a team considers as part of their defining characteristics. While the literature has

traditionally focused on a generalized form of team identity, this dissertation introduces a novel approach by centering on the content of team moral identity. By examining the specific moral traits and values that form the foundation of a team's collective identity, this research enhances our understanding of how different aspects of morality can shape team dynamics and outcomes. This content-focused approach allows for a more nuanced exploration of the moral landscape within teams, providing valuable insights into how teams prioritize and demonstrate moral principles. Additionally, by distinguishing between conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identities, this dissertation opens the door for further investigation into the intricate interplay between various moral dimensions and their impacts on team processes and outcomes. Ultimately, the focus on the content of team moral identity in this unique manner enriches the literature and sets the stage for future studies to delve deeper into the multifaceted nature of moral identity within teams.

Finally, the dissertation contributes to the behavioral ethics literature by examining the effects of team moral identity on both moral and non-moral outcomes, such as team moral performance, team task performance, team creative performance, and team turnover. It reveals that team moral identity has significant implications for important organizational outcomes. By exploring these diverse outcomes, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of the wide-ranging impact of team moral identity on various aspects of team and organizational functioning. This expanded perspective on the consequences of team moral identity not only advances knowledge within the behavioral ethics domain but also offers valuable insights for managers and organizations aiming to cultivate moral behavior, retain key talent, drive innovation, and improve overall performance. Furthermore, by highlighting the potential connections between moral identity and non-moral outcomes, this dissertation opens up new

avenues for research, exploring the indirect and long-term effects of team moral identity on organizational success.

The dissertation concludes by identifying future research opportunities and practical implications of this work. In terms of future research opportunities, this work provides several avenues to explore. For instance, future research could investigate the effects of team moral identity with different contents, such as various moral values, moral characters, or even ethical leaders or coworkers as role models. Another compelling theoretical approach to consider is the possibility of a cross-level relationship involving team moral identity. For example, team moral identity could be a contextual contingency that influences the relationship between individual moral identity and work outcomes, as moral fit between an employee and a team could be critical for individual employee effectiveness. Further, contextual contingencies that render team moral identity more desirable for work outcomes could also be examined. For instance, it may be that team moral identity has more positive effects on team outcomes later in the team developmental stage, particularly given its enduring and lasting effects on a formal team system. Finally, an unfolding model that examines the emergent process of team moral identity could offer new insights into this topic. For example, theory on team development stages suggests that a team moral identity might differentially propagate throughout team members. As this dissertation explores an important yet unexplored topic, the possibilities for future research are numerous.

Regarding practical implications, this dissertation suggests that team leaders can benefit from making strategic decisions to develop different forms of team moral identity that align with their team's tasks in order to achieve strong performance while maintaining moral legitimacy. The theoretical propositions discussed in this manuscript also indicate that managers should be mindful of their hiring decisions and consider applicants' moral orientations as part of the hiring

criteria, as the moral fit between team members can have a significant impact on performance. Lastly, team leaders and supervisors should be mindful of their communication and language usage, as their practices are highly influential and can easily spread among team members, thus influencing team moral identity and subsequent team outcomes.

In the following pages, I present Chapters 2 and 3. These chapters are written in a journal-ready format, designed to be stand-alone articles suitable for submission to academic journals. Each chapter includes an abstract and an introduction to the topic, following the style of a typical research article. It is important to note that since these chapters are independent articles, their content may not be perfectly parallel. For instance, Chapter 2 focuses on the impact of team moral identity on a team's moral imagination, a concept suitable for theory-centric journals. On the other hand, Chapter 3 explores the relationship between team moral identity and team creativity, a construct commonly found in empirical journals. This approach ensures a comprehensive and rigorous examination of team moral identity. To enhance convenience, the references, tables, figures, and appendix are presented at the end of the dissertation in a combined format.

CHAPTER 2

TEAM MORAL IDENTITY:

A THEORY OF ITS ANTECEDENTS, CONTINGENCIES, AND IMPLICATIONS

ABSTRACT

While a considerable amount of research has been conducted on the form of collective identity, limited attention has been given to exploring its content that can be compared across different identities. In an attempt to identify such content, this study introduces the concept of team moral identity—a team-level construct that captures the shared belief that morality is a central, distinctive, and enduring attribute that defines the team. Drawing from the literature on behavioral ethics, social identity theory, and the IPESO (Input Process Emergent State Outcome) framework, a comprehensive model is developed to examine the antecedents, contexts, and outcomes of team moral identity. This model carries significant theoretical implications for research in the areas of behavioral ethics and collective identity. Additionally, it holds numerous practical implications for organizations that heavily rely on teams to achieve their goals, as well as for employees working within team contexts.

Keywords:

Team moral identity; social identity theory; collective identity; team effectiveness

Management scholars recognize that identity is a critical feature of any formal collective, whether it be a team, a subunit, an organization, or an industry (Ashforth, Rogers, & Corley, 2011). Both theoretical and empirical evidence indicates that a collective with a well-developed shared identity is more likely to regulate its members' concerted behaviors and to achieve its collective goals (Ashforth, 2016; Ellemers & van den Bos, 2012; Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton, & Corley, 2013). Thus, collective identities, shared beliefs about what the collective is and what it represents, have been associated with a number of important outcomes, including conflict, external reputation, inter-unit collaborative relationships, and performance (Hardy, Lawrence, & Grant, 2005; Pratt, 2003; Mitchell et al., 2015).

Whereas numerous management scholars have explored the nature and evolution of individual collective identities (e.g., Pratt, 2003; Sonenshein, Nault & Obodaru, 2017; Steele & Lovelace, 2023) and have identified the general characteristics of a collective identity (e.g., Albert & Whetten, 1985; Ashforth, 2016; Ashforth, Rogers, & Corley, 2011), the field has yet to identify common content that can be compared across the identities of teams, subunits, organizations, and more. Dutton, Roberts, and Bednar (2010) recognized this gap in our understanding and called for more research on “positive” identity at the collective level, arguing that a deeper understanding of positive identity content could have significant implications for important organizational outcomes, such as social resource constructions and change initiatives. Unfortunately, their specific research call has yet to be addressed, and more generally, questions about any content comparable across a range of collective identities remain unexplored.

To develop a deeper understanding of the content of collective identities, we consider the moral identity of teams. At the individual level of analysis, moral identity is a sense-of-self organized around moral attributes (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Considerable scholarly attention has

demonstrated that an individual moral identity has a strong influence on moral regulation processes in social contexts and explains a wide variety of social and moral behaviors, including charitable giving, volunteering, decreased cheating, citizenship behaviors, and others. (Jennings, Mitchell, & Hannah, 2015; Reed & Aquino, 2003). In this paper, we argue that morality-based concerns are not limited to individuals, but also occupy even the smallest of formal groups and can become critical components of the identities of those groups. Drawing from both social identity theory and work on collective identities (e.g., Albert & Whetten, 1985; Pagliaro, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2011), we conceptualize team moral identity as a shared belief among team members that morality is a central, distinctive, and enduring attribute that defines their team. We further integrate the literature on behavioral ethics, social identity theory, and the IPESO (Input Process Emergent State Outcome) framework to develop a comprehensive framework that explains the antecedents and outcomes of a team moral identity. In developing our theoretical arguments, we propose two distinct forms of team moral identity: conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity (Schminke, Ambrose, & Noel, 1997). We highlight the importance of recognizing both procedural and consequential aspects of team moral identity, as it reflects a fundamental question of team identity - not only "who are we," but also "what do we do?" and "how do we do it?" (Pratt, 2003). We explain why this distinction matters by delving into each form of team moral identity and exploring how each influence different sets of team behaviors and outcomes.

We believe that this discussion makes several valuable contributions. Firstly, we contribute to the literature on behavioral ethics by portraying the team as a critical moral agent in the organization and explaining its identity-based effects, both moral and nonmoral. Scholars in moral psychology have repeatedly called for research from a team-based perspective to advance

theoretical insights about the social psychological functions of moral values in group life (Ellemers & van den Bos, 2012; Treviño, Weaver & Reynolds, 2006). While a modest amount of research has been conducted in this regard (Chen, Treviño, & Humphrey, 2020; Dasborough, Hannah, & Zhu, 2020), none have taken an identity-based perspective. Thus, we believe that this research represents an important contribution to this field. Second, we extend the literature on collective identities by detailing the specific content, the formative processes, and the behavioral implications of a team identity (Ashforth, 2016; Dutton, et al., 2010; Pratt, 2003). The concept of a team moral identity not only provides a basis for comparing and contrasting the identities of any set of teams, but also serves as a template for considering other forms of content comparable across teams and for thinking about the moral identity of other collectives. Finally, we also believe that this research yields several practical implications worth consideration.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Identity at the Team Level

A collective identity refers to the common sense-of-selves members of an entity share (Pratt, 2003). Though collectives can range in size from dyads to large demographic groups, the earliest management research on collective identity focused on the organization. Albert and Whetten (1985) defined organizational identity as a set of characteristics of an organization that members regard as central, enduring, and distinctive (Albert & Whetten, 1985). Decades of research has demonstrated a strong relationship between organizational identity and a large set of organizational phenomena, such as organizational change, innovation, and competitive advantage (Anthony & Tripsas, 2016). Subsequently, scholars have applied this same framework to other levels of analysis. For example, Ashforth and colleagues (2011) explored the linkage

between organizational identity, subunit identity, and individual identity, and discussed how contents of linked identities could be isomorphic or differentiated across different levels such as dyads, teams, and departments.

The team is widely recognized as the principal unit through which organizations achieve their goals (Cohen & Bailey, 1997), and yet discussions about team identities are quite limited. To date, team identity has been regarded largely as an intra-team phenomenon, an element of an individual's self-concept driven by their membership within a social group or a team (Tajfel, 1978; Ozeki, 2015). For instance, existing studies have referred to the term "group-level" social identity, yet they have treated this phenomenon as an individual identity driven by group membership or an internalized belief of us-ness that resides in an individual's self-identity (Haslam & Reicher, 2012; Leach et al., 2008). In contrast, we propose team moral identity as a team-level construct. While scholars have noted that teams can have collective features and properties, e.g., goals, missions, and tasks, that can drive identity processes (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Hogg & Terry, 2000), the forms and contents of these team-level components, especially a "collective" team identity that initially drives these identity processes, remain largely unexplored (Ozeki, 2015). In this light, we focus on morality as a type of team identity content.

Morality as a Basis for Team Identity

Theory and research on individual identity have demonstrated that morality is a domain from which a team identity can be constructed (e.g., Blasi, 1983; Hardy & Carlo, 2011). Aquino and Reed (2002) defined individual moral identity as the extent to which moral characteristics are important in defining an individual's sense-of-self. A large literature has demonstrated that moral identity is a significant predictor of a wide variety of moral actions such as prosocial behavior, avoidance of antisocial behavior, and moral behavior (Hertz & Krettenauer, 2016).

Further, recent works have also demonstrated that moral identity contributes to other organizational phenomena beyond moral actions, such as employee engagement (He, Zhu, & Zheng, 2014), voice (Hu & Jiang, 2018), and organizational commitment (Rupp et al., 2013).

We propose that moral values can similarly serve as the foundation for a team identity. Specifically, we define team moral identity as a shared team identity that considers moral values as a central, distinctive, and enduring attribute that defines their team. As such, the team as a collective social entity regards moral characteristics as the most important qualities of their team that distinguish them from other teams, as noted by Pratt (2003). While a few studies have considered moral identity as a group characteristic based on similar levels or agreements of individual members' moral identities (Kuenzi et al., 2020; Thornton & Rupp, 2016), our approach moves beyond this additive characterization by conceptualizing team moral identity as an emergent construct that represents shared cognition and consensus that morality is a central trait of the team, separate from its individual members. In other words, we consider team moral identity as a "gestalt" property of the team as the team relies on moral values and attributes to respond to the questions "who are we?" and "who do we want to become?"

It is important to note that we distinguish team moral identity from two related constructs: ethical culture and ethical climate. Ethical culture refers to the practices and procedures that exist in collectives, including teams and organizations, which facilitate moral behaviors (Kaptein, 2011). This construct considers both the content (e.g., a code of conduct) and the form (e.g., how rewards and punishments are distributed) of those practices and procedures (Kaptein, 2008). Ethical climate is defined as the perception about what constitutes unethical or moral behaviors in a particular social context (Martin & Cullen, 2006). For example, Victor and Cullen (1988) identified five different types of ethical climate based on the climate's

philosophical orientation and locus of analysis. Both ethical culture and climate describe the conditions and internal environment in which a team operates, and they focus on the elements of the team structure that define morality and motivate, monitor, and reward team members. In contrast, team moral identity is a shared belief about "who" the team is and what it represents—it constitutes a self-understanding of the team that may or may not be directly related to the team's operating environment. Thus, team moral identity describes a distinct phenomenon compared to ethical culture and ethical climate.

The Structure of Team Moral Identity

The literature offers several theoretical perspectives that can explain the structure of a team moral identity. For example, consistent with Erikson's (1964) definition of the theoretical properties of self-identity, Aquino and Reed (2002) identified two dimensions of individual moral identity, internalization and symbolization. Internalization is defined as the relative centrality of moral identity in one's overall self-schema, and symbolization refers to the extent to which people outwardly display their moral identity in a social context (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Research has demonstrated that each dimension captures distinct facets of individual moral identity and that each has complementary roles in motivating moral behavior (Winterich, Mittal, & Aquino, 2013).

Although teams do not internalize nor symbolize their identity as individuals do, we suggest that team moral identity can also be of two forms. First, conduct-oriented team moral identity focuses on procedural moral values that emphasize developing and maintaining moral work processes and procedures, such as fairness, honesty, transparency, and respect (Botes, 2000; Schminke et al., 1997). Second, outcome-oriented team moral identity revolves around moral values that reflect beneficial outcomes and worthwhile ends, such as improving the lives

of others, being socially impactful, and making a difference (Botes, 2000; Schminke et al., 1997). Of course, as these two types of team moral identity reflect different but not necessarily mutually exclusive value systems (Brady, 1985; Brady & Wheeler, 1996), it is possible that a team's moral identity can be rooted in both value sets.

These two forms of team moral identity are consistent with distinctions explained by theory in both the collective identity and behavioral ethics literatures. First, the collective identity literature posits that "what people work on" and "how they work" constitute two distinct factors that contribute to the development of collective identity (Pratt, 2003). Second, ethical theory similarly recognizes two predominant perspectives on morality. Deontological approaches specify adherence to pre-established standards of conduct as the determinant of moral status, while teleological perspectives argue that the consequences or outcomes of an action justify its moral worth. Indeed, the notion that morality is determined either by conduct or by outcomes is one of the most fundamental of philosophical notions (Brady, 1985; Botes, 2000; Schminke et al., 1997). Finally, moral conviction theory posits that people have differentiated attitudes on moral issues depending on their preferences for several different sets of moral values (Skitka et al., 2021). Indeed, this theory states that because morality takes on different forms, these differences can serve as the basis for distinctions between ingroups and outgroups, which constitutes one of the primary roles of a team identity. Thus, theories of both identity and ethics support our proposed structure of team moral identity.

Furthermore, while research surrounding individual moral identity might lay a groundwork for exploring the concept of a team moral identity, the latter cannot be reduced to a simple aggregation of individual moral identities at a team level. The identities of individuals are intricately entwined with their social markers like ethnicity, professional roles, or skill sets -

aspects that often don't translate to the broader canvas of a team's identity. Moreover, teams cannot internalize and symbolize their identities as individuals do, indicating a distinct separation in the way a team moral identity is conceptualized versus an individual one. Moreover, it is crucial to differentiate between team moral identity and team identification. The latter is an adjacent concept pertaining to the affinity or sense of belonging that members cultivate towards their group. Although a moral component may be present within team identification, it remains primarily an individual-centric phenomenon, clearly distinct from the collective identity phenomenon on a team level such as team moral identity.

Antecedents of Team Moral Identity

When examining the antecedents of team moral identity, it is important to understand that collective identity differs from personal and social identity (Ashforth et al., 2011; Foreman & Westgren, 2019; Simon & Klandermans, 2001). Collective identity is not an individual property—it is shared across its members and emerges from interdependent processes, such as socialization, identity media, and symbolic devices (Chen, 2011; He & Brown, 2013). Indeed, scholars have demonstrated that numerous artifacts contribute to the emergence of collective identities, including labor/hierarchical structures, technology, language, reward structure, policies, and rules and procedures (He & Brown, 2013; Whetten, 2006). Moreover, the formation of a collective group identity is often strategic and motivated to create a positive distinctiveness of their ingroup from outgroups (Tajfel, 1972). Therefore, while team moral identity shares some similarities with personal identity in a metaphorical sense, it is a distinct concept that reflects a shared belief about who the team is and what it represents. Therefore, identifying the antecedents of team moral identity requires a distinct approach.

To propose antecedents of team moral identity, we first draw from social identity theory, a cornerstone of the collective identity literature. Social identity theory posits that a shared identity of a social group can be created from the combination of three primary factors: 1) a team readiness to regard a certain identity characteristic as part of their central attribute; 2) a team narrative that reflects a team's enduring commitment to the identity characteristics; and 3) a team motivation to distinguish the team from others via the identity characteristics (Spears, 2011; Whetten, 2006). In short, a team's readiness, narratives, and motivations influence the way the team approaches, interprets, and responds to identity characteristics and provides a foundation for the creation and development of a collective team identity. Consistent with this framework, we identify moral language, ethical team purpose, and team moral attentiveness as key antecedents to team moral identity. Specifically, we suggest that these predictors represent team readiness, team narratives, and the team's motivation to regard morality as their central, enduring, and distinctive identity characteristic.

We further integrate our theoretical account with the IPESO framework, which views teams as dynamic systems operating within a specific context and evolving and adapting in response to unfolding demands (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). According to the IPESO framework, a team's emergent state, such as team moral identity, is formed as a response to the strategic imperatives that reflect the team's core mission and objectives. The way individuals perceive and communicate these imperatives becomes a crucial factor influencing the emergence process and the resulting collective construct, which ultimately impacts team effectiveness (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). Consistent with this theoretical perspective, we conceptualize team ethical purpose, moral attentiveness, and moral language as critical antecedents that serve as proxies for a team's strategic imperatives, members' ability to identify the team's core mission and objectives, and the

mode of social interactions that facilitate the emergence process of team moral identity, respectively.

Ethical Team Purpose

Zhang and Doll (2001) argued that teams often have a distinct purpose that specifies its reason for existence and serves as a foundational element of a team. Most often, a team purpose drives the initial formation of the team, but a team purpose can also be offered or developed after the team has formed as this process unfolds over time. For example, Google's DeepMind has created an Ethics & Society team, which serves its purpose of addressing the moral implications of artificial intelligence. Generally speaking, a team purpose can be essential for team functioning as it establishes the team's goals and prioritizes common objectives that determine the use of a team's resources (Lembke & Wilson, 1998). When focused specifically on morality-related issues, a team purpose can be a critical driver of both moral and nonmoral dynamics and functions within and by the team as it engages and develops over time (Friedland, 2012).

Referring to our proposed model, we argue that an ethical team purpose, the degree to which a team's reason for existing aligns with moral principles and values, is directly related to the emergence of a team moral identity. Social identity theory posits that the emergence of collective identity requires its members to evaluate their collective purpose and adapt and change their cognitive perspectives accordingly (Lembke & Wilson, 1998). The IPESO model also suggests that a team's strategic imperative, reflecting the core mission and objectives, is a key factor contributing to the emergent property of the team, as it shapes the processes relevant to achieving that goal within the team (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

Therefore, when a team has an ethical team purpose, it is more likely for the members to focus on the moral vision of the team and realign their values and priorities to their purpose,

providing a basis for the development of team moral identity. Furthermore, past studies have demonstrated that a team purpose is strongly related to the way team members relate to each other, as well as how members select and screen out knowledge and information from inside and outside of the team (Klimoski & Mohammed, 1994; Mansour-Cole, 2001). For example, prior case studies have compared and contrasted team purposes of campus sexual assault response teams and revealed that even though they work on the same tasks, some teams defined their purpose using morally charged objectives such as "we exist to end violence and abuse of women" or "we coordinate direct services for survivors," while others have used a more generally phrased purpose (Carlson et al., 2020).

Similarly, the purpose of research ethics committees is to ensure moral research procedures and to establish the integrity and legitimacy of the research community (Davies, Wells, & Czarkowski, 2009). Thus, having an ethical team purpose facilitates the emergence of a team moral identity as it orients the team around moral values and characteristics and directs team members to establish relational patterns based on moral principles and values (Zhang & Doll, 2001).

Scholars of organizational purpose have noted that a collective purpose can be defined differently based on how the group fulfills its purpose (Hollensbe et al., 2014; Van Ingen et al., 2021). For example, if a purpose of an organization is to improve sustainability, it can accomplish that goal by developing sustainable work procedures or by manufacturing a green product. The manner of fulfillment has been regarded as a critical characteristic of a collective purpose. In this same vein, an ethical team purpose can vary depending on whether it is outcome or procedurally oriented (Ellsworth, 2002; Pratt, 2003). Accordingly, we posit that different moral values reflected in ethical team purposes will uniquely influence the core content of a

team's identity, facilitating the development of conduct-oriented and/or outcome-oriented team moral identity.

To begin, we expect that an ethical team purpose focusing on developing and maintaining moral work procedures will be related to the conduct-oriented team moral identity. Prior research has indicated that a collective purpose of a social group can have strong influences on its members, affecting them to prioritize the type of values and objectives reflected in their purpose (Lembke & Wilson, 1998). Considering that formalist moral values are exhibited in procedurally oriented ethical team purposes, it is likely for members of those teams to demonstrate procedural moral values. Likewise, we suggest that an ethical team purpose that focuses on achieving moral outcomes will be associated with the outcome-oriented team moral identity. As consequentialist moral attributes are manifested in outcome-oriented ethical team purposes, members of those teams should develop a shared moral value system that enables the emergence of an outcome-oriented team identity. Thus,

> *Proposition 1: Ethical team purpose is positively associated with team moral identity. Furthermore, a team is more likely to develop a conduct-oriented team moral identity when they are created to enact moral procedures and more likely to develop an outcome-oriented team moral identity when they are created to generate moral outcomes.*

Team Moral Attentiveness

Moral attentiveness is defined as the extent to which an individual perceives and considers morality and moral elements in their experiences (Reynolds, 2008). Moral attentiveness helps people to recall and report morality-related situations and behaviors, which then influences their awareness of moral issues and moral conduct (Reynolds, 2008). When

people are attentive to moral information, they are more likely to identify, process, and structure vague information based on moral viewpoints and moral frameworks (Reynolds, 2006).

Research has demonstrated that individual identity emerges and is strengthened from regular reflection upon one's own actions, creating meaning out of individual experiences (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Brown, 2015; Weick, 1995). Morally attentive team members are inclined to perceive and reflect upon moral values, which we suggest will contribute to the development of the team identity in both an additive and an aggregate fashion. Awareness of an issue by a single individual on a team implies awareness by the team—in the event that one team member brings attention to an issue, the entire team is likely more aware. Additionally, previous theory has noted that as members of a team interact with each other, the team can develop a similar level of perceptual sensitivity to recognize moral issues (Chen et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2016). In the end, collective reflection will impact team self-perceptions, such that "intrasubjective understanding ('I think') will foster intersubjective understanding ('we think') through interaction" (Ashforth, Rogers, & Corley, 2011, p. 1047).

Moreover, the IPESO framework posits that the ability and motivation of team members to perceive and identify the mission and objectives of a team are essential for effectively responding to evolving demands, thereby facilitating the emergence of a collective team construct (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). In the context of team moral identity, this highlights the significance of members' capacity to recognize and identify moral elements within their daily work and task requirements. Consequently, the ability of team members to perceive and identify these moral aspects becomes a critical factor contributing to the emergence of team moral identity. Thus, we posit that teams with morally attentive members are more likely to perceive

and reflect upon the moral implications of their work, which will constitute the competence and motivational aspects necessary to facilitate the development of a team moral identity.

Proposition 2: A team's moral attentiveness will be positively associated with team moral identity.

Moral language

Moral language refers to the utilization of moral phrases, terms, and framing as a component of communication practices within interpersonal interactions in both task-oriented and social contexts (Bird & Waters, 1989). Individuals, teams, and organizations vary in the extent to which the use moral language in their communication (Chen et al., 2020; Mayer et al., 2019; Zanin, Bisel, & Adame, 2016). Mayer et al. (2019) demonstrated that moral language promotes the endorsement of voice and organizational change initiatives, and Zanin et al. (2016) suggested that a supervisor's moral language usage is associated with its followers' whistleblowing when they face morally unacceptable procedures in their organization. Importantly, Chen et al. (2020) showed that when a single member of a team frames a work issue in moral terms, this framing propagates to other team members, enhancing the team's moral decision-making processes and facilitating the emergence of a collective moral attitude.

Although previous studies have concentrated on the moral language practiced by a single individual, there are several reasons to believe that members of the same team develop and share a similar moral language communication practice. First, extant studies have demonstrated that moral talk is contagious especially in a team setting (Zanin et al., 2016). Assuming that members of the same team frequently interact with each other, share the same social context, and work together in order to accomplish a common goal, it is expected that team members will engage in similar communication practices. Second, research on team culture specifies language as a

distinctive artifact of a team that can distinguish one team from others, an argument demonstrated in several different contexts including project management teams and sports teams (Zajac, 2012). For these reasons, we argue that moral language can be conceived as a distinctive and shared property of a team that can contribute to subsequent team norms, processes, and behaviors.

We argue that the team's use of moral language increases the saliency of moral concepts and the moral domain to the team members thus making it more likely for a team moral identity to emerge (Spears, 2011). Social identity theory argues that at the individual level perceptual accessibility leads to identity saliency (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Stets & Burke, 2000). Previous research from the psychology of language literature has suggested that the exposure to a moral concept is associated with the activation of the brain region related to the moral decision-making process and the executive control processing (Tang et al., 2017). This within-individual consequence can have a spiral effect on team processes as individual thought patterns shape interpersonal exchange processes, thereby increasing the conceptual saliency of morality and making it more accessible and available to the team as a whole (Morgeson & Hofmann, 1999). Moreover, research has demonstrated that observing contextual moral cues and symbols can influence the moral identity of individuals (Leavitt, Zhu, & Aquino, 2016). We propose that these same principles apply at the team level, such that the contextual moral cues embedded in moral language will influence the collective moral identity of the team and increase their readiness to regard morality as a central attribute of their team (Kuenzi et al., 2020).

The IPESO model also supports this relationship, as it suggests that the emergence process of a team is facilitated when team members actively communicate the team's imperative as part of their social interactions (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). In other words, in addition to

having an existing moral imperative within the team and members' ability and motivation to identify these moral goals and objectives, effective communication and interaction among members, referring to these goals and objectives, are crucial. Consequently, the practice of using moral language, which can be distinguished across different teams, becomes a leverage point for shaping the emergence of team moral identity within a team.

Furthermore, we suggest that moral language has the capacity to predict the type of team moral identity that will emerge. Prior studies have noted that the primary function of moral language is to clarify the characteristics of moral issues in an organization and to cite and to establish relevant moral codes and norms (Bird & Waters, 1989). Moral language can also express and even establish important value systems in teams, as well (Love, 1992). Importantly, the type of moral language used in a team can be distinguished according to the underlying moral theories upon which they are based (Forsyth, 1985). Specifically, we suggest that if the moral language used in a team is more representative of deontology, it is more likely that the team will develop a conduct-oriented team moral identity. Conversely, for teams that rely on teleological moral language, it is more likely that they will develop an outcome-oriented moral identity. Thus, we propose the following,

> *Proposition 3: The use of moral language by team members is positively associated with team moral identity. Furthermore, a team is more likely to develop a conduct-oriented team moral identity when their moral language is more deontological in nature and to develop an outcome-oriented team moral identity when their moral language is more teleological in nature.*

Contexts

Drawing on the extensive literature on collective identity and the IPESO framework, we acknowledge that the broader organizational context can play a significant role in either facilitating or hindering the development of team moral identity. These theoretical perspectives emphasize that teams are not isolated from their organizational systems, contextual contingencies, and environmental dynamics (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). Consequently, the broader context within which a team operates can exert leverage on or impede the emergence process of a collective team property. In line with the insights provided by the IPESO model, our theoretical framework specifically focuses on two contextual factors: team prevalence and team developmental stage (Brewer, 2011; Spears, 2011).

Team prevalence encapsulates the degree to which a team is an isolated entity within its context, or one among several similarly structured units. We propose that this forms a crucial distal organizational context, moderating the relationship between the antecedents of team moral identity - namely, moral language, team ethical purpose, and moral attentiveness - and the emergence of a team moral identity. Our propositions are anchored in the significance of distinctiveness for an identity, as discussed in the social identity theory and collective identity literatures (Brewer, 2011; Spears 2011).

According to social identity theory, an identity is shaped by perceptions of how the individual or team is both similar and different from others (Brewer, 2011; Topaler, Koçak, & Üsdiken, 2021). Indeed, theory suggests that individuals are driven to identify an optimal amount of distinctiveness, crafting an identity that is not too similar nor too different from salient others (Brewer, 2011). Theory at the individual level assumes an unlimited number of others to whom the self can be compared, but at the team level, this is not the case. In fact, in some contexts, teams do not have any immediate others to whom they can compare themselves. A team, for

example, that is formed on an ad hoc basis to solve a unique problem in a small organization might only have historical or extra-organizational others with whom to compare. In contrast, a team that is one of hundreds of teams formed by a multinational organization (e.g., a sales team) will have numerous others from whom they can draw similarities and distinctions. Subsequently, when team prevalence is low, the team will have little motivation for identifying unique characteristics and qualities that establish their distinctiveness—they are distinctive simply by existing. When team prevalence is high, however, teams will be highly motivated to identify characteristics and qualities that distinguish them from the other teams in their immediate context. In such situations, we argue, the team will be motivated to form a distinctive identity and, as our model suggests, when a team is using moral language, has an ethical team purpose, and is morally attentive, team prevalence will enhance the effects of these factors and will make it more likely that a team moral identity will emerge.

> *Proposition 4: Team prevalence moderates the relationship between (a) moral language, (b) ethical team purpose, and (c) moral attentiveness and team moral identity, such that high team prevalence will strengthen the effect of moral language, ethical team purpose and moral attentiveness on team moral identity.*

We further propose that the team developmental stage can serve as a significant distal team context impacting the emergence process of a team moral identity. The collective identity literature indicates that a team's maturity is instrumental in the shaping of its collective identity (Choi, 2004). In their infancy, teams are often in the process of shaping their identity, rendering their collective self-concept more pliable and susceptible to various influences, including members' moral attentiveness, the team's ethical purpose, and the communication process. In other words, members are more likely to be equipped with the readiness, motivation, and ability

to identify and adopt moral characteristics as part of their central and defining attribute. As teams mature, their identities tend to solidify, necessitating more potent external stimuli to prompt a reinterpretation and formulation of new identities with morality as a defining attribute. Simply put, mature teams are more likely to scrutinize their underlying assumptions and strive to adopt a new identity in the face of a moral crisis, differing from the common antecedents we have described, in order to develop a team moral identity. Hence,

> *Proposition 5: The stage of team development serves as a moderator in the relationship between (a) moral language, (b) team ethical purpose, and (c) moral attentiveness and the formation of team moral identity. Specifically, teams in nascent stages are more susceptible to crafting a robust team moral identity influenced by moral language, ethical team purpose, and moral attentiveness.*

Consequences of Team Moral Identity

Drawing from the social identity and collective identity literature, it is widely anticipated that team identity will influence key outcomes. In alignment with this rationale, we hypothesize that a team moral identity will affect intergroup social status, team in-role performance, team extra-role performance, and team turnover rates - all of which are significant team outcomes explored in identity literature. However, our current examination centers on a specific facet of identity - morality. We anticipate that a team moral identity will exert a distinct and direct influence on the team's moral outcomes. Moreover, it may uniquely affect non-moral outcomes as mentioned earlier, driven by distinct moral processes and dynamics as well. Therefore, in this section, we theorize about both moral and non-moral outcomes resulting from a team moral identity.

Team Moral Behavior and Moral Imagination

We propose that a strong team moral identity positively influences team moral behavior. As the previous discussion on deontology and teleology indicates, the definitions of moral behavior can vary depending on the principal criteria involved, and these definitions are regularly debated (Jones, 1991; Treviño, Weaver & Reynolds, 2006). While the most common definitions refer to general expectations of conduct, they vary on the extent to which they emphasize the way in which a team operates versus the outcomes that it generates (e.g., Jones, 1991). For this reason, it is natural that a conduct-oriented team moral identity would be consistent with deontologically-defined moral behaviors and outcome-oriented moral identity would align with teleologically-defined moral behaviors. For example, a team with a conduct-oriented identity is less likely to engage in immoral behaviors such as lying and cheating, whereas a team with an outcome-oriented identity may exhibit moral behaviors leading to beneficial outcomes, such as helping behaviors and charitable giving.

Beyond these straightforward characterizations based on ends and means, we further recognize that teams can take various strategies to fulfill their moral obligations. and that their moral behaviors can vary in the extent to which these behaviors conform to traditional expectations. In some cases, a team might engage in moral behaviors that are highly typical, highly predictable, and highly consistent with broader expectations of what constitutes moral conduct. In contrast, a team might engage in moral behaviors that are regarded as original, novel, and creative. We suggest that this variance is best captured by the notion of creative moral imagination (Jacobs, 1991; Johnson, 1993; Zhang, Gino, & Margolis, 2018).

Werhane (1999) defined creative moral imagination as the ability to envision alternative or new possibilities for meeting moral demands and solving moral problems. Creative moral imagination is demonstrated through processes and outcomes that deviate from standard practice

and represent novel and unorthodox approaches to meeting moral expectations. Although the concept of moral imagination has been applied exclusively to individual decision-makers, we suggest that teams are equally capable of developing and exercising creative moral imagination. However, a team's capacity to exhibit creative moral imagination likely depends on the type of moral identity they adopt.

We expect that a conduct-oriented team moral identity will be negatively associated with creative moral imagination. As Brady (1985) argued, deontological values are generally associated with a preference for consistency and tradition. Therefore, we propose that a team with a conduct-oriented team moral identity, which is generally aligned with deontological values such as honesty and transparency, will likely adhere to more standardized and/or fixed expectations of moral conduct. As a result, these teams may be less inclined to consider innovative or alternative methods when addressing their moral responsibilities, particularly when faced with complex moral dilemmas. This resistance could manifest in situations requiring creative moral insight to resolve moral quandaries, such as conflicts among differing moral values or the challenge of upholding moral standards while dealing with organizational constraints. Such constraints might include limited resources or the difficulty of achieving performance goals while adhering to moral values (Cropley & Cropley, 2011).

While these teams are likely to demonstrate moral behavior, we predict these actions will predominantly adhere to conventional and traditional forms. This could mean following existing ethical codes and moral norms, with a focus on "what I should do" based on current moral mandates. In essence, their moral behavior will align with long-standing societal expectations of morality, resulting in actions that are both highly characteristic and predictably consistent, which could be viewed as morally clear-cut yet inflexible.

In contrast, we expect that a team with an outcome-oriented moral identity will be considerably more likely to exhibit morally imaginative behaviors. An outcome-oriented team moral identity is associated with teleological values and focuses on generating outcomes that satisfy relevant moral demands. To achieve these objectives, the team will be more likely to seek out unusual and creative alternatives and to engage in unexpected behaviors that align with their moral goals (Kim & Zhong, 2016; Kundro, 2022; Zhang et al., 2018). In other words, the team should be significantly more motivated to "think outside the box" and to identify original and novel behaviors that satisfy their moral obligations. In this way, their actions are unlikely to match traditional or widespread expectations, and yet those actions will still fulfill their moral obligations and responsibilities both in how they conduct their business and in the outcomes that they achieve. Thus, they will be more likely to engage in behaviors that are atypical and less predictable, but these actions will nevertheless still be regarded as moral behaviors.

In short, we expect that a conduct-oriented team moral identity will be negatively associated with creative moral imagination and that an outcome-oriented team moral identity will be positively associated with a creative moral imagination. In both cases, the teams will act in what is regarded as a moral manner, but the specific behaviors in which they are engage will differ in the extent to which they rely upon and exhibit creative moral imagination.

Proposition 6a: Both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity will be positively associated with moral behaviors.

Proposition 6b: Conduct-oriented team moral identity will be negatively associated with creative moral imagination.

Proposition 6c: Outcome-oriented team moral identity will be positively associated with creative moral imagination.

Intergroup Social Status

As social identity theory generally predicts, we suggest that a team moral identity will impact several critical nonmoral team outcomes (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). To begin, we theorize that team moral identity will positively impact intergroup social status. Social status refers to social standing reflected in the honor, prestige, and influence of a person based on desirable capabilities in a social setting such as a team and organizational context (Anderson & Kennedy, 2012). According to social identity theory and self-enhancement theory (Alicke & Sedikides, 2009), people generally strive for higher social status and can acquire social status by demonstrating positive qualities, including competence (i.e., skillful, industrious, intelligent) and sociability (i.e., good-natured, warm, sociable) (Leach et al., 2007). Several scholars have noted that moral qualities similarly facilitate the acquisition of status (Bai, Ho, & Yan, 2020; Fiske & Bai, 2020) and that morality is a dimension of group evaluation that is most strongly related to the inter-group status conferral (Leach et al., 2007). For instance, Leach et al. (2007) demonstrated that people refer to the morality information of other individuals more than they refer to competence and sociability information in inferring their group-level status. Second, a large-scale ethnographic study has also supported that people refer to a morality-related cue first when evaluating people affiliated with other social groups (Brewer & Campbell, 1976). Bai and colleagues (2020) demonstrated that these effects were significant, even after accounting for the influence of competence, which can be inferred from strong performance.

Importantly, scholars have demonstrated that the search for and the mechanisms that explain the acquisition of status extend to the group. Specifically, social groups often engage in concerted group-level efforts to demonstrate positive characteristics and thereby improve their status (Ellemers et al., 2008; Spears, 2011). Thus, we argue that a strong team moral identity

allows a team to increase its intergroup status by its association with these positive qualities. To the extent that a team as a collective unit identifies with moral traits, both procedural and outcome-oriented values, others will recognize this association and the social status of the team will rise.

Proposition 7: Both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity will be positively associated with intergroup social status.

Team In-role Performance

Team in-role performance is a key element of organizational success and relates to how effectively a team executes its assigned tasks, goals, and mission (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). Research has shown that teams that coordinate members' efforts by assigning tasks and relevant team resources to right team members tend to achieve high levels of in-role performance (Chun & Choi, 2014; Lewis, 2003; Zhang, Waldman, & Wang, 2012). In our model, we propose that both conduct-oriented and identity-oriented team moral values can positively impact a team's in-role performance. Generally speaking, social identity research suggests that collective self-affirmation can foster greater cooperation among group members, facilitating effective resource and task allocation processes (Corell, Spencer, & Zanna, 2004; Ozeki, 2015), and self-verification theory posits that individuals have a basic need for others to perceive them as they perceive themselves, which motivates behaviors that align with their collective self-concept (Das et al., 2008; Thatcher & Zhu, 2006). Thus, a team moral identity directly impacts in-role performance. Furthermore, we suggest that this effect is true for both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity.

To begin, a conduct-oriented team moral identity will shape in-role performance because the moral values that define a conduct-oriented identity have been identified as essential for team

in-role performance (Ellemers & Rink, 2005). Effective teams establish collaborative norms and work procedures to assign tasks, duties, and resources to the most appropriate members in a team (Lewis, 2003). Scholars have demonstrated that procedural moral values such as fairness, transparency, and accountability are crucial for successful resource and task allocation in teams (Porter, Gogus, & Yu, 2010). Furthermore, process conflict, which refers to disagreements about how to organize group resources and work procedures, can have a detrimental impact on team in-role performance (Behfar et al., 2011). A conduct-oriented team moral identity, however, can prevent team members from engaging in process conflict and help them navigate these disagreements by relying on moral values such as mutual respect. Therefore, we suggest that a strong conduct-oriented team moral identity is likely to improve a team's overall processes such as improved coordination from decreased process conflict, which can subsequently impact a team's in-role performance (Klein et al., 2011).

Additionally, we suggest that an outcome-oriented team moral identity will also have a positive relationship with a team's in-role performance. This type of team moral identity is rooted in teleological values, emphasizing the practical achievement of outcomes that have positive implications for others (Brady, 1985). Hence, when teams possess a strong outcome-oriented team moral identity, they are likely to view their work as a means of making a positive impact on their organization and team. This sense of purpose can serve as a powerful motivator, driving team members to engage more fully in their tasks and perform at a higher level (Grant, 2008). In addition, an outcome-oriented team moral identity can help foster stronger emotional connections and cooperation among team members (De Dreu & Nauta, 2009). By improving team processes, such as communication and collaboration, teams can achieve synergistic gains that lead to more effective task performance (Boies, Fiset, & Fill, 2015).

Proposition 8: Team moral identity (both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented) will be positively associated with team in-role performance.

Team Extra-role Performance

Extra-role performance, also referred to as constructive deviance or team organizational citizenship behavior, refers to behaviors recognized as slight deviations from a local norm intended to satisfy globally held expectations and to create a shared benefit (Hu & Liden, 2015; Vadera, Pratt, & Mishra, 2013; Warren, 2003). These norms are not recognized as moral norms, but instead pertain to the general functioning of the team. Examples of extra-role behaviors include voice, issue-selling, and inter-team helping behaviors (Vadera et al., 2013). Prior studies have noted that although these behaviors might incur a short-term cost for a team (e.g., increased difficulty in communicating and coordinating works), they ultimately benefit teams and organizations by improving the quality of team processes (Vadera et al., 2013). Note that while we use the general term "team extra-role performance" to align with existing literature, our specific focus is on extra-role performance that is relevant to promoting moral goodness. This type of behavior is not typically included as part of a team's formal job responsibilities or organizational expectations. Examples of such behavior may include raising awareness of moral issues, advocating for moral business practices, and promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, such as encouraging sustainability efforts. It is important to note that these examples are not exhaustive but rather indicative of the types of behaviors we are referring to.

We posit that a team with a strong outcome-oriented team moral identity will exhibit more extra-role behaviors in the context in which they operate. The effect is explained both by the power of a strong identity and of an identity that revolves around consequentialistic morality. A strong group identity strengthens the self-affirmation process, which creates a sense of safety

for trying unusual or new behavioral repertoires and possibilities (Corell et al., 2004; Spears, 2011). In addition, a strong team identity offers an opportunity for the team to constructively deviate from normal expectations without fear of backlash (Vadera et al., 2013). To the extent that a strong team identity increases the relational qualities and mutual trust between team members, these relational links and social capital offer even more opportunities for the team to try unusual yet constructive actions, particularly in pursuit of the collective goal of promoting moral goodness (Dutton et al., 2010).

While any strong identity can impact a team's extra-role performance, we propose that an outcome-oriented team moral identity is particularly suited to do so. Consequentialistic values are less concerned with the means and are more focused on the attainment of valuable ends (Brady, 1985; Schminke et al., 1997). Thus, extant studies have demonstrated that consequential moral values are more closely associated with relativism, "bending the rules," a flexible thought process, and other concepts that reflect a willingness to deviate from conduct-oriented norms in order to achieve greater effectiveness (Kim & Zhong, 2016; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). Achieving extra-role performance requires deviations from the kinds of norms that can impede or limit performance. For example, an organization might foster an unspoken norm that teams should not communicate with each other. If one of those teams, however, has adopted an outcome-oriented team moral identity and is subsequently invested in the outcomes they are pursuing, they might be more likely to communicate with these other teams in the hopes of improving their chances of achieving those outcomes. In this way, we expect that an outcome-oriented team moral identity will have a strong relationship with a team's extra-role performance:

Proposition 9: Outcome-oriented team moral identity will be positively associated with team extra-role performance.

Team Turnover

Collective turnover is defined as the "aggregate levels of employee departure that occur with groups, work units, or organizations" (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2011, p. 353). Scholars have generally regarded collective turnover as an emergent construct that has implications beyond the aggregate of individual turnover. Thus, collective turnover reflects more than the sum of individual turnover that occurs in a team (Hausknecht, 2017). Although collective turnover might be quantitatively the same as aggregated individual turnover, it involves more complicated phenomena such as member interaction, interpersonal relationships, and team processes (Hausknecht, 2017). Hence, studies have noted that team emergent phenomena, such as team moral identity, might better predict voluntary turnover at the team-level as opposed to the sum of individual-level predictors, such as aggregated individual moral identity (Kozlowski & Chao, 2018).

We posit that conduct-oriented team moral identity is negatively related to collective team turnover for several reasons. To begin, a conduct-oriented team moral identity can generate an enjoyable work context by impacting team members to internalize moral values that can provide stronger interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, procedural moral values such as inclusiveness and accountability, when internalized by team members, can generate a psychologically safe work environment that can facilitate their affective commitment to the team and desire to keep working together with team members (Bushe & Coetzer, 2007; Heavey, Holwerda, & Hausknecht, 2013). Thus, we argue that the conduct-oriented team moral identity can strengthen members' embeddedness in the team, namely, employees' formal and informal

connections to their teams, perceived compatibility with their work environment, and perceived cost of leaving a job (Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Mitchell et al., 2001). Thus, we propose the following:

Proposition 10: Conduct-oriented team moral identity will be negatively associated with team turnover.

Discussion

Our discussion and model of team moral identity addresses a nexus of theoretical omissions. To begin, our discussion addresses a gap in the collective and social identity literatures. These literatures have focused attention on understanding identities either singularly or in their most general forms and has struggled to identify content that might be common from one identity to the next. In addition, this work addresses a gap in the behavioral ethics literature. Despite the ubiquity of morality as part of identity claims in the workplace, research in the management literature has limited its view of the topic to the individual. The team, however, is the most common unit of organization in management and the principal mechanism by which work is accomplished (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). To the extent that concerns about morality extend to such units, this gap in our understanding is glaring. Ultimately, this research addresses both of these gaps and makes a series of theoretical contributions worth detailing.

First, this discussion extends the literature of collective identities in several ways. To begin, our model constitutes the most significant effort to identify potentially common content of collective identities and thereby creates the most substantial basis for formally and systematically comparing one collective identity to another. While the literature has developed frameworks for understanding the purposes and general characteristics of a collective identity, scholars have yet to consider content that might be common and thus comparable from one collective unit to

another. Thus, this discussion creates both theoretical opportunities for those who care to dig more deeply into understanding the role that morality plays in the self-identification of teams and other collectives, and empirical opportunities for those who are interested in comparing one team to another along moral terms. Just as the individual moral identity construct allowed scholars to examine individual identities side-by-side, a team moral identity now provides a basis for comparing the identities of teams and potentially other formal collectives in different venues, contexts, and conditions across common criteria. Thus, this research can serve as a template in the collective identity literature for thinking more intentionally about the kinds of content that regularly populates collective identities and the extent to which morality constitutes a basis for other types of collectives, including dyads, subunits, and organizations.

Second, this study expands the literature on social identity theory by exploring an identity's moral dimension. Social identity theory, which suggests individuals partially derive their self-concept from perceived group membership, has been key in explaining various organizational phenomena, such as group cohesion, intergroup conflict, and leadership emergence. However, the theory has mainly been utilized to explore social categorizations based on readily observable characteristics or roles, with less emphasis on abstract and value-laden aspects like morality. By introducing team moral identity as a construct, this research broadens the scope of social identity theory to include moral considerations. This has potential implications for future research, such as the impact of team moral identity on intergroup relations, thereby providing a nuanced and sophisticated understanding of a wide range of group phenomena.

Finally, this discussion contributes to the behavioral ethics literature in several ways. For example, we provide a much-needed discussion about morality at the team level. While

behavioral ethics scholars have long recognized the importance of the team, scholars have struggled to extend discussions of morality to the team level (Dutton et al., 2010). Often, these discussions tend to focus on the individual level of analysis and detail individual processes within a team context. In contrast, our discussion recognizes the team as a unit conceptually distinct from the individual and applies critical moral theories and findings to the qualities, processes, and outcomes of the team separate from the individuals who form the team. Specifically, we recognize that individuals on a team will vary in the strength of their individual moral identities, but our conceptualization of team moral identity suggests that the collective sense of self can emerge independent of those individual moral identities. This not only constitutes a divergent approach to the study of the morality of teams (e.g., morality as a multilevel phenomenon), but also opens a door to other kinds of similar considerations. If a well-documented individual level construct exists at the team level, to what extent could other concepts, such as ethical leadership, moral courage, and more, also exist in a group separate from its members?

Future Research

By focusing on the conceptual framework of team moral identity together with its team-level antecedents and consequences, the current model offers several avenues for future research. First, the current conceptual framework offers several research propositions that can lead directly to empirical research on team moral identity. Empirically testing these arguments will advance research on team moral identity by demonstrating its validity as a concept, its emergent processes, and its impact on important team outcomes. Furthermore, we have pinpointed ethical team purpose, moral attentiveness, and moral language as significant antecedents that contribute to the emergence of team moral identity. However, it may be the case that the ethical imperative,

in this case, ethical team purpose, forms first, subsequently fostering the moral attentiveness of team members, which in turn propagates into moral language. Through the undertaking of an empirical study, using qualitative and/or quantitative methods, researchers can deepen our understanding of the process by which team moral identity emerges.

Second, while this model identifies key variables the give rise to and emerge from a team moral identity, the variables were largely driven by our reliance on social identity theory. We are open to the possibility that alternative theoretical perspective might point to other possibilities. For example, some extant research in the social identity literature has adopted a social network perspective to explain how an identity process propagates through group members (Graupensperger, Panza, & Evan, 2020). Given that an individual can have a strong influence on a team process by occupying a certain position in a team social network, the network characteristics (e.g., centrality, tie strength, and tie variety) of one individual, particularly an individual with a moral identity, might be integral in spreading the importance of moral values to the other team members. Similarly, while we have relied on the two most common moral theories, deontology and teleology, to identify types of moral identity, other possibilities do exist. It is conceivable that a team might forge a moral identity out of Aristotelean values, such as character and integrity, or from a caring perspective (Gilligan, 1995). If that is a possibility, then these same theories should predict that other kinds of antecedents and outcomes are likely to be salient.

Finally, we note that our model has focused entirely on the team-level. To fully understand a team's moral identity, however, future research will no doubt benefit from a multi-level approach to this issue. For example, future research needs to consider that extent to which a single individual's (e.g., a leader, a new member) moral and nonmoral traits impact the emergent

identity of the team? Furthermore, we recognize important questions about the possible interactive effects of the individual and the team on both individual and team-level outcomes. Similarly, future research should consider exploring organizational-level constraints and enablers of the emergence of team moral identity. It seems very likely that the tactical and strategic choices of the organizations in which the team resides could be a significant factor in the identity and subsequent behavior of the team. Clearly, a multi-level perspective could add a great deal to this discussion.

Incorporating the aforementioned future directions, we propose a more comprehensive framework centered on the concept of team moral identity. This framework includes predictors from various levels, diverse types of moderators, and team processes and outcomes, both with and without moral implications. We are confident that future research will benefit from examining a portion of the relationships depicted in our model, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of team moral identity.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Practical Implications

As prior research has acknowledged, the morality of a social group is one of the strongest factors associated with social status conferral (Bai et al., 2020). Nevertheless, morality is often considered to be incompatible with strong performance (Schwepker & Ingram, 1996). In this paper, however, we offer the view that having a strong team moral identity can improve team effectiveness and organizational performance in turn. We also propose that a team moral identity can take a different form depending on the type of moral values, highlighting the unique effects of a distinct form of team moral identity. Accordingly, we believe that supervisors can benefit by considering to what extent the different forms of a team moral identity are relevant to their teams

and represent a good fit with the work that they do. At a minimum, managers should be cognizant of their teams' identities and willing to engage in conversations about the extent to which their teams do or do not incorporate the moral values associated with a conduct-oriented and/or an outcome-oriented team moral identity. To the extent that managers are willing to pay attention to these issues, speak about these issues with their teams, and perhaps even incorporate these values into the very purpose of their teams, they are on their way to reaping the positive outcomes a team moral identity has to offer.

Conclusion

Team moral identity is a complicated yet worthwhile phenomenon to pursue given its implications on subsequent team processes and outcomes. The proposed conceptual model provides a framework that significantly increases our understanding of the formative processes of team moral identity and why it may lead to several different team outcomes, including both moral (i.e., team moral behavior) and nonmoral (i.e., team in-role and extra-role performance and turnover) objectives. We hope that the current theoretical framework encourages a constructive discussion and a deeper exploration of team moral identity, increasing our general understanding of intra- and inter-team dynamics.

CHAPTER 3

"WE ARE A MORAL TEAM": THE CONCEPTUALIZATION, MEASUREMENT, AND EXAMINATION OF TEAM MORAL IDENTITY

Abstract

Teams are a critical component of the organization, but our understanding of the moral aspects of teams is very limited. To address this significant gap in our understanding, we develop the construct of team moral identity, a team-level emergent construct that represents the shared belief of the team that regards morality as a central and defining attribute that defines the team as a collective. Drawing on the research findings from the collective identity literature, theory of moral self, and self-verification literature, we discuss the theoretical properties of team moral identity and consider its unique effects on numerous team-level phenomena. We then conduct a series of online studies, a lab experiment, a quasi-field study of a student case competition, and a field study of pharmacies to develop a valid measure of team moral identity centrality and to explore its relationship with important team processes and outcomes. Ultimately, this research demonstrates that team moral identity substantially impacts the functions and outcomes of a team and offers a theoretical and empirical foundation for future research on team moral identity.

Keywords**:** team moral identity; collective identity; self-verification theory; team effectiveness

Teams are an indispensable tool for organizations trying to solve difficult business problems (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). Given the vital importance of teams to modern organizations, scholars have proposed and probed numerous antecedents of desirable team processes and outcomes (Bell, 2007; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). What has received relatively little attention, however, are the moral aspects of teams. This is a critical oversight given recent research findings on the importance of moral concepts to teams (Chen, Treviño, & Humphrey, 2020; Dasborough, Hannah, & Zhu, 2020). For instance, research has suggested that morality is one of the most important factors that people refer to when evaluating a team, as morality constitutes a fundamental basis for the social reputations of teams and organizational supports from upper management (Leach, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2007). For these reasons, the moral psychology literature has called for more research that takes a team-based perspective on morality, as doing so promises to generate numerous insights about the social psychological functions of teams (Ellemers & van den Bos, 2012).

Responding to this research call, this manuscript focuses on the moral identity of teams. At the individual level, moral identity is defined as a sense of self organized around a set of moral traits (Shao, Aquino, & Freeman, 2008). Normally focused on individuals, we recognize two reasons for extending the concept of moral identity to the team level. First, identity scholars have called for more research on the process of positive team identity construction at more macro levels of analysis, as the identity of collectives such as teams can explain organizational phenomena that exist at different levels (Dutton, Roberts, & Bednar, 2010). Second, the collective identity literature posits that collective identities have distinct structural and functional characteristics compared to individual identities (Pratt, 2003; Whetten, 2006). Hence, shedding light on the distinct attributes of team moral identity relative to individual moral identity and

general team identity will help us deepen our understanding of the identity phenomena in general.

Thus, we use the collective identity literature as a foundation to conceptualize moral identity as a team-level phenomenon. Specifically, we define team moral identity as team members' collective identity that regards morality as a central, distinctive, and enduring attribute that defines their team (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Pratt, 2003). In developing our theoretical argument, we propose two forms of team moral identity, namely, conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented identity (Schminke, Ambrose, & Noel, 1997). Conduct-oriented team moral identity is defined as a team moral identity centered around the moral processes that teams follow, whereas outcome-oriented team moral identity refers to a shared identity references to moral outcomes that teams create. By recognizing both procedural and consequential aspects of a team moral identity, our model fulfills a tenet of the collective identity literature by suggesting that teams can answer the question of *"Who are we?"* by focusing on how they perform their work and/or what they create (Pratt, 2003). We offer theoretical arguments for why the distinction between process and outcomes matters and demonstrate that each form of identity uniquely influences different aspects of team phenomena.

To examine our theory, we report five studies. The first study describes the development of a team moral identity measure that focuses on the extent to which teams regard morality as their central and defining characteristic and provides preliminary evidence of its psychometric properties. In the second study, we verify the measure's structure via confirmatory factor analysis and examine its concurrent validity in relation to theoretically adjacent team-level variables. In our third study, we provide initial evidence of the relationship between the two forms of team moral identity and team task performance outcome using data collected from

student project teams in the context of a strategy case competition. In Study 4, we experimentally test whether team moral identity has unique effects on the moral aspects of team outcomes, Finally, we conduct a field study to ensure the predictive and external validity of our findings.

This research makes several contributions. First, we provide a theoretically grounded conceptualization of team moral identity and develop a model that explains how team moral identity influences several different aspects of team processes and outcomes. As such, this paper is one of only a few that discusses an identity construct where the target and locus of the identity reside collectively at the team level and focuses on specific contents, namely, morality (Pratt, 2003; Sonenshein et al., 2017). Second, we contribute to the moral identity literature by introducing a team-level moral identity construct (Aquino & Reed, 2002). This confirms Dutton et al.'s (2010) claim that new questions and research opportunities can arise by applying the positive identity construction process at more macro levels of analysis. Third, we contribute to the broader behavioral ethics literature by theorizing how a team can be an agent that performs moral functions and generates moral outcomes in an organization. As the literature on the ethics of teams has received relatively very little attention, we believe that this represents an important and meaningful contribution to the field (Treviño, Weaver & Reynolds, 2006).

What is Team Moral Identity?

We define team moral identity as a form of collective team identity, a shared sense of self that addresses the question of "who we are" as an entity and regards moral characteristics as central, distinctive, and enduring features of the team (Pratt, 2003). Developing the theoretical properties of team moral identity and explaining how this construct influences various outcomes requires insights from both the literature on individual moral identity and collective team identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Aquino & Reed, 2002; Ashforth, 2016; Pratt, 2003).

Individual Moral Identity

The concept of individual moral identity has received substantial research attention in the fields of business ethics and moral psychology (Shao et al., 2008). Moral identity is defined as the extent to which moral characteristics are important in defining an individual's sense-of-self (Hardy & Carlo, 2011). In particular, the social cognitive perspective of moral identity proposes that people have multiple personal and social identities structured into a self-schema, and moral identity is one of them (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Building upon this assumption, Aquino and Reed (2002) defined moral identity as the self-importance of morality and then proposed that the more a person's moral identity is central to one's sense-of-self, the larger role it will play in affecting individuals to commit to moral social roles (Stets et al., 2008). Consistent with Erikson's (1964) definition of self-identity, Aquino and Reed (2002) identified two dimensions of moral identity, internalization and symbolization. Internalization is defined as the relative centrality of moral identity in one's overall self-schema, and symbolization refers to the extent to which people outwardly display their moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Research has demonstrated that each dimension plays important roles in motivating moral behaviors (Shao et al., 2008).

While the literature on individual moral identity provides a basis for discussing a team moral identity, a team moral identity is not simply an individual moral identity at the team level. To begin, individual identities revolve around social identities (e.g., ethnicities, professions, skills sets), which are far less salient for teams. Additionally, teams cannot internalize and symbolize their identities as individuals do, which suggests that a team moral identity is different in its form than an individual moral identity. Further, an individual's moral identity evolves from personal narratives and distinct characteristics, whereas a team moral identity emerges from the collaborative interaction and consensus among team members, complemented by collective team

attributes such as a team ethical purpose or reason for existence. Therefore, the literature on collective identity and organizational identity is needed to inform this discussion.

Collective Identity Literature and Team Moral Identity

Albert and Whetten (1985) proposed that a social entity, such as an organization, can have a collective identity, a collective sense-of-selves focusing on characteristics that members feel are central, enduring, and distinctive to the collective. Their work prompted extensive research that has generally demonstrated a strong relationship between organizational identity and a large set of organizational phenomena, including organizational change, innovation, and competitive advantage (Anthony & Tripsas, 2016; Pratt, 2003). Although Albert and Whetten's discussion was directed at an organization-level phenomenon, this construct has been further applied to several different levels of analysis. For example, Ashforth and colleagues (2011) explored the linkage between organizational, subunit, and individual identities, and discussed how the contents of each identity could be isomorphic or differentiated across different levels. In this tradition, we consider team moral identity as a team's emergent property, a collective response to the question, *"Who are we?"*

Consistent with the literature on moral theory that distinguishes between means- and ends-based approaches to ethics (Brady, 1985; Schminke et al., 1997), we recognize two different forms of team moral identity depending on the extent to which the team is forming their identity around how they perform and/or what they create. We define conduct-oriented team moral identity as a type of team identity that references moral work procedures and related moral values such as fairness, honesty, and respect (Botes, 2000; Schminke et al., 1997). In contrast, we define outcome-oriented team moral identity as a team identity that revolves around the moral (i.e., beneficial) outcomes that a team creates (e.g., positive social impact) (Botes, 2000).

Beyond the justifications provided by moral theory, we recognize two additional reasons for distinguishing between conduct- and outcome-oriented team moral identity. First, moral conviction theory posits that people have distinct attitudes on moral issues, dependent upon their priorities on different sets of moral values (Skitka et al., 2021). This theory also explains that the emphasis on different moral values and attitudes constitutes a primary factor that distinguishes their ingroup from outgroups, implying that team moral identity might take different forms, i.e., conduct-oriented team moral identity and outcome-oriented team moral identity, depending on members' emphasis on a unique set of moral values. Second, the collective identity literature posits that "what people work on" and "how they work" constitute two primary factors to the development of collective identity, which conceptually matches with the outcome and process concerns from moral framework literature (Pratt, 2003; Schminke et al., 1997).

Having defined what team moral identity is, we next draw on the self-verification theory (Swann, 1987) to consider its impact on team processes and outcomes.

The Impact of a Team Moral Identity

The main premise of self-verification theory is that people have a fundamental need for others to see them as they see themselves (Swann, 1987; Thatcher & Zhu, 2006). As such, identity-based motivations should encourage attitudes and behaviors that are consistent with the expectations that arise from the contents of the focal team identity (Das et al., 2008). In other words, members of a high moral identity team might engage in concerted efforts to align their behaviors in various task and social situations with the moral values, principles, and ideals that they regard as their team's defining characteristics (Jenning et al., 2015). Specifically, we suggest that a team moral identity will be related to a set of team processes and outcomes that include, but are not limited to, team engagement, conflict, task performance, and moral performance.

Team Moral Identity and Team Processes

Team engagement. Team engagement is defined as the collective investment of physical, cognitive, and emotional energy in work-related efforts as a means of self-expression, which has been regarded as a critical team process that contributes to team performance (Kahn, 1990; Rodríguez-Sánchez, Hakanen, & Salanova, 2021). Self-verification theory proposes that motivations based on one's identity can reinforce behaviors that align with the expectations stemming from that identity. Therefore, we predict that both conduct- and outcome-oriented moral identities are positively related to team task engagement. Conduct-oriented team moral identity will be positively related to team task engagement as teams with high procedural moral identity abide by moral values and norms such as respect, care, and tolerance, which can contribute to the positive interpersonal relationships between team members (Goncalo et al., 2015). This relational quality between members will increase their collective enthusiasm to invest in work-related efforts, improving levels of engagement in goal-oriented behaviors. We expect that outcome-oriented team moral identity will also positively impact team engagement, though perhaps for a slightly different reason. An outcome-oriented team moral identity focuses members' attention on generating social and/or moral goodness. Therefore, an identity-driven motivation to achieve good outcomes can energize members to invest and coordinate their resources to accomplish task-related goals and to attain their raison d'être (Kahn, 1990). For these reasons, we predict the following:

Hypothesis 1: Conduct- and outcome-oriented team moral identity are positively related to team engagement.

Team conflict is a representative type of team process that has been extensively studied in the field of management. While several different forms of team conflict have been identified in the literature, task, relationship, and process conflict have garnered the most scholarly attention.

To date, research indicates that relationship conflict is typically detrimental, due to its harmful impact on the interpersonal relationships between team members and their overall performance (Jehn, 1994). Conversely, task conflict, despite its seemingly negative effects on team effectiveness, can sometimes lead to the sharing of useful ideas and perspectives when team members actively engage with the task at hand (Jehn, 1994). In other words, teams might be able to frame task conflict as an opportunity to improve task-oriented outcomes, especially when members navigate conflict in a mutually respectful manner. Process conflict, though generally noted to negatively impact team performance, still requires a more thorough understanding. In this study, we propose that process conflict is deeply related to team moral identity, given its definition touches on the incompatibility between the "means" used to achieve the "ends"—a type of discussion that typically carries moral implications. In the following section, we begin to elaborate on the definitions of these three types of team conflict, as well as their relationships with two forms of team moral identity.

Task conflict. Task conflict occurs when team members have differing perspectives and ideas related to a task (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999). In this study, we posit that outcome-oriented team moral identity is positively related to task conflict. Previous research has shown that the most common driver of task conflict is the diversity of ideas held by team members (Chun & Choi, 2014). The collective identity model posits that when a team subscribes to consequential moral values and ideals as their defining characteristics, members identify themselves with a similar set of outcome-oriented moral attributes (Ozeki, 2015), but these individuals might have a wide range of ideas about how to achieve those ends. Previous research has demonstrated that the outcome-oriented thought process leads to greater levels of cognitive flexibility, which serves as a basis to generate diverse work-related ideas (Kim & Zhong, 2016).

Therefore, this increased pool of ideas, combined with a sense of unity created by the common identity, can improve psychological safety, which encourages team members to voice their opinions without fear of interpersonal backlash from others. This, in turn, is likely to result in a clash of varying task-related perspectives among team members.

Hypothesis 2: Outcome-oriented team moral identity is positively related to task conflict.

Relationship conflict. Relationship conflict is defined as friction among team members in non-task areas, which is often driven by the difficulty or failure to reconcile the differences in personalities, values, or beliefs of people (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998). We hypothesize that conduct-oriented team moral identity is negatively associated with relationship conflict. Teams with conduct-oriented team moral identity cherish formalist moral values and ideals such as fairness, respect, and tolerance (Schminke et al., 1997). These values are the foundation for harmonious relationships. Moreover, the self-verification perspective proposes that identity motivation encourages team members to engage in behaviors consistent with their collective identity (Swann, 1997). Therefore, in dealing with the differences and incompatibilities, members of these teams will be motivated to comply with the defining values of the team, engaging in constructive communication based on a set of rules that facilitate mutual understanding of needs and frustrations driven by principles such as mutual respect and care.

Furthermore, as indicated in the definition, one of the primary reasons for teams to experience relationship conflict is the incompatibility of values and/or moral convictions held by individual team members (Harrison et al., 1998). For instance, team members may hold divergent attitudes regarding topics like environmental sustainability, with some members considering it a moral imperative while others may not. In such cases, teams with a strong conduct-oriented team moral identity can effectively address these differences in moral

convictions, which may otherwise lead to relationship conflict. This can be achieved through the establishment of common norms and modes of interaction that prioritize mutual respect and care. Thus, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 3: Conduct-oriented team moral identity is negatively related to relationship conflict.

Process conflict. Process conflict refers to members' disagreement over "how task accomplishment will proceed" (Jehn & Mannix, 2001, p. 239). Generally speaking, process conflict is driven by disagreement about assignments of duties and resources in a team (Behfar et al., 2011). Following a logic similar to the other forms of conflict, we expect that conduct-oriented team moral identity will have a negative relationship with process conflict for several reasons. First, members of the team that follows procedural moral ideals as their defining values strive to maintain moral team procedures, stemming from their identity motivation to demonstrate procedural fairness (Swann, 1997). Therefore, the members of these teams dedicate themselves to the strong rules and norms of the team that are based on conduct-oriented moral values such as fairness and justice, which can prevent unfair allocation of team duties and/or resources (Aime, Meyer, & Humphrey, 2010). For instance, in teams where social loafing—a situation where someone takes credit for work they have not done—is common (Simms & Nichols, 2014), the presence of a robust conduct-oriented team moral identity reduces the likelihood of such incidents. This is due to the strong procedural norm that discourages personal deviance that could undermine effective coordination and workflow among team members, thus reducing process conflict within the team.

Furthermore, previous research has demonstrated that a moral team process can mitigate procedural uncertainty, which can eventually reduce members' misunderstanding of work

procedures, such as who should do what or the amount of time to spend on different parts of the work (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). The collective understanding and motivation regarding work procedures and coordination rules fostered by a conduct-oriented team moral identity can enhance team processes, leading to a reduction in process conflict commonly observed within work teams in organizations.

Hypothesis 4: Conduct-oriented team moral identity is negatively related to process conflict.

Consequences of Team Moral Identity

Team task performance. Individual task performance is defined as "the effectiveness with which employees perform activities that contribute to the organization's technical core" (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997, p. 99). At the team level, task performance refers to the efficient completion of the tasks expected of the group. Building on this established definition, our study focuses on team task performance, specifically in tackling technical challenges and resolving well-known problems. Lewis (2003) has argued that strong team performance is achieved by establishing a system of collaboration between team members that facilitates the efficient division of labor by assigning part of team tasks to appropriate members. In this light, we suggest that strong procedural norms facilitate the efficient assignment of duties, and thereby improves the efficient completion of team tasks. Thus, we propose that conduct-oriented team moral identity is positively related to team task performance. By definition, teams with high conduct-oriented moral identity conform to strong social norms and rules focusing on moral values such as fairness and justice (Aime et al., 2010). As such, these teams are likely to focus on establishing a work routine structured around procedural moral values, which provides a basis for sound coordination between team members (Kuenzi et al., 2020).

We propose that a team's collective outcome-oriented moral identity is also positively related to their performance. The self-verification perspective suggests that members of a team seek to verify and maintain their central identity, which can be implemented through their work (Swann, 2011). In other words, members may view their work as a means of expressing and reinforcing their collective identity. Therefore, teams with a strong outcome-oriented team moral identity are more likely to be motivated to perform their tasks with the highest level of commitment, dedication, and effort, ultimately leading to better team task performance (Chadi, Jeworrek, Mertins, 2017). In sum, we expect that outcome-oriented moral identity will positively impact team task performance, as it aligns with the team's goals and values, and provides a sense of purpose and direction to their work.

Hypothesis 5: Both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identities are positively related to team task performance.

Team creativity. Creativity is defined as the generation of novel and original ideas, providing further ground for accomplishing effective team performance. Creativity impacts the quality dimension of task performance due to its association with the injection of novelty and usefulness into tasks assigned by an organization. (Amabile et al., 1996; Sung & Choi, 2012). Especially in a team setting, creativity is determined by the recombination of non-overlapping knowledge and ideas contributed by team members (Madjar et al., 2011). Therefore, harmonious interpersonal processes involving mutual information sharing, on top of non-overlapping pools of knowledge and ideas, are critical determinants of team creative performance. As such, creativity scholars have focused on various antecedents to team creativity such as team diversity, psychological safety, and team cohesion (Hülsheger et al., 2009). In this study, we posit that outcome-oriented team moral identity is positively related to team creativity. Teams with high

outcome-oriented moral identity are likely to have an expanded pool of non-overlapping ideas and task viewpoints contributed by members' flexible thought processes (Jacob, 1991; Johnson, 1993; Kim & Zhong, 2016; Kundro, 2022). Research has demonstrated that this diverse knowledge pool is an essential ingredient to creativity as non-overlapping ideas can be combined and evolved into novel and useful ideas (Sung & Choi, 2012; Werhand, 1999). Furthermore, prosocial goals reflected in outcome-oriented team moral identity can function as a social glue, which can help team members to coordinate their viewpoints more harmoniously and thereby contribute to team creativity.

In contrast to our predictions about outcome-oriented moral identity, we predict that teams with a conduct-oriented moral identity will exhibit lower levels of team creativity. This hypothesis is based on two key reasons. First, conduct-oriented moral values are often associated with formalistic thinking, which is regularly characterized as being inflexible and antithetical to cognitive flexibility (Brady, 1985; Kim & Zhong, 2016). Since team creativity involves the flexible combination of knowledge and information held by team members, reduced cognitive flexibility could negatively impact creative output. Second, research has shown that a preoccupation with norms and rules can stifle creativity, as breaking established norms can sometimes inspire creative ideas and actions (Cropley & Cropley, 2011). A conduct-oriented team moral identity may encourage team members to adhere to norms and rules during task-related interactions, which could inhibit their ability to generate novel outcomes that can only be achieved by overcoming the constraints of strict norms and regulations.

Hypothesis 6a: Outcome-oriented team moral identity is positively related to team creativity.

Hypothesis 6b: Conduct-oriented team moral identity is negatively related to team creativity.

Team moral performance. We posit that both types of team moral identity, conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented, have a positive correlation with team moral performance. Team moral performance is defined as those outcomes that align with societal expectations of a team's moral behavior. This not only encompasses the team's moral conduct but also includes outcomes deemed as morally desirable, such as advancing social justice or creating a positive social impact. Our reasoning draws upon both self-verification theory and social cognitive theory. The former suggests that individuals strive for consistency between their self-concepts and their experiences. Thus, in a team with a strong moral identity, members will be driven to act in ways that align with this shared moral self-concept, leading to enhanced moral performance.

Similarly, social cognitive theory posits that individuals' actions are influenced by environmental cues that signal what behaviors are deemed morally acceptable within a given context (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). In a team setting, this implies that team dynamics and collective identities can significantly influence collective moral behavior. Jones (1991) corroborates this view by suggesting that organizational factors, including group dynamics, directly shape moral behavior through a socialization process.

A strong team moral identity, therefore, engenders a collective understanding of normatively appropriate actions within the team, which is likely to be shaped by a set of moral values and characteristics held in high regard by the team members (Chen et al., 2020; Kuenzi et al., 2020). Moreover, a strong team moral identity facilitates social support among team members when making moral team decisions, enhancing the collective moral regulation process that is crucial in moral decision making within the team context. This reasoning and these

processes are universally applicable regardless of the specific type of team moral identity. Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 7: Both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity is positively related to team moral performance.

Overview of the Studies

To test the proposed relationships, we conducted five studies. Following the research procedure from Brown, Vogel, and Akben (2021), the first two studies were conducted to develop a measure of team moral identity centrality, evaluate its psychometric properties, and explore the initial links between team moral identity and team-level processes. Thus, the first two studies are conducted at the individual level, measuring individuals' perceptions of team-level constructs. This approach provides a good contrast between measures of team moral identity and an adjacent variable, ethical climate, which was typically been measured at the individual level. After completing this initial set of studies, we assessed the predictive validity of team moral identity on team-level outcomes using both survey and experimental methodologies (Studies 3-5). We used student and field samples, including both temporary experimental teams and continuing work teams, which complemented the first two studies. In the following sections, we present the findings of each study.

Study 1: Item Development and Factor Structure Assessment

Item Development

To develop a scale to measure team moral identity centrality, we adapted the general form of the individual moral identity measure to fit the team context (Aquino & Reed, 2002). That measure identifies nine moral traits (e.g., caring, compassionate, hardworking, helpful, etc.) and uses 12 items to measure the extent to which the individual internalizes and symbolizes

those traits. Relying on extensive discussions in the literature about the difference between moral processes and moral outcomes (e.g., Ashby, 1950; Brady, 1985; Brady & Wheeler, 1996; Colquitt et al., 2001; Love, Salinas, & Rotman, 2020; Schminke et al., 1997; Tyler, 2000), we identified eight conduct-related moral characteristics (i.e., committed to fairness, respectful, friendly, collaborative, tolerant of each other, reliable, accepting, and caring) and six outcome-related moral characteristics (i.e., impactful, benefiting others, effective, helpful to others, committed to making a difference, and influential) of a team.

We validated these moral values using a separate sample of 152 participants solicited through Prolific Academics. Participants were first presented with the definitions of conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral values, and then asked to categorize the 14 moral values listed above into one of three categories: conduct-oriented moral values, outcome-oriented moral values, or neither. We then conducted a series of chi-square tests of independence to examine whether participants recognized each moral value as we intended. Participants categorized 11 of the 14 values as expected. For the remaining three - committed to making a difference, reliable, and helpful to others - approximately half of the participants correctly assigned these values to either conduct-oriented or outcome-oriented team moral values, but the success rate was not statistically significant. Despite this outcome, we retained these values for two reasons. First, these individual values are regularly associated with the larger value sets by both academic and more general audiences (e.g., Brady & Wheeler, 1995), a point confirmed by the number of participants categorizing these terms as intended. Second, the team moral identity scale does not ask participants to respond to individual values, but to the full set of values. In such a context, the slight ill fit of individual terms is less important than the collective similarities of the terms, as similarities tap broader understandings of what constitutes conduct-

oriented and outcome-oriented value sets. Admittedly, we recognize that this argument deserves empirical validation, and thus we relied on subsequent analyses (e.g., EFA, CFA) to provide evidence of our argument. These analyses notwithstanding, we recognize a need for more research on the topic and explicitly call for it in our limitations section. A full description of the study procedure and outcomes is available in the Appendix.

In line with Aquino and Reed's (2002) individual measure of moral identity, we developed items to assess the extent to which the team members believed each set of moral values to be the central characteristics of their team (Whetten, 2006). We focused on centrality for two reasons. First, Whetten (2006) has discussed that the centrality aspect of collective identity functions as a foundational element, as a certain identity characteristic cannot be invoked as a distinguishing and/or enduring feature without being recognized as their central characteristic. Second, the commonly used measure of moral identity at the individual-level assesses the extent to which individuals centralize moral values and characteristics as part of their defining characteristics (Aquino & Reed, 2002). While several in the individual identity literature have noted small but important distinctions between centrality and strength of identification (e.g., Leach, et al. 2008), we concluded that such distinctions were less critical at the group level. Social identity theory argues that individuals manage their identities in the context of relevant in-groups, but group identity is not concerned with membership in larger units in this same way. Thus, while individuals considering their memberships in various relevant in-groups can experience important differences between centrality and mere identification (e.g., "I strongly identify with group X, but that identity is not central to who I am."), groups are far less likely to experience such differences. Thus, we felt that items focused

on centrality (as opposed to strength of identification) would be more consistent with our theoretical discussions of team moral identity and yield similar methodological results.

Per the definition of the construct, our measures of team moral identity used team-level referents (Chan, 1998). The four items are shown in Table 1. For each of the scale items from Table 1, participants were asked to refer to their work team and indicate the extent to which they agreed with each item using a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*). We then examined the validity of this approach using two separate samples.

Insert Table 1 about here

Sample 1: Online Sample of Those Working on a Team

We sought participation from 300 individuals on Prolific Academic. We limited participation to people residing within the United States who are currently working on a team in an organization. We excluded individuals who reported either that they worked with fewer than 2 people or more than 10 people or that they rarely or never conduct team meetings. The final sample was 239 individuals. This sample was 32.21% female with the average age of 38.39 (*SD* = 10.98). Additionally, 76.98% of participants were white and the average team size was 6.13 (*SD* = 2.14).

Method. Participants were initially asked to provide information about their teams, including the frequency of team meetings, the percentage of performance evaluation determined by team performance, and the percentage of the workday spent collaborating with teammates. Following this, they were presented with questions related to conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity. Participants received a compensation of $0.80 for completing the online survey.

Result. We conducted exploratory factor analyses (EFA) on the items using a maximum likelihood method and oblimin rotation. The parallel analysis result, which tests the number of factors to retain from EFAs, recommended retaining two factors (Hayton, Allen, & Scarpello, 2004). The EFA result identified two distinct factors, which were distinguished by the different types of team-oriented moral values, namely, conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented moral characteristics. Together, these two factors explained 72.56% of the variance. For item retention, we established a criterion where factor loadings should exceed .40 and cross-loadings should be lower than .30 (Hinkin, 1998). Detailed factor loading values can be found in Table 1.

Sample 2: Student Teams in a Problem-Solving Context

Our second sample consisted of 218 student participants recruited from a public university located in the Pacific Northwest area. Specifically, 218 students were assigned to 77 two-to-three-person teams. While four teams consisted of only two people, our analyses revealed that the results were consistent with or without these teams. Thus, we proceeded to use the full sample in our analyses. Following the discussion activity, participants completed the team moral identity items as part of their debriefing activity. The sample comprised 50% female participants, with an average age of 20.06.

Method. The study was conducted online over Zoom. Participants were asked to participate in an online group discussion activity, where they discussed the issue of homelessness prevalent in the neighborhood near their university. This topic was deliberately chosen due to its moral implications, which could potentially foster a sense of moral elevation among student teams. After engaging in a 15-minute team exercise, students responded to the items on conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity.

Result. To analyze the eight items of the team moral identity measure, we performed an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using a maximum likelihood method and oblimin rotation. The parallel analysis indicated that maintaining two factors was appropriate. Results revealed two distinct factors defined by the two sets of moral values and accounting for 67% of the variance (please see Table 1 for specific factor loading values). These results were entirely consistent with the results from the first sample. As a preliminary analysis, we have calculated aggregation statistics. Both conduct-oriented (α =.83; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .61, ICC(1) = .013, ICC(2) = .04, F = 1.04, *ns.*) and outcome-oriented (α =.91; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .56, ICC(1) = -.083, ICC(2) = -.29, F = .63, *ns.*) team moral identity demonstrated indices lower than the conventional standards. We attribute this finding to the transient nature of the experimental teams, which posed challenges for the emergence of team moral identity. Additionally, the similarity in tasks and demographic profiles among student teams significantly reduced the variance in team moral identity measures, as indicated by the ANOVA results, and resulted in aggregation statistics lower than the conventional standards.

Discussions

In this study, we developed an eight-item measure of team moral identity that assesses the degree to which teams prioritize conduct-oriented and/or outcome-oriented moral values as part of their shared identity. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) confirmed that our measure effectively captures the two dimensions of team moral identity we hypothesized. These findings were consistent across two distinct samples: working adults recruited via a crowdsourcing platform and student groups. Based on these initial results, we conducted Study 2, recruiting another sample to perform a confirmatory factor analysis and to explore the proposed relationship between the two types of team moral identity and team processes.

Study 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Correlates of Team Moral Identity

Our second study aimed to confirm the factor structure of the two measures of team moral identity and to evaluate the scales' nomological network. Generally speaking, we followed the empirical procedures outlined by Brown et al. (2022). To begin, this study explored the convergent and discriminant validity of team moral identity by comparing it to two related constructs: ethical climate and team identification. Ethical climate refers to the shared beliefs of organizational members regarding what constitutes right behaviors and typical forms of moral reasoning within the organization (Newman et al., 2017). Because ethical climates similarly rely on moral theories for its theoretical foundation, we anticipate that the teleological and deontological forms of ethical climate will be positively associated with the two forms of team moral identity (Martin & Cullen, 2006; Newman et al., 2017). Nevertheless, team moral identity and ethical climate ultimately answer different questions and serve different purposes. An ethical climate defines what behaviors and practices constitute right and wrong behaviors, while a team moral identity only addresses the question of identity. Therefore, despite some conceptual similarities between team moral identity and ethical climate based on their connections to the broader moral domain, we believe that they are theoretical and empirically distinct constructs and will have their own unique relationships with other team-level phenomena.

Team identification, or collective team identification refers to "a sense that membership in one's team is an emotionally significant aspect of one's identity" (Van Der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005, p.535). Research has shown that members of teams with high levels of team identification demonstrate higher levels of commitment to the team and team goal achievement than to their personal goal accomplishment (Van Der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005). Studies have noted that team members who strongly identify with their teams, i.e., at extreme levels, conduct immoral behaviors to accelerate team goal accomplishment (Mo et al., 2023). Although this form

of collective team identification has some levels of conceptual similarity with team moral identity (i.e., both constructs imply "oneness" between team members), only team moral identity discusses moral and moral aspects of team functioning. Thus, we expect that team moral identity will demonstrate theoretical empirical distinctiveness from team identification. Furthermore, while we expect that both collective team identification and team moral identity predict team processes and outcomes that require strong coordination between team members, we believe that team moral identity will have a stronger and perhaps exclusive effect on team processes and outcomes that have moral implications, such as process conflict and team moral performance.

Finally, in this study we sought to assess the concurrent validity of team moral identity by examining its relationship with the hypothesized team-level phenomena, task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict, and team engagement.

Sample and Procedure

To examine our arguments, we recruited 183 participants using MTurk. To increase data quality, we solicited responses from the participants vetted by CloudResearch (Litman et al., 2017). Research participation was limited to working individuals residing in the United States who were at least 18 years old and were working in a team setting. The sample was 37.74% female, the average age was 39.09 (SD = 11.11), and the average team size was 8.23 (SD = 9.54). Participants received $1.20 in exchange for participating in the online survey.

Measures

Team moral identity and team engagement items were rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*, and the items measuring three forms of team conflict, ethical climates, and team identification were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree.*

Team moral identity. Team moral identity was assessed with the eight-item retained in Study 1 (α = .90 for conduct-oriented team moral identity, and α = .92 for outcome-oriented team moral identity).

Ethical climate. We assessed three forms of ethical climates, namely, caring, rules, and independence, using measures from Victor and Cullen (1988). The 4-item caring climate scale had a sample item that read, "The most important concern is the good of all the people in the company as a whole" (α = .89). The 4-item rules climate scale had a sample item that read, "It is very important to follow the company's rules and procedures here" (α = .84). Finally, the 3-item independence climate scale had a sample item that read, "The most important concern in this company is each person's own sense of right and wrong" (α = .81).

Team identification. Team identification was assessed with the 5-item measures adapted from Mael and Ashforth (1992). A sample item was, “my sense of self overlaps with the identity of this team” (α = .85).

Team engagement. Team engagement was assessed with the six items from Barrick et al. (2015) measure. An example item was, “My team members and I really throw ourselves into our work” (α = .90).

Task conflict. We have assessed team task conflict by adapting the items from Jehn (1995) and Shah and Jehn (1993). An example item was, “My team members experienced conflict of ideas” (α = .91).

Relationship conflict. Relationship conflict was assessed by using items from Jehn (1995) and Shah and Jehn (1993). A sample item was, “My team members experienced relationship tension that was not related to the task” (α = .90).

Process conflict. To assess process conflict, we adapted the items from Jehn (1995) and Shah and Jehn (1993). One example item was, "My team members had disagreements about who should do what" (α = .92).

Control variables. The current analyses included theoretically relevant control variables to rule out the plausible explanations of the current findings. To analyze the variance of team engagement, conflict, and performance, we controlled for the team size and interaction frequencies between members of the team, variables regularly associated with team-level outcomes (Mao et al., 2016). Given that we solicited responses from an individual's perception on team processes and outcomes, we also controlled for respondents' gender and team tenure (Behfar, Friedman, & Oh, 2016).

Results

Confirmatory factor analysis. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis consistent with the factor structure identified in Study 1, i.e., the ten-factor model of two forms of team moral identity together with eight other variables (team engagement, task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict, three forms of ethical climates, and team identification), observed variables loaded on the corresponding latent factors. The results demonstrated that the data had a good fit to the model (χ^2 (356) = 695.15, $p < .001$, CFI = .95, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .057, SRMR = .081). The specific items and CFA loadings are available from Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

We also conducted an alternative CFA on a plausible nine-factor model by loading all eight team moral identity items on a single latent factor. This alternative model exhibited a

significantly worse fit than the original model ($\Delta\chi^2$ test, $p < .001$). We also tested an alternative model treating three conflict variables loaded on a unitary latent factor, but then that model exhibited a significantly worse fit that the model that treated each conflict variable separately ($\Delta\chi^2$ test, $p < .001$). Finally, we tested alternative CFA models combining team moral identity and ethical climates and team identification, which also demonstrated a significantly worse fit than the original model, partially demonstrating the discriminant validity between these constructs ($\Delta\chi^2$ test, $p < .001$).

Hypothesis testing (incremental concurrent validity). Table 2 presents the mean values, standard deviations, and intercorrelations between the study variables and control variables. Results indicate that conduct-oriented team moral identity is positively correlated with caring climate ($r = .65$), rule climate ($r = .43$), independence climate ($r = .37$), and team identification ($r = .56$). Similarly, outcome-oriented team moral identity is positively correlated with caring climate ($r = .57$), rule climate ($r = .31$), independence climate ($r = .34$), and team identification ($r = .51$). The observed moderate correlations between team moral identity and these variables provide the initial evidence for convergent validity.

To assess the concurrent validity of two forms of team moral identity, we performed hierarchical regression analyses. In the first step, we included both types of team moral identity and control variables, namely, gender, team size, interaction frequency, and team tenure to predict team processes and outcomes (Brown et al., 2021). We also controlled for the effects of theoretically adjacent variables discussed above, namely, three forms of ethical climates (i.e., caring, rules, and independence climate) and team identification. Next, we introduced conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identities in the second step to evaluate the incremental validity of the team moral identity construct over demographic control variables,

ethical climate, and team identification. By doing so, we aimed to demonstrate that team moral identity has a unique contribution in explaining team processes and outcomes beyond these relevant variables.

Insert Tables 2 & 3 about here

Table 3 presents the results of regression analyses. As reported in Model 2 of Table 3, Both conduct-oriented moral identity (b = .27, p < .01) and outcome-oriented moral identity (b = .33, p < .01) were positively related to team engagement, supporting our Hypothesis 1. In Hypothesis 2, we predicted that outcome-oriented team moral identity is positively related to task conflict. Unlike our prediction, outcome-oriented team moral identity was not a significant predictor of task conflict (Model 4; b = .10, *ns*.). Conduct-oriented team moral identity was negatively related with both relationship conflict (Model 6; b = -.52, p < .01) and process conflict (Model 8; b = -.46, p < .01). Therefore, Hypotheses 3 and 4 were supported.

Discussion

In this study, we utilized confirmatory factor analysis results to once again confirm our hypothesized two-factor model of team moral identity. Also, we examined the concurrent validity of the team moral identity scale, and the results were generally supportive of our theoretical predictions. Consistent with our expectations, both conduct and outcome-oriented of team moral identity predicted team engagement, providing preliminary evidence that teams which consider morality integral to their identity are more likely to be engaged in, and derive both meaning and enjoyment from, their work. Furthermore, we found that conduct-oriented of team moral identity reduced the incidence of relationship and process conflicts, suggesting that

teams with a strong conduct-oriented of team moral identity may be capable of developing effective conflict resolution strategies to manage interpersonal and procedural conflicts, which typically impair team outcomes. Contrary to our expectations, outcome-oriented of team moral identity did not exhibit a significant correlation with task conflict. However, task conflict was negatively associated with conduct-oriented of team moral identity, reinforcing the inference about the conflict resolution strategy inherent in a strong conduct-oriented of team moral identity. It's worth noting, however, that our study presents several limitations, such as employing single respondents for team-level constructs, which we will address later in this manuscript.

After developing the measure of team moral identity and examining the preliminary test of its predictive validity, we conducted our next study with student teams. In Study 3, we collected team-level data and used external judges to evaluate team task performance.

Study 3: Team Moral Identity and Team Task Performance

Sample and Procedure

The present study recruited 584 undergraduate business students in 119 teams currently enrolled in a strategic management course at a public university in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. These students were participating in a team case competition called the business strategy competition, which required the student teams to propose a novel business strategy that addresses a management problem faced by a participating organization. In the second week of the academic term, students were randomly assigned to their project teams. Throughout the academic term, the student teams completed several assignments, such as presenting a new product development idea and a business simulation assignment. About halfway through the academic term (i.e., after 4 weeks), the student teams were given detailed

information about the target organization and its management problem. To ensure that the students had sufficient time to work on their project, we distributed the survey about a week before the competition. Hence, on average, student teams had about seven weeks to interact with each other and three weeks to work particularly on the business case competition. On the day of the competition, external judges were invited to evaluate the student teams' presentations.

Although the case competition was a required element of the course, participation in the study was voluntary. Each student team consisted of four to six members, with an average team size of 4.91 (SD = 0.34), and an average of 3.82 students (SD = 1.13) responding per team. The sample included 54.72% female participants, with an average age of 21.74 (SD = 2.42).

Measures

The participants completed the survey questionnaire approximately a week before the scheduled day of the competition. Their performance was evaluated by a panel of three external judges, including an insider from the target company, a strategy consultant, and an academic expert in the field of strategic management. The survey questionnaires were rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*, unless otherwise specified.

Team moral identity. We adopted the team moral identity measures we developed from Study 1 and 2. Both conduct-oriented (α = 90; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .86, ICC(1) = .24, ICC(2) = .50, F = 2.01, p < .001) and outcome-oriented (α = .95; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .77, ICC(1) = .14, ICC(2) = .34, F = 1.51, p < .01) team moral identity demonstrated acceptable levels of aggregate statistics, indicating consensus among members and justifying their aggregations.

Team engagement. Team engagement was assessed with the same five items from Barrick et al. (2015). This measure has shown acceptable levels of aggregate statistics (α = .90; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .86, ICC(1) = .37, ICC(2) = .65, F = 2.87, p < .001).

Task conflict. We have used the same three-item measure of task conflict from Study 2 from Jehn (1995) and Shah and Jehn (1993). This measure has shown acceptable levels of aggregate statistics (α = .90; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .74, ICC(1) = .27, ICC(2) = .54, F = 2.18, p < .001).

Relationship conflict. The same relationship conflict items by Jehn (1995) and Shah and Jehn (1993) were used (α = .90). This measure has shown acceptable levels of aggregate statistics (α = .90; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .81, ICC(1) = .29, ICC(2) = .56, F = 2.27, p < .001).

Process conflict. We used the three-item measures of process conflict we used in Study 2 to measure this construct (Jehn, 1995; Shah and Jehn, 1993) (α = .92). This measure has shown acceptable levels of aggregate statistics (α = .90; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .72, ICC(1) = .17, ICC(2) = .39, F = 1.64, p < .001).

Team task performance. External judges evaluated the performance of each team based on a comprehensive set of metrics, which included assessing the quality and innovativeness of the proposed business strategy, the team's analytic and presentation skills, and the coherence, feasibility, and persuasiveness of the overall proposal. The evaluation criteria were used to assign a total score ranging from 7 to 63.

Control variables. Throughout the analyses, we controlled for the effects of team size, average work hours, and female percentage of a team, which are covariates accounted for in team studies (e.g., Apesteguia, Azmat, & Iriberri, 2012; Mao et al., 2016). We have also controlled for the effect of individual moral identity aggregated at the team level.

Results

Confirmatory factor analysis. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using two forms of team moral identity, team engagement, task conflict, relationship conflict, and process conflict. The results demonstrated that the data had a good fit to the model (χ^2 (194)

= 369.92, $p < .001$, CFI = .973, TLI = .968, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .04). We also conducted an alternative CFA on a plausible five-factor model by loading all eight team moral identity items on a single latent factor. However, this alternative model exhibited a significantly worse fit than the original model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 587.32$, $p < .001$).

Hypothesis testing. The mean values, standard deviations, and intercorrelations between study variables and control variables are reported in Table 4. As an initial piece of evidence, both conduct team moral identity ($r = .33$) and outcome team moral identity ($r = .28$) had a positive correlation with team performance rated by external judges. Both conduct team moral identity and outcome team moral identity exhibited similar relationships with our criterion, namely, team engagement ($r = .70$ and .62 for conduct and outcome team moral identity), task conflict ($r = -.36$ and -.39 for conduct and outcome team moral identity), relationship conflict ($r = -.45$ and -.32 for conduct and outcome team moral identity), and process conflict ($r = -.39$ and -.28 for conduct and outcome team moral identity).

Insert Tables 4 & 5 about here

We conducted a set of regression analyses to test the effects of two forms of team moral identity on our four team process variables and team task performance. We first entered the control variables into the regression equations, and then analyzed the effect of two forms of team moral identity. The analytic results are summarized in Table 5.

Hypothesis 1 predicts that both conduct ($b = .68$, $p < .01$) and outcome team moral identity ($b = .24$, $p < .05$) are positively correlated with team engagement, which was confirmed by our analysis. Hypothesis 2 explains that outcome team moral identity is positively related to

task conflict. Contrary to our prediction, outcome team moral identity had a negative relationship with task conflict (b = -.31, p < .05). Hypotheses 4 and 5 predict that conduct team moral identity is negatively related to relationship and process conflict, respectively. Supporting our prediction, conduct team moral identity had a negative relationship with both relationship conflict (b = -.53, p < .01) and process conflict (b = -.48, p < .01). Finally, we predicted that both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity will have a positive relationship with team task performance. Partially supporting our prediction, conduct team moral identity (b = 3.67, p < .05), but not outcome team moral identity (b = .61, ns), was a positive predictor of team task performance.

Discussion

This study aimed to replicate and build upon Study 2 by conducting a CFA and similar regression analyses with active teams and an objective performance measure. The results support our hypothesis that both forms of team moral identity have distinct effects on several critical team processes and outcomes, including team engagement, task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict, and team task performance, ultimately improving overall team functioning and effectiveness. Interestingly, when both forms of team moral identity were entered together in the regression equation, only the conduct-oriented team moral identity demonstrated a significant correlation with team performance. This finding is noteworthy because it challenges conventional stereotypes that suggest focusing on moral rules and regulations has a negative impact on economic performance (e.g., Bird & Waters, 1989). Instead, it indicates that adherence to rules and procedures can actually assist teams in effectively coordinating their efforts, thereby contributing to strong team performance (e.g., Bird & Waters, 1989). This

finding is particularly compelling given that the proxy to team performance was evaluated by experts from the field who were blind to the study's hypotheses and objectives.

Whereas this study offered numerous benefits, it was not without limitations. For example, while the data was temporally separated, it was nevertheless from the same source and cross-sectional, which makes it difficult for us to establish causality. To address this limitation, we developed Study 4, which employs an experimental approach to test our hypotheses and further explore the effects of team moral identity on both moral and non-moral aspects of team performance. Additionally, this study afforded an opportunity to collect data on Hypotheses 6 and 7, which examine the relationships between two forms of team moral identity and a team's creative and moral performance.

Study 4: Team Moral Identity and Different Aspects of Team Outcomes via Experiment

In this study, we sought to test the effect of conduct-oriented team moral identity on team in-role or task performance (i.e., Hypotheses 5) in a controlled experimental context using student teams. We also tested the effects of team moral identity on two important team outcomes, team creativity and team moral performance (i.e., Hypotheses 6 & 7).

Sample

We recruited 363 undergraduate business students enrolled at a public university located in the Pacific Northwest area in the United States. Students voluntarily participated in the study for management course credit. Students were registered to participate in a work team of three people (n = 121). The sample was 49.3% female, and the average age was 21.6 (*SD* = 2.62).

Design and Procedure

The study employed a between-subjects design with a single factor of three different levels: conduct-oriented team moral identity (n = 37), outcome-oriented team moral identity (n =

40), and an equivalent control condition (i.e., a team identity without moral content) (n = 44). Because of the COVID-19 pandemic at the time we administered the study, we conducted this study in an online setting using a videotelephony proprietary software Zoom. After logging into the study link, participants were randomly assigned to a work team of three people and then were sent to a private online discussion room. Once there, participants in the team moral identity conditions watched a short lecture video about successful teamwork, which manipulated the importance of either conduct-oriented or outcome-oriented moral values in achieving successful teamwork. The dialogue in each video were structurally similar varying only on the type of moral values considered. Each video lasted for about 2 minutes and 30 seconds. Participants in the control condition watched a video that discussed the importance of coordination between team members. To strengthen the experimental manipulation, participants were instructed to create a team name and mission statement that reflected their collective identity and goals.

The primary team task was adapted from Goncalo and Duguid (2012). Participants were asked to brainstorm ideas about how to use the empty office space in the university's student center. Participants were first requested to create as many solutions as possible within 10 minutes. They were then asked to rank order their top five ideas within five minutes. Finally, participants were given eight minutes to elaborate on their best idea and to develop a plan for implementing that idea. After the team activity, participants left their discussion room and responded to the individual survey. Finally, participants were debriefed.

Following the research procedure, we recruited independent evaluators from Prolific Academic to assess the creativity and moral status of the final ideas submitted by each team (Berg, 2016). On average, 8.53 (SD = .97) evaluators were randomly assigned to each team.

Measures

Team task performance. Team in-role task performance was measured as the number of ideas submitted during the brainstorming stage.

Team creative output. The final idea the team submitted was utilized to generate a measure of team creative performance. Third-party evaluators responded to the following three items to assess the creativity of the submitted idea: "The plan involves new solutions to the problem," "The plan proposes useful solutions to the problem, " and "The plan is a creative solution to the empty space problem" (1= *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree; a = .83,* $r_{wg(j)}$ = .64).

Team moral performance. Evaluators also provided a measure of team moral performance. Evaluators reviewed the teams' submitted idea and responded to the following two items: "The plan considers ethical aspects to this decision," "The plan is trying to achieve ethical results," and "The plan would not violate any ethical or moral principles" (1= *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree; a = .83,* $r_{wg(j)}$ = .71).

Results

Manipulation check. To ensure the efficacy of the team moral identity manipulation, participants were presented five conduct-oriented (i.e., tolerance of each other, honesty, respect of each other, caring of each other, and fairness) and five outcome-oriented (i.e., being socially impactful, committing to making a difference, benefiting others, being a positive force for good, and helpful to others) moral values. They were then asked to select the five moral values that they focused on and hoped to demonstrate together as a team during the exercise. According to the ANOVA results ($F(2, 118) = 314.5$, $p < .001$, *Cohen's f* = 2.31), the manipulation was effective as teams that were assigned to the conduct-oriented team moral identity selected significantly more of the conduct-oriented moral values ($M = 4.63$, $SD = .85$) than did teams

assigned to outcome-oriented moral identity condition (M = .08, SD = .27; p < .001) or control condition (M = 2.65, SD = 1.03; p < .001). Also, teams that were assigned to outcome-oriented team moral identity condition (F(2, 118) = 314.1, p < .001, *Cohen's f* = 2.31) selected significantly more of the outcome-oriented moral values (M = 4.92, SD = .27) than did teams assigned to conduct-oriented moral identity condition (M = .34, SD = .84; p < .001) or control condition (M = 2.15, SD = 1.06; p < .001).

Although we intentionally chose a team task devoid of moral implications, students assigned to the team moral identity conditions generated ideas with moral dimensions. Examples include establishing a thrift shop to promote sustainability, creating a social innovation lab to benefit the local community, and setting up a food pantry to support students in need. These unexpected results lend additional validity to the effectiveness of our experimental manipulation.

Main analyses. We conducted a series of between-subject analyses of variance to test our theoretical hypotheses. In Hypothesis 5, we proposed that conduct-oriented team moral identity is positively related to team task performance. Partially supporting our predictions (F(2, 118) = 3.28, p < .05, *Cohen's f* = .24), teams in the conduct-oriented identity condition (M = 20.08, SD = 7.39) created significantly more ideas compared with teams in the outcome-oriented identity condition (M = 16.44, SD = 5.61; p < .05), but not significantly more than teams in the control condition (M = 19.2, SD = 7.09; *ns.*). We then tested Hypothesis 6, which posited the positive association between outcome-oriented team moral identity and team creativity. Partially supporting our prediction (F(2, 118) = 3.46, p < .05, *Cohen's f* = .24), ideas submitted by teams in the outcome-oriented identity condition (M = 3.81, SD = 0.45) were evaluated to be more creative than those submitted by teams in the control condition (M = 3.56, SD = 0.39; p < .05) but not more than the teams in the conduct-oriented identity condition (M = 3.64, SD = 0.45, *ns.*).

We then tested Hypothesis 7, which posited the positive association between both forms of team moral identity and team morality. Partially supporting our prediction ($F(2, 118) = 7.05$, $p < .01$, *Cohen's f* = .35), ideas submitted by teams in the outcome-oriented identity condition ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.54$; $p < .05$) and teams in the conduct-oriented identity condition ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 0.47$; $p < .05$) were evaluated to be more moral than those submitted by teams in the control condition ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.43$). The difference between the conduct-oriented identity condition and the outcome-oriented identity condition was not significant (*ns.*), indicating that the perceived level of morality in the ideas generated under both conditions was similar according to third-party evaluators. Furthermore, these levels of morality exceeded those of the ideas generated by teams in the control condition.

Insert Table 5 about here

Discussion

In this study, we demonstrated that conduct- and outcome-oriented team moral identities have distinct effects on different team-level outcomes, namely, team task, creative, and moral performances. The result demonstrated that having a team identity centered around morality had additional performance and social benefits beyond those generated by having a general oneness and cohesiveness between team members. This result is interesting given stereotypical notions that moral values can hinder critical workplace outcomes (e.g., Bird & Waters, 1989).

Although we employed teams of business students to examine the proposed hypotheses, the participants were relatively young and therefore this study might not be generalizable to working adults. Furthermore, the student project teams only existed for 40 minutes, which

represents a vastly different context compared with real teams in an organizational setting. In essence, while our objective was to experimentally prime and manipulate distinct forms of team moral identity, it is possible that the development of a collective identity, considering morality as a core feature of a team necessitates more time. To overcome this limitation, we conducted a fifth study in a field context. This study tested our theoretical hypotheses and strengthened the external validity and generalizability of the overall findings (Chatman & Flynn, 2005).

Study 5: Hypotheses Testing via Field Research

Sample

To further empirically test our theoretical framework, we collected data from a chain of pharmacies located in an East Asian Country. We initially distributed the survey packets to 94 team leaders (i.e., store managers) and 369 team members (i.e., store employees). We then received completed survey questionnaires from 90 team leaders and 290 team members. The final sample of members consisted of 86.6% females with an average organizational tenure of 6.57 years (SD = 3.63) and an average age of 35.47 years (SD = 7.43). Team leaders included 94.7% females with an average organizational tenure of 6.44 years (SD = 3.92) and an average age of 34.04 years (SD = 6.81). The average team size was 3.93.

Measures

We collected data from three different sources to reduce common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Team members reported team moral identity and team process variables at time 1, which include task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict, and team engagement. Team leaders reported their teams' outcome variable, team moral performance, at time 2 four weeks later. After four more weeks, at time 3, we collected each team's objective

performance indicator for task performance, i.e., monthly sales volumes at the team level (i.e., store level). If not noted, items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*. The full list of measures is separately presented in Appendix.

Team Moral Identity. Employees responded to the team moral identity measures developed in Studies 1 and 2. Both conduct-oriented (α =.87; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .93, ICC(1) = .35, ICC(2) = .63, F = 2.68, p = .001) and outcome-oriented (α =.89; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .92, ICC(1) = .38, ICC(2) = .66, F = 2.91, p = .001) team moral identity demonstrated acceptable levels of aggregate statistics, indicating consensus among members and justifying their aggregations.

Team Conflict. We measured three different types of team conflict commonly discussed from the literature, i.e., task, relationship, and process conflict. Employees responded to the same task (α =.82; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .82, ICC(1) = .53, ICC(2) = .78, F = 4.52, p < .001), relationship (α =.66; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .83, ICC(1) = .50, ICC(2) = .76, F = 4.08, p < .001), and process (α =.86; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .86, ICC(1) = .57, ICC(2) = .80, F = 5.11, p < .001) conflict items adopted from Jehn (1995) and Shah and Jehn (1993) that we used in Studies 2 and 3. All three types of conflict demonstrated acceptable levels of aggregate statistics, justifying the aggregation of these measures at the team-level.

Team Engagement. Team engagement was assessed by employees with the same five-item measure that we used in Studies 2 and 3 (Barrick et al., 2015). The items demonstrated the acceptable levels of aggregate statistics (α =.83; $r_{wg(j)}$ = .95, ICC(1) = .47, ICC(2) = .74, F = 3.82, p < .001).

Team moral performance. We used a three-item measure of team moral performance adapted from team OCB measures used in Hu and Liden (2015). The sample items included: "Members of this team are considerate of each other and their ideas and work," "Members of this

team are truthful to each other," and "Members of this team are always fair in their dealings with each other (α =.84)."

Team task Performance. We collected the monthly sales volume of each branch as an indicator for team task performance.

Control variables. We controlled for several theoretically important demographic control variables used in team studies, which include team size (Mao et al., 2016), female percentage (Apesteguia et al., 2012), average age and age diversity (Timmerman, 2000).

Results

Confirmatory factor analysis. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis referring to the factor structure identified in Study 1, i.e., the six-factor model that includes two forms of team moral identity together with other study variables, namely, team engagement, task conflict, relationship conflict, and process conflict. The results demonstrated that the data had an acceptable fit to the model (χ^2 (194) = 523.82, $p < .001$, CFI = .91, TLI = .89, RMSEA = .077, SRMR = .057). We also conducted an alternative CFA on a plausible five-factor model by loading all eight team moral identity items on a single latent factor. This alternative model exhibited a significantly worse fit than the original model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 161.37$, $p < .001$).

We attempted to conduct Harman's One Factor test to evaluate the potential effect of method bias. However, the model failed to converge due to its increased complexity.

Analyses. The mean values, standard deviations, and intercorrelations between study variables and control variables are reported in Table 7.

Insert Tables 7 & 8 about here

We conducted a set of regression analyses to test the effects of two forms of team moral identity on related team processes (i.e., task, relationship, process conflict, and team engagement) and team outcomes (i.e., team moral and team task performance). The analytic results are summarized in Table 8. Contrary to our predictions, our proxy for team performance, specifically, sales volume, did not display a significant correlation with either conduct team moral identity (r = .15) or outcome team moral identity (r = .19). Interestingly, though not hypothesized, both team engagement (r = .26) and team moral behavior (r = .24) showed a positive and significant correlation with sales volume at the store level.

Hypothesis 1, which states that both forms of team moral identity are positively related to task engagement, is supported (b = .26, p = .05 and b = .27, p < .05 for conduct and outcome team moral identity, respectively). Hypothesis 2 indicates that task conflict is positively related to outcome team moral identity, yet this relationship is not supported (b = -.26, *ns.*). Hypothesis 3 indicates that relationship conflict is negatively predicted by conduct team moral identity, and this hypothesis is supported (b = -.48, p < .05). Hypothesis 4 predicts that conduct team moral identity and process conflict are negatively related. However, this relationship was not supported (b = -.33, *ns.*). The relationships between conduct and outcome team moral identity and sales volume, i.e., team task performance, were not significant (b = 5813.0, *ns.* and b = 14145.0, *ns.* for conduct and outcome team moral identity), not supporting our prediction from Hypothesis 5. In Hypothesis 7, we predicted that both conduct team moral identity and outcome team moral identity would have a positive relationship with team moral performance. However, contrary to our prediction, neither conduct team moral identity (b = .19, *ns.*) nor outcome team moral identity (b = -.24, *ns.*) showed a significant relationship with team moral performance.

Post-hoc analytic results. In addition to testing our main effect hypotheses, we also examined potential indirect relationships (i.e., mediation), between conduct- and outcome-oriented team moral identity, team engagement, and sales volume. Specifically, we examined the relationships where both forms of team moral identity were the independent variables, task engagement was the mediator, and sales volume was the outcome variable. We used the bootstrapping method to test this relationship as it increases the accuracy of statistical inferences and corrects bias in parameter estimates (Preacher & Hayes, 2008; Wood, 2005). As we did in our main analyses, we controlled for the effects of team size, female percentage, gender diversity, average age, and age diversity of the team. The bootstrapping procedure showed significant indirect effects for both conduct team moral identity (*indirect effect* = 6407.08, 95% CI [431.74, 18194.09]) and outcome team moral identity (*indirect effect* = 6505.52, 95% CI [486.62, 18074.47]), which complement our main effect hypotheses.

Discussion

In this study, we examined the relationship between two forms of team moral identity (i.e., conduct and outcome team moral identity) and team processes and outcomes in drug store branches operating in an East Asian context. Our findings indicate that both forms of team moral identity were positively related to team engagement, which in turn led to an increase in store-level sales volume. Additionally, conduct-oriented team moral identity was found to have a negative relationship with relationship conflict, a common interpersonal process that can impede effective team functioning. While not all of our hypotheses were supported, cultural differences might explain this result. For example, the moral values emphasized in Western versus East Asian contexts may differ, and this could have influenced the interpretation of study items despite our efforts to ensure accuracy through a double-blind translation procedure.

The concept of cultural tightness and looseness may provide other valuable insights into the relationship between team moral identity and its outcomes (Gelfand, Nishii, & Raver, 2006). In particular, it is observed that Asian cultures generally display a higher degree of cultural tightness. Cultural tightness refers to societies characterized by strong social norms, strict rules, and a greater emphasis on conformity, with less acceptance of behaviors that deviate from established norms. Consequently, the samples taken from the current teams might display consistently higher levels of conduct-oriented team moral identity, resulting in reduced variability among the teams that can be analyzed.

Given these possibilities, future research should consider the impact of cultural factors on the relationship between team moral identity and team outcomes. For example, our key variable, team moral identity, had relatively low levels of variance (SD = .46 and .49 for conduct and outcome team moral identity, respectively). This could have contributed to some of the unsupported results. In other words, because the teams in our sample underwent standardized onboarding and training procedures, it's possible that there wasn't enough variation in team moral identity levels to detect its impact on relevant team processes and outcomes. Similarly, we believe that future research could be enriched by sampling teams from different settings or implementing a field experiment with an intervention to aid teams in restructuring their identities around moral characteristics, providing a contrast with teams in the control condition.

General Discussion

This paper focuses on the conceptualization of team moral identity, the development of scale items to reliably measure this construct, and the relationships between team moral identity and several workplace outcomes such as team conflict, team engagement, and team's moral and non-moral outcomes. The findings from this research support the notion that a collective identity

focused on morality as a central feature might emerge in work teams, and that this identity's effects can vary depending on the moral values, principles, and ideals that the team considers to be central, distinctive, and enduring characteristics of their collective self-concept. We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of this research and the potential future research endeavor that we recommend.

Theoretical Contributions

This paper makes several contributions to the literature. First, this study contributes to the collective identity literature by examining the theoretical dynamics centered on moral identity at the collective team level. The collective identity literature, particularly the team identity literature, has largely focused on examining a generalized team identity that highlights the oneness between team members and constituents (Ozeki, 2015). In this study, by conceptualizing conduct- and outcome-oriented team moral identity, we demonstrate that a team collective identity can have unique implications on various team phenomena depending on its distinctive subject matter. On a related note, team identification literature often tests the influences of the identification processes on individuals' thoughts and behaviors focusing primarily on the sense of belongingness and oneness to their team (Ozeki, 2015). We argue that the literature might benefit more by examining the specific subject matters of the preceding collective team identity in probing the relationship between the team identification process and individual work outcomes.

Second, this work extends the moral identity literature specifically and the behavioral ethics literature generally by introducing and empirically demonstrating that a moral identity can exist at the team level, above and beyond that of individual identities. While the influence of moral identity at the individual level is well documented, we have demonstrated that the moral

identity of teams influences various workplace outcomes ranging from team processes, such as conflict and engagement, to team outcomes, such as task performance and creativity. Furthermore, by conceptualizing team moral identity in two forms, we have demonstrated that the implications of team moral identity on workplace outcomes can differ depending on the set of the values that a team regards as part of their defining characteristics. In terms of the broader behavioral ethics literature, these findings suggest that the moral identity of a team has meaningful implications on moral and ethical outcomes and beyond. Moreover, these results demonstrate that abiding by moral procedures and goals can be beneficial for the organization, demonstrating that team moral identity is an important and worthwhile construct to investigate and cultivate within teams. Given that the team is a fundamental unit for identifying and completing complicated work procedures, this finding is very meaningful and potentially very impactful.

Third, this research complements existing works on teams by focusing on moral elements of team behaviors. Although a number of team studies have used a referent-shift approach to conceptualize a team's emergent properties comparable to their individual counterparts, scholars have rarely considered a team's collective moral characteristics (Dasborough et al., 2020). By demonstrating that a team's moral quality can impact how team members are engaged in their core tasks (i.e., team engagement) and consequently impact their performance (e.g., sales volume), both subjectively and objectively understood, this study indicates that scholars should delve more deeply into the implications of the collective moral attitudes and behaviors of teams.

Future Research

This research opens numerous opportunities for future investigation. First, although our focus has primarily been on exploring the downstream consequences of having a team moral

identity in this paper, an important question to consider is what critical antecedents contribute to the emergence of different forms of team moral identity. Existing research on emergent processes suggests that interactive processes between team members ultimately contribute to the development of higher-level constructs such as a team moral identity (Morgeson & Hofmann, 1999). Therefore, a longitudinal study that tracks the process of how a team moral identity emerges within a team would be an interesting research agenda to pursue.

While our aim was to develop an initial construct and theory around team moral identity, we did not focus on creating a complex research model involving potential contextual contingencies and process variables that could explain when and why a team moral identity impacts critical team processes and outcomes. Although our post-hoc analysis from Study 5 suggests a potential mediation between team moral identity, team engagement, and team performance, we believe that there are several other theoretical angles that can explain this phenomenon. For example, other important team processes, such as team inclusivity, psychological safety, and trust climate, might explain the effect of team moral identity on critical team outcomes, such as team performance, moral voice, and turnover. Future research should explore these possibilities.

In addition, future studies on team moral identity could benefit from considering alternative conceptualizations of identity. Leach and colleagues (2008) suggested that in-group identification has multiple components in addition to centrality, including self-stereotyping, satisfaction, and solidarity. While we focused on centrality as the critical factor driving team-level outcomes, other components of the identification process could also affect team processes and team behaviors. To the extent that a team's identity is understood as its similarity to model moral teams (e.g., self-stereotyping), for example, the implications of a team moral identity

could be quite different. While care needs to be taken to recognize the unique aspects of a team identity viz a vis individual identity, different components of identification specified in the identification literature could add a great deal to this discussion.

In addition, we believe that investigating the interaction between team moral identity and individual moral identity is an interesting topic to pursue. Given that there can be a gap between individuals' self-importance of morality and the extent to which their team regards moral values as part of their defining characteristics, the way a team member navigates this gap can be an intriguing future research question. Although we have defined two different forms of team moral identity based on the two most prevalent moral theories discussed in the literature, we believe that a team moral identity might take on different content as well. A team could build up their collective moral identity by referencing certain values regarded in virtue ethics, such as moral courage. Different forms of team moral identity might have varying effects on subsequent team processes and outcomes.

Limitations

This research is not without limitations. To begin, in this manuscript, we did not examine how team moral identity is created and developed over time. The definition of team moral identity highlights its enduring nature, implying that team moral identity might have distinct implications on team processes and outcomes depending on the different stages of team development. However, our results from Study 3 & 5 provide merely partial blueprints as it examines the effect of team moral identity on team processes and outcomes using a cross-sectional approach. Future research should take the longitudinal approach and examine the effects of team moral identity on team processes and outcomes over time.

Also, we have primarily focused on team-level dynamics revolving around team moral identity. However, the theory of the emergence of collective construct posits that a collective structure stems from interactions and relational patterns of individuals (Morgeson & Hofmann, 1999). Future research can benefit by considering and testing potential upward theoretical relationships, in a way that examines individual members' influences on the emergence and perpetuation of team moral identity. Furthermore, examining the organizational influences, such as the effects of organizational moral guidelines on team moral identity, is an interesting way to expand the present research as well.

While we adhered to the methodology outlined by existing studies (e.g., Brown et al., 2022) to guide our validation process, we propose that additional empirical research could help bolster the reliability and validity of the measure. For instance, incorporating a sample of real teams into the content validation process could further supplement our Study 1 findings. Additionally, engaging a panel of experts in the field to evaluate our team-oriented moral values could also enhance the validity of our measure.

Furthermore, the empirical section of this paper does not provide evidence supporting each hypothesis across all studies, as illustrated in Table 10. we suggest three potential reasons for this discrepancy. The first is tied to cultural differences, particularly in Study 5, which involved teams from an East Asian setting. Given East Asia's unique cultural attributes and distinct moral theories, it's plausible that East Asian work teams might espouse different moral values and interpretations. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the potential influence of cultural tightness as a broader cultural dimension on how teams approach a different set of moral values (e.g., conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented moral values). This factor should be taken into careful consideration in future empirical studies. Second, the divergent outcomes could be

explained by the distinct team contexts and characteristics across our samples. For instance, our student teams from Study 3 were tasked with formulating a business strategy, while the working adults in Study 5 were primarily focused on maintaining a pharmaceutical branch. These differing task characteristics and goals could explain the varied results. Therefore, when designing future studies, it is essential to take into account various team characteristics such as team longevity, the level of task and outcome interdependence, and potentially the diversity of team members. Considering these factors will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship under investigation. Finally, statistical artifacts might contribute to some of the inconsistent findings, as high correlations were observed between the conduct and outcome-oriented team moral identity across our studies. Future research could utilize alternative survey presentation methods to determine if this has an impact on the results.

Practical Implications

We believe that the findings from this research offer important messages for business practice. Despite generalized beliefs that pursuing moral values and ideals hampers teams in their pursuit of business goals, our findings indicate that having a strong team moral identity can benefit work teams by mitigating team conflict and improving team performance. Accordingly, we believe that team leaders can take advantage of these opportunities by creating teams and team environments that cherish moral values and principles contingent upon their team goals and characteristics (Kuenzi et al., 2020). For example, a supervisor of an institutional review board team might emphasize procedural values, principles, and ideals to invoke procedural team moral identity, thereby improving the team's capacity to address review requests from researchers both thoroughly and efficiently. These practical implications highlight the importance of integrating moral considerations within team dynamics, as it can have positive effects on both individual

team members and overall team outcomes. By promoting a strong team moral identity, organizations can foster a work environment that values ethics, promotes collaboration, and enhances performance.

An additional practical application of this research can be identified in the fields of human resources and organizational development. For instance, in training and development, HR professionals could design onboarding programs to emphasize and reinforce the team's shared moral values and principles, thereby strengthening the team's moral identity. Moreover, these insights equip us with the means to devise strategic moral interventions, particularly crucial in times of team conflict or crisis, a proposition underscored by recent lapses in corporate ethics. Grasping the concept that a team's moral identity can dampen conflict and boost performance bestows team leaders and supervisors with a strategic edge. This advantage can manifest as increased trust and cooperation within the team, heightened employee retention, an augmented corporate reputation, and perhaps, an enhanced collective resilience against potential challenges or setbacks. Leaders can leverage this understanding to align their teams along shared moral principles, thereby preempting or reducing the impact of interpersonal challenges within their teams.

Conclusion

As organizations are highly apt to consider ethical and moral issues as part of their daily operations, including sustainability, equality, and inclusion, the ethics and morals of work teams that perform critical decision-making tasks are also important. We defined and developed the construct of team moral identity and validated a measure of the construct. We also demonstrated preliminary evidence showing that having a team that considers moral values and characteristics as their central and distinctive attributes is different from having a team of very moral people,

both theoretically and empirically. We hope this research functions as a starting point for future research to examine more about theoretical dynamics focusing on team morality and the functions of moral values in group life.

CHAPTER 4

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This dissertation set out to explore the critical, yet largely unconsidered, topic of team moral identity. By developing and validating a measure of team moral identity, I have generated valuable insights into the effects of morality on team dynamics and have established a foundation for future research on the topic. This conclusion summarizes the key findings and contributions of this research, discusses the theoretical and practical implications of this work, and identifies promising directions for future research.

Key Findings

The dissertation first theorized and then empirically demonstrated that team moral identity is a distinct construct that significantly influences a wide range of team processes and outcomes. The extensive theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 is important because it details the specific structure of a moral identity and explains how this structure is tightly intertwined with antecedents that ultimately give rise to a team moral identity. For example, to the extent that a team uses moral language that focuses on the moral values associated with moral processes or moral consequences, the team is more likely not only to develop a team identity, but also to develop a moral identity associated with either moral conduct our moral outcomes. Furthermore, the theoretical discussion makes it clear that different forms of moral identity yield different outcomes for the team, as a conduct-oriented identity will have a unique relationship with turnover while outcome-oriented identity will impact extra-role performance. Thus, a team moral identity is important both because of its general impact as a shared understanding of the self, and also because of the nuanced effects its specific forms can cause.

Empirically speaking, the studies conducted in Chapter 3 are significant for several reasons. First, the research establishes a valid and reliable method for measuring a team moral identity. This is a critical outcome in the short-term because it allows for the immediate testing

of the arguments made in the dissertation. This outcome is also important in the long-term as the measures provide a means for exploring as of yet unasked questions regarding the moral aspects of teams. Of course, future research, particularly studies conducted in contexts outside Western culture, could gain from implementing additional tests to examine the validity of the measurements used. Testing further constructs to ensure the discriminant validity of these measurements might also prove beneficial. Additionally, modifying some items to better reflect cultural differences, such as societal tightness or looseness, would be recommended.

In addition, this empirical work establishes several critical relationships. For example, the results demonstrate that both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity positively relate to important team phenomena, including team engagement, with conduct-oriented team moral identity being negatively associated with team relationship and process conflict. Furthermore, the findings indicated that conduct-oriented team moral identity positively impacts team task performance, while outcome-oriented team moral identity indirectly affects team task performance through enhanced team engagement. Additionally, both forms of team moral identity were positively associated with team moral performance, and outcome-oriented team moral identity positively impacted a team's creative performance. Generally speaking, these findings are critically important because they testify to the validity of the scales and the predictive value of the construct, which suggests that this study has created a viable path for a great deal of additional research in the future.

Contributions

This dissertation contributes to the existing literature in several ways. First, by extending the concept of moral identity to the team level, this dissertation contributes to that literature by demonstrating that a moral identity can have substantial effects on workplace outcomes beyond

individual employees. This extension of moral identity from individual to team level aligns with the growing importance of teams in modern organizations and emphasizes the need for a team-based approach to moral psychology. By exploring the construct of team moral identity, this research provides a more comprehensive understanding of how collective moral values can shape various aspects of team dynamics and performance. Moreover, this transition to a team-level perspective permits the exploration of emergent moral properties within teams, properties arising from member interactions as they respond to the team's moral imperatives. As these properties might not be evident at the individual level, this is an opportunity to develop a richer and more nuanced view of the interplay between morality and team functionality. In this light, this dissertation contributes to both the moral psychology and team literature by highlighting the importance of considering the role of shared moral values in shaping team behavior and outcomes, offering new insights and directions for future research in these areas.

Second, this research contributes to the collective identity literature. By focusing on the content of team moral identity and considering the specific moral values and traits within a team's identity, this dissertation introduces a common content and/or criterion, i.e., morality, that is comparable across different teams and organizations. This approach offers a deeper understanding of the identity phenomena in general, as it underscores the importance of examining the specific content within a team's identity rather than merely considering a generalized form of team identity. By differentiating between conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity, this dissertation uncovers distinct implications for various team outcomes and processes, revealing the intricacies and complexities associated with moral aspects of team identity. This common content also allows for a more consistent comparison and assessment of team moral identity across a wide range of contexts, contributing to the broader

literature on identity, moral psychology, and team dynamics. Furthermore, this focus on the content of team moral identity paves the way for future research aimed at understanding the diverse ways in which moral considerations can shape team behavior, decision-making, and overall performance, ultimately enriching our knowledge of the role that morality plays in shaping the functioning of teams in organizations.

Lastly, this dissertation makes a valuable contribution to the behavioral ethics literature by comprehensively examining the effects of team moral identity on a wide range of both moral and non-moral outcomes, highlighting the far-reaching and significant theoretical implications of team moral identity for essential organizational outcomes. Exploring the diverse effects of conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity on outcomes such as team moral performance, team task performance, team creative performance, and team turnover, expands our understanding of how the moral aspects of team identity can influence various aspects of team functioning.

Practical Implications

The findings from this dissertation offer several practical implications for team leaders, managers, and organizations. First, team leaders can make strategic decisions to develop different forms of team moral identity that match their team's task to achieve strong performance while maintaining moral legitimacy. By understanding the nuanced differences between conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented moral identities, leaders can foster a team process and/or routine that aligns with the desired objectives, ensuring that the team's moral compass is consistent with its overall mission and goals. This tailored approach to team moral identity development not only enhances team cohesion and motivation but also contributes to improved decision-making

processes and overall performance in a morally responsible manner while achieving various forms of non-moral performance goals.

Second, this research suggests that hiring decisions should consider applicants' moral orientations as part of the criteria, as moral fit between members and a team can significantly affect performance. By paying attention to the moral values and inclinations of potential team members, organizations can build teams with strong moral foundations that align with their collective identity. This alignment not only promotes a positive team culture and cohesive work environment but also reduces the likelihood of conflicts and moral breaches, ultimately leading to improved team performance and long-term organizational success.

Lastly, these results indicate that team leaders and supervisors should be mindful of their communication and language usage, as their practices can influence team moral identity and subsequent team outcomes. If leaders actively promote the use of moral language and engage in moral discussions, they can cultivate a shared understanding of moral values and principles within the team. This conscious attention to moral communication can foster the development of a strong team moral identity, which in turn has been shown to positively impact a range of team outcomes, such as task performance, creative performance, and moral performance. By emphasizing the importance of moral considerations in team interactions, leaders can create a supportive and morally-driven environment that encourages collaboration, innovation, and success.

Future Research

This dissertation provides a solid foundation for future research on team moral identity. Potential avenues for exploration include examining the effects of team moral identity with different contents, such as various moral values, moral characters, or even ethical leaders or

coworkers as role models. Diving deeper into the nuances of these factors and their interplay with team moral identity could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of team morality and its effects on team dynamics and performance.

Additionally, future research could examine contextual contingencies that render team moral identity more desirable for work outcomes. Identifying specific situations, tasks, or environments in which a strong team moral identity leads to improved performance or other positive outcomes would help inform targeted interventions and best practices. For example, some industries or markets may require more flexibility or a focus on different values, making it difficult for teams with a high moral identity to succeed in those contexts (e.g., morally stigmatized), while industries that emphasize moral practices or social responsibility might benefit more from teams with a strong moral identity. In some cases, the regulatory environment may require a focus on specific ethical or compliance issues that differ from a team's moral identity, creating challenges in aligning the team's values with organizational requirements, but a team with a strong moral identity might be better equipped to navigate complex regulations and maintain compliance.

Relatedly, we have primarily focused on the positive consequences of having a team moral identity. However, it is worth exploring the potential negative consequences of a team moral identity, as well. Teams with high team moral identity may experience conflicts with other teams that hold different values. In some cases, shared moral rigidity among team members could hinder effective team functioning. Indeed, many other unintended consequences, both direct and indirect, might result from a team moral identity. Investigating these potential drawbacks can provide a balanced perspective and promote a more nuanced understanding of the implications of team moral identity.

Another compelling opportunity is to investigate cross-level relationships involving team moral identity, as moral fit between an employee and a team could be critical for individual employee effectiveness. Understanding the interplay between individual and team moral identity could offer valuable insights into how employees' personal values align with team values and how this alignment contributes to individual and team success. Future research can also develop an unfolding model that investigates the emergent process of team moral identity. By examining how team moral identity forms, evolves, and influences team dynamics over time, researchers can gain a richer understanding of the temporal aspects of team moral identity and its impact on various team outcomes. This kind of research would contribute to the literature on team ecology and team developmental stages, and potentially have substantial practical implications.

Finally, given that the empirical chapter of this dissertation does not provide empirical evidence for each hypothesis in every study, as can be seen in Table 9, the three most likely potential explanations for this outcome point to important areas for future research. To begin, cultural differences may have partially influenced these outcomes, particularly in Study 5. The items measuring two forms of team moral identity were developed using diverse samples, but all were sourced from a U.S. context. Given East Asia's distinct cultural characteristics and existing arguments that Eastern ethics is different from Western ethics (e.g., Rachels, 2007), it is plausible that work teams from East Asian contexts may uphold different types and interpretations of moral values.

It is also possible that the varying team contexts and characteristics across different samples could explain the divergent results. For instance, Hypothesis 2 posited a positive relationship between outcome-oriented team moral identity and task conflict. While this relationship was not significant in Studies 2 and 5 (conducted with working adults), the data in

Study 3 (involving students) revealed a significant and negative relationship (involving students). One possible interpretation of this results is that outcome-oriented team moral identity may have a dual impact on task conflict—potentially amplifying conflict as team members contribute more ideas, but simultaneously reducing conflict by fostering a shared goal. This effect, which reduces task conflict overall, might appear more pronounced in student teams. This suggests that the nature and type of teams, and potentially the characteristics of the task itself, could be significant factors that moderate the hypothesized relationships. This result clearly opens up new avenues for future research.

I also recognize that statistical artifacts may explain some of the mixed findings. Although the exploratory and confirmatory factor analytic results consistently provided evidence of superiority of two forms of team moral identity (versus a single form), the correlations between the conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity were notably high in our empirical studies. In the studies that utilized real team samples (specifically, Studies 3 and 5), these correlations ranged from .70 to .73. Moving forward, future research should consider different methods of presenting the two distinct forms of team moral identity to participants, including revising the survey items. Perhaps such an approach could help generate more consistent and reliable analytical results.

Conclusion

This dissertation offers valuable insights into the moral aspects of teams and their implications on team processes, outcomes, and overall organizational success. By developing and validating a measure of team moral identity, we have laid the groundwork for future research to further explore the theoretical dynamics of team morality and the functions of moral values in group life.

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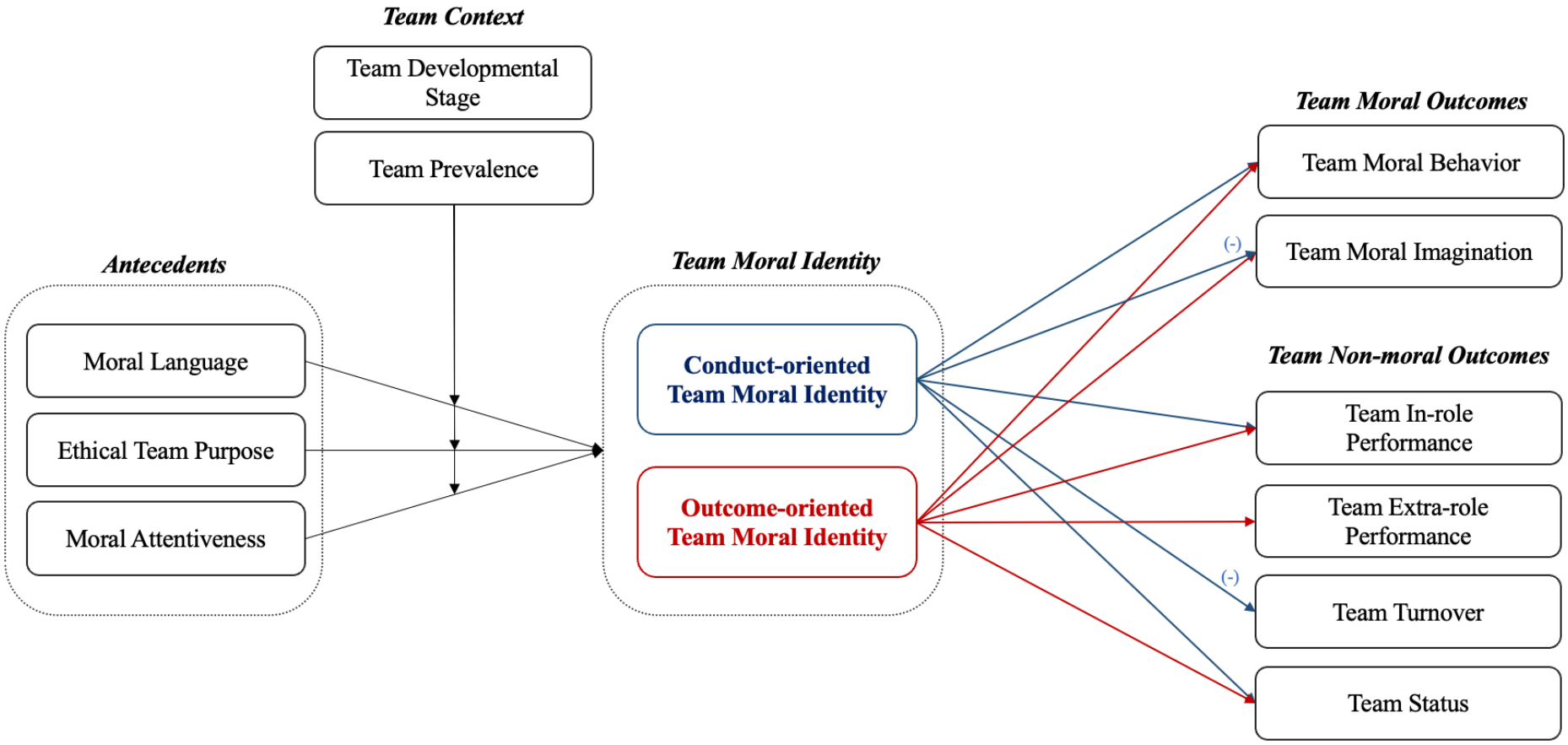
FIGURE 1

Conceptual Framework



Note. Unless otherwise specified, a line denotes a positive relationship.

FIGURE 2

Extended Conceptual Framework for Future Studies

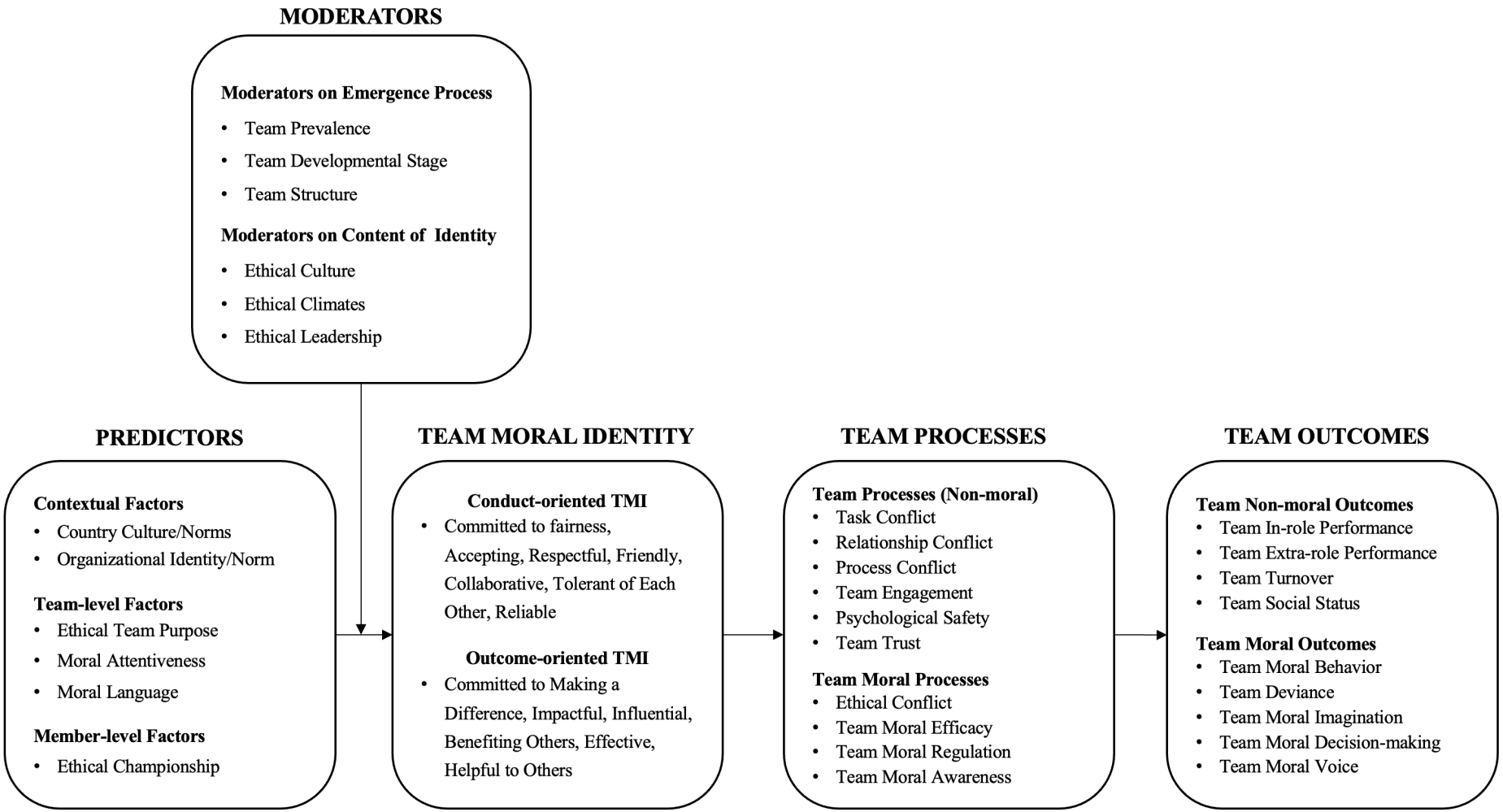


Table 1

Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of the Team Moral Identity Items

	Online Sample		Student Sample	
Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 1	Factor 2
Conduct-oriented Moral Values				
These characteristics are some of the most important qualities of my team.	-.07	.90	-.09	.91
As a team, we frequently think about these values.	-.02	.80	.33	.39
These qualities define who we are as a team.	.04	.71	.09	.75
As a team, we take great pride in having these characteristics.	.09	.82	.12	.67
Outcome-oriented Moral Values				
These characteristics are some of the most important qualities of my team.	.95	-.02	.84	.04
As a team, we frequently think about these values.	.72	.14	.89	-.06
These qualities define who we are as a team.	.96	-.04	.87	.04
As a team, we take great pride in having these characteristics.	.80	.03	.83	.01

Table 2

Study 2: Confirmatory Factor Analytic Result

Factor	Item	CFA Loadings
Conduct-oriented Team Moral Identity	These characteristics are some of the most important qualities of my team.	.86
	As a team, we frequently think about these values.	.77
	These qualities define who we are as a team.	.86
	As a team, we take great pride in having these characteristics.	.88
Outcome-oriented Team Moral Identity	These characteristics are some of the most important qualities of my team.	.90
	As a team, we frequently think about these values.	.84
	These qualities define who we are as a team.	.88
	As a team, we take great pride in having these characteristics.	.88
Team engagement	My team members and I have really thrown ourselves into our work.	.89
	I find that nearly every team member devoted a lot of effort and energy to our work.	.83
	Nearly everyone in our team felt passionate and enthusiastic about our jobs.	.81
	Working in this team was so absorbing that we often forgot about the time.	.81
	My team members and I tended to be highly focused when doing our job.	.83
Task conflict	My team members experienced conflict of ideas.	.89
	My team members frequently had disagreements about the task we were working on.	.89
	My team members often had conflicting opinions about the task we were doing.	.92
Relationship conflict	My team members experienced relationship tension that was not related to the task.	.73
	My team members often got angry while working in this team.	.47
	My team members experienced emotional conflict.	.80
Process conflict	My team members had disagreements about who should do what.	.88
	My team members experienced conflicts about task responsibilities.	.85
	My team members disagreed about resource allocation.	.78
Ethical Climate (Caring)	The most important concern is the good of all the people in the company as a whole	.88
	Our major concern is always what is best for the other person	.72
	What is best for everyone in the company is the major consideration here	.84
	In this company, people look out for each other's good	.79
Ethical Climate (Rule)	It is very important to follow the company's rules and procedures here	.80
	Everyone is expected to stick by company rules and procedures	.84
	Successful people in this company go by the book	.73
	People in this company strictly obey the company policies	.61
Ethical Climate (Independence)	The most important concern in this company is each person's own sense of right and wrong	.85
	In this company, people are guided by their own personal ethics	.79
	Each person in this company decides for themselves what is right and wrong	.67
Team Identification	I think that this team and I value the same things.	.57
	When I think about this team, I have a strong sense of identification with it.	.60
	If this team were criticized, it would influence how I thought about myself.	.72
	My self-identity is based in part on my membership in this team.	.89
	My sense of self overlaps with the identity of this team.	.88

Table 3

Study 2: Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Gender (1 = female, 0 = male)	0.40	0.49													
2. Team size	8.82	10.49	.03												
3. Interaction frequency	1.74	1.09	.10	.07											
4. Team tenure	4.56	3.78	.05	.35**	-.04										
5. Conduct TMI	5.71	1.05	.06	.05	-.31**	.03									
6. Outcome TMI	5.60	1.22	.12	.04	-.25**	.08	.81**								
7. Caring Climate	3.77	0.87	.07	.10	-.16*	.01	.65**	.57**							
8. Rule Climate	4.14	0.66	-.06	.04	-.17*	.03	.43**	.31**	.40**						
9. Independence Climate	3.19	1.01	.06	.13	-.05	.13	.37**	.34**	.43**	.02					
10. Team Identification	3.67	0.86	.02	.03	-.20**	.09	.56**	.51**	.60**	.33**	.41**				
11. Task Conflict	2.38	1.19	.04	.13	.23**	.10	-.36**	-.22**	-.28**	-.22**	-.02	-.08			
12. Relationship Conflict	2.16	1.15	.02	.02	.21**	.12	-.41**	-.25**	-.29**	-.23**	.02	-.08	.70**		
13. Process Conflict	2.37	1.24	.01	.01	.22**	.04	-.36**	-.23**	-.29**	-.20**	-.05	-.04	.78**	.77**	
14. Team Engagement	5.45	1.10	.06	-.01	-.30**	.03	.71**	.72**	.51**	.40**	.22**	.57**	-.25**	-.28**	-.21**

Note: $n = 183$.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Table 4

Study 2: Regression Analysis Results

Variables	Team Engagement		Task Conflict		Relationship Conflict		Process Conflict	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Step 1: Covariates								
Gender	.16 (.13)	.04 (.11)	.08 (.17)	.11 (.16)	.04 (.16)	.08 (.16)	.02 (.17)	.06 (.17)
Size	-.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.02 (.01)**	.02 (.01)**	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Interaction frequency	-.17 (.06)**	-.08 (.05)	.19 (.08)*	.13 (.07)	.17 (.07)*	.09 (.07)	.21 (.08)**	.14 (.08)
Team tenure	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	.01 (.02)	.01 (.02)	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)	.01 (.02)	.01 (.02)
Caring Climate	.25 (.10)**	-.03 (.09)	-.49 (.13)**	-.35 (.13)**	-.51 (.12)**	-.30 (.12)**	-.56 (.13)**	-.41 (.14)**
Rules Climate	.33 (.11)**	.15 (.09)	-.23 (.13)	-.09 (.13)	-.21 (.13)	-.03 (.13)	-.19 (.14)	-.05 (.14)
Independence Climate	-.05 (.07)	-.09 (.06)	.05 (.09)	.08 (.09)	.14 (.09)	.18 (.08)*	.03 (.10)	.06 (.09)
Team Identification	.48 (.10)**	.35 (.08)**	.26 (.12)*	.33 (.12)**	.21 (.12)	.30 (.11)*	.36 (.13)**	.43 (.13)**
Step 2: Main effects								
Conduct-oriented TMI		.27 (.09)**		-.43 (.13)**		-.52 (.12)**		-.46 (.14)**
Outcome-oriented TMI		.33 (.07)**		.10 (.10)		.07 (.10)		.10 (.11)
R^2	.44	.62	.20	.26	.18	.28	.17	.24
ΔR^2		.18**		.06**		.10**		.07**

Note. $N = 183$. Values in parentheses are standard errors.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 5

Study 3: Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Work hour	6.11	4.66										
2. Female Percentage	0.55	0.35	.27**									
3. Team size	4.91	0.34	.08	.18*								
4. Moral Identity (Ind)	3.88	0.40	.21*	.22*	.12							
5. Team engagement	3.83	0.55	.21*	.07	-.05	.39**						
6. Task conflict	2.51	0.66	.12	.03	.14	-.30**	-.23*					
7. Relationship conflict	1.68	0.51	-.02	-.06	.04	-.19*	-.36**	.48**				
8. Process conflict	2.02	0.58	.04	.04	.07	-.11	-.36**	.60**	.68**			
9. Team performance	46.16	6.10	.18*	.21*	-.02	.39**	.36**	-.11	-.22*	-.05		
10. Conduct TMI	3.99	0.49	.13	.18*	-.03	.59**	.70**	-.36**	-.45**	-.39**	.33**	
11. Outcome TMI	3.59	0.56	.19*	.14	-.09	.52**	.62**	-.39**	-.32**	-.34**	.28**	.70**

Note. $N = 119$.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 6

Study 3: Regression Analysis Results

Variables	Team Engagement		Task Conflict		Relationship Conflict		Process Conflict		Task Performance	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Step 1: Covariates										
Team size	-.13 (.14)	-.01 (.10)	.28 (.17)	.19 (.16)	.08 (.13)	.02 (.13)	.11 (.16)	.02 (.15)	-1.22 (1.62)	-.64 (1.58)
Female percentage	-.05 (.14)	-.13 (.11)	.05 (.17)	.09 (.17)	-.04 (.14)	.01 (.13)	.07 (.16)	.13 (.15)	2.82 (1.67)	2.41 (1.62)
Work hour	.02 (.01)*	.01 (.01)	.02 (.01)	.03 (.01)*	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.16 (.12)	.15 (.12)
Moral identity (Ind)	.51 (.12) **	-.13 (.11)	-.57 (.15)**	-.22 (.17)	-.23 (.12)	.16 (.13)	-.19 (.14)	.29 (.16)	1.92 (1.42)	-1.25 (1.71)
Step 2: Main effects										
Conduct-oriented TMI		.68 (.10)**		-.17 (.17)		-.54 (.13)**		-.48 (.15)**		3.67 (1.65)*
Outcome-oriented TMI		.24 (.08)*		-.31 (.14)*		-.02 (.10)		-.20 (.12)		.78 (1.37)
R^2	.18	.55	.14	.23	.04	.22	.02	.21	.08	.16
ΔR^2		.37**		.09**		.18**		.19**		.08**

Note. $n = 119$. Values in parentheses are standard errors.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations for the Variables for Each Condition in Study 4

	Conduct-oriented Team Moral Identity Condition (n = 37)	Outcome-oriented Team Moral Identity Condition (n = 40)	General Team Identity Condition (n = 44)
Team Performance (Idea Quantity)	20.08 (6.96) $_{a}$	16.44 (5.83) $_{b}$	19.2 (6.76) $_{a}$
Team Creativity (Idea Quality)	3.65 (0.45) $_{ab}$	3.81 (0.45) $_{a}$	3.56 (0.38) $_{b}$
Team Ethical Performance (Idea Ethicality)	3.66 (0.47) $_{a}$	3.84 (0.53) $_{a}$	3.45 (0.43) $_{b}$

Note: Values in parentheses are standard deviations. Means with common subscripts on each row are not significantly different from one another.

Table 8

Study 5: Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Team size	3.93	2.00											
2. Female Percentage	0.97	0.09	-.17										
3. Average Age	35.32	3.99	.01	-.12									
4. Age Diversity	6.92	3.45	-.06	-.06	-.01								
5. Conduct TMI	4.06	0.46	.07	.06	-.01	-.12							
6. Outcome TMI	4.03	0.49	.07	-.03	-.06	-.10	.73**						
7. Task Conflict	2.70	0.74	-.07	-.03	-.12	-.05	-.23*	-.24*					
8. Relational conflict	2.59	0.63	-.02	.07	-.19	-.02	-.46**	-.41**	.30**				
9. Process conflict	2.67	0.74	-.07	.13	-.12	.06	-.41**	-.44**	.25*	.62**			
10. Team engagement	4.20	0.44	.13	.07	-.01	-.09	.51**	.50**	-.27**	-.29**	-.26*		
11. Team moral performance	4.14	0.47	.17	-.02	.23*	.01	.01	-.13	-.07	-.13	-.01	.08	
12. Sales Volume	31153.00	58515.18	.59**	-.26*	.09	.02	.15	0.19	-.16	-.12	-.18	.26*	.24*

Note: $n = 90$.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Table 9

Study 5: Regression Analysis Results

Variables	Team Engagement		Task Conflict		Relationship Conflict		Process Conflict		Team Task Performance		Team Moral Performance	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12
Step 1: Covariates												
Team size	.03 (.02)	.02 (.02)	-.03 (.04)	-.02 (.04)	-.01 (.03)	-.01 (.03)	-.01 (.04)	-.01 (.04)	16554 (2532)**	16252 (2519)**	.04 (.03)	.04 (.03)
Female percentage	.40 (.54)	.37 (.46)	-.48 (.90)	-.48 (.89)	.31 (.77)	.42 (.69)	.94 (.91)	.95 (.82)	-101211 (57257)	-100353 (57281)	.19 (.55)	.08 (.55)
Average Age	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	-.02 (.02)	-.02 (.02)	-.03 (.02)	-.03 (.01)*	-.02 (.02)	-.02 (.02)	1081 (1252)	1191 (1248)	.02 (.01)*	.02 (.01)*
Age Diversity	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.02)	-.02 (.01)	.01 (.02)	-.01 (.02)	725 (1476)	1017 (1475)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Step 2: Main effects												
Conduct-oriented TMI		.26 (.13)*		-.17 (.24)		-.48 (.19)*		-.33 (.22)		5813 (15689)		.19 (.15)
Outcome-oriented TMI		.27 (.12)*		-.26 (.23)		-.22 (.17)		-.45 (.21)*		14145 (14799)		-.24 (.14)
R^2	.03	.31	.02	.09	.04	.27	.03	.25	.38	.40	.09	.12
ΔR^2		.28**		.07*		.23**		.22**		.02		.03

Note. $n = 90$. Values in parentheses are standard errors.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 10

Summary of Hypotheses and Overall Empirical Results

	Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4	Study 5
H1: *Conduct- and outcome-oriented team moral identity are positively related to team engagement.*	–	✓	✓	–	✓
H2: *Outcome-oriented team moral identity is positively related to task conflict.*	–	*ns.*	*ns.* *(Different direction)*	–	*ns.*
H3: *Conduct-oriented team moral identity is negatively related to relationship conflict.*	–	✓	✓	–	✓
H4: *Conduct-oriented team moral identity is negatively related to process conflict.*	–	✓	✓	–	*ns.*
H5: *Both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identities are positively related to team task performance.*	–	✓	*Partially Supported (Conduct identity)*	*Partially Supported (Conduct identity)*	*ns.* *(Indirect effect via team engagement)*
H6: *Outcome-oriented (Conduct-oriented) team moral identity is positively (negatively) related to team creativity.*	–	–	–	*Partially Supported (Outcome identity)*	–
H7: *Both conduct-oriented and outcome-oriented team moral identity is positively related to team moral performance.*	–	–	–	✓	*ns.*

Notes: "–" denotes not tested, "✓" denotes supported, and "*ns.*" denotes not supported; Studies 1-2 measured individual perceptions of team-level phenomena, whereas studies 3-5 measured team-level phenomena using multiple responses from team members (shaded cells).

Appendix I: Additional Analytic Results

Study 1: Scale Validation

What follows below is the detailed procedure and result of the content validation study reported in Study 1.

Sample

A total of 152 participants were recruited from Prolific Academic and received $0.6 for their participation. 41.44% of the participants were female, and their average age was 37.32 (SD = 9.91). 79.60% of the participants identified as White.

Procedure

Participants were initially presented with definitions of conduct-oriented (i.e., moral characteristics that promote the development and maintenance of ethical teamwork procedures among team members) and outcome-oriented team moral values (i.e., moral characteristics that promote the development of positive outcomes and meaningful ends for customers, stakeholders, and beyond). They were then asked to categorize the 14 moral values (i.e., committed to fairness, respectful, friendly, collaborative, tolerant of each other, reliable, accepting, caring, impactful, benefiting others, effective, helpful to others, committed to making a difference, and influential) into one of three categories: conduct-oriented moral values, outcome-oriented moral values, or neither.

Result

We conducted a series of chi-square tests of independence to examine whether participants recognized each moral value as intended. The specific results are presented in the table below. Note that when "neither" was included as part of the analysis, all chi-square test

results were significant at $p < .001$ levels. As such, the asterisks below show the chi-square analytic results without "neither" as part of the options.

Phrase/characteristics	Conduct-oriented	Outcome-oriented	Neither
Committed to fairness***	120	25	7
Accepting***	127	18	7
Caring of each other***	135	15	2
Committed to making a difference	68	76	8
Respectful***	120	26	6
Friendly***	108	32	12
Impactful***	31	116	5
Influential***	33	105	14
Collaborative***	100	48	4
Benefiting others***	53	92	7
Tolerant of each other***	117	26	9
Effective***	33	112	7
Reliable	70	70	12
Punctual	77	57	18
Honest***	96	42	14
A positive force for good**	52	84	17
Helpful to others	65	78	9

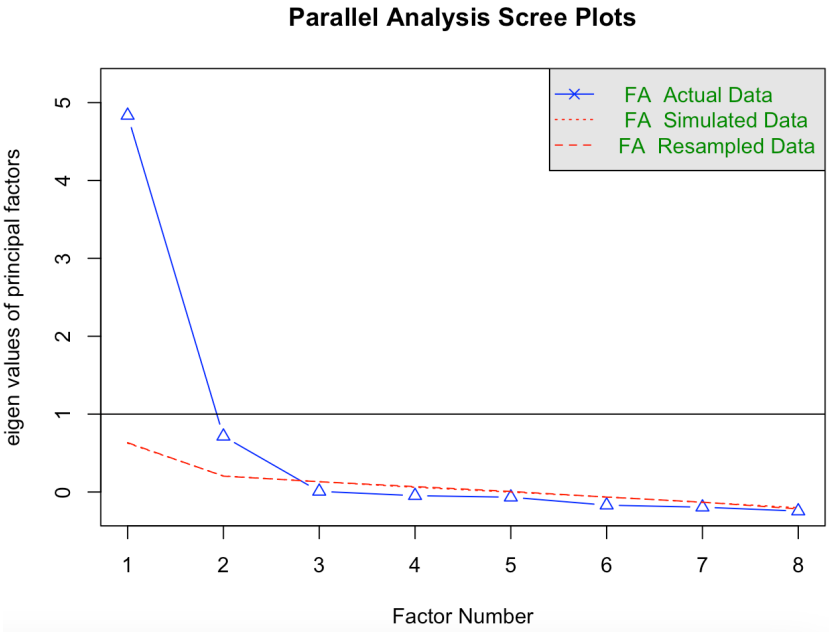
*** = $p < .001$, ** = $p < .01$, * = $p < .05$

Participants categorized 11 of the 14 values as expected. As for the other three, committed to making a difference, reliable, and helpful to others, a majority of participants categorized them correctly, but the difference was not statistically significant. Thus, the results supported our classifications.

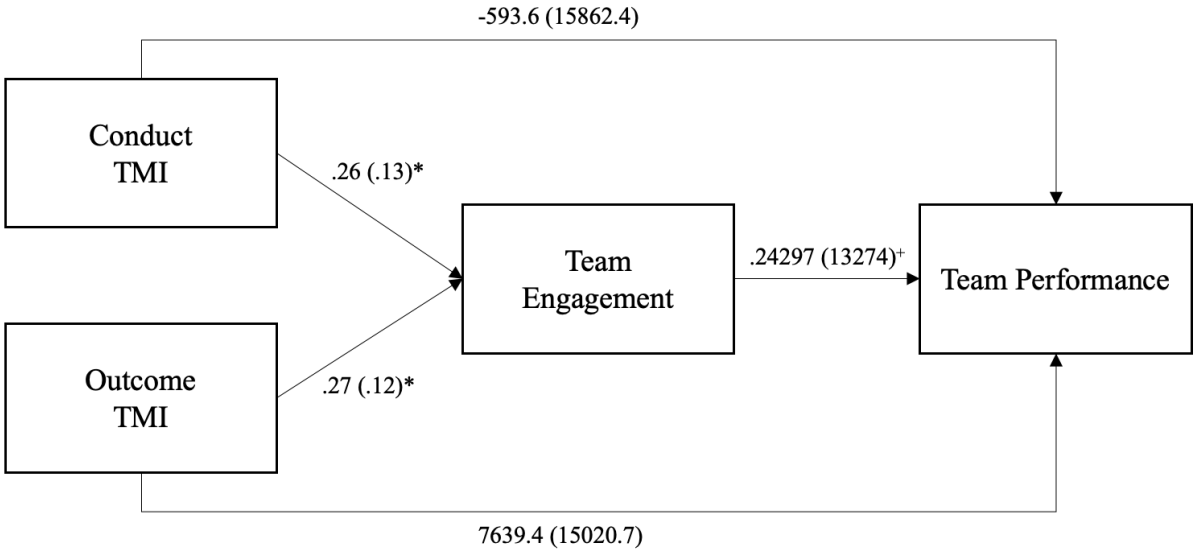
It's worth noting that we provided definitions for conduct-oriented (i.e., moral characteristics that promote the development and maintenance of ethical teamwork procedures among team members) and outcome-oriented (i.e., moral characteristics that promote the development of positive outcomes and meaningful ends for customers, stakeholders, and beyond) team-oriented moral values prior to participants evaluating each moral value. Consequently, several values and characteristics that, at first glance, seemed devoid of ethical implications (e.g., effectiveness) were also contextualized to carry ethical connotations and implications.

Study 1: Scree plot

What follows below is the scree plot from the Explorative Factor Analysis from Study 1.



Study 5: The Figure Summarizing the Post-hoc Analytic Result



Appendix II: Study Materials

Study 1

Full Items

Conducted-oriented Team Moral Identity

Listed below are some terms that you might use to describe ***a team.***

• Committed to fairness	*• Respectful*	*• Friendly*
• Collaborative	*• Tolerant of each other*	*• Reliable*
• Accepting	*• Caring*	

Think of your experience in your TEAM. Consider the statements below and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each.

- These characteristics are some of the most important qualities of my team.
- As a team, we frequently think about these values.
- These qualities define who we are as a team.
- As a team, we take great pride in having these characteristics.

Outcome-oriented Team Moral Identity

Listed below are some terms that you might use to describe ***a team.***

• Impactful	*• Benefiting others*	*• Effective*
• Helpful to others	*• Committed to making a difference*	
• Influential		

Think of your experience in your TEAM. Consider the statements below and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each.

- These characteristics are some of the most important qualities of my team.
- As a team, we frequently think about these values.
- These qualities define who we are as a team.
- As a team, we take great pride in having these characteristics.

Study 2

Full Items

Conduct-oriented and Outcome-oriented Team Moral Identity

- These characteristics are some of the most important qualities of my team.
- As a team, we frequently think about these values.
- These qualities define who we are as a team.
- As a team, we take great pride in having these characteristics.

Team Engagement

- My team members and I really throw ourselves into our work.
- I find nearly every team member devotes a lot of effort and energy to our work.
- My team members and I gain considerable pride from performing our jobs well.
- Nearly everyone in our team feels passionate and enthusiastic about our jobs.
- Performing work in my area as a whole is so absorbing that we often forget about the time.
- My team members and I tend to be highly focused when doing our job.

Task Conflict

- My team members experienced conflict of ideas.
- My team members frequently had disagreements about the task we were working on.
- My team members often had conflicting opinions about the task we were doing.

Relationship Conflict

- My team members experienced relationship tension that was not related to the task.
- My team members often got angry while working in this team.
- My team members experienced emotional conflict.

Process Conflict

- My team members had disagreements about who should do what.
- My team members experienced conflicts about task responsibilities.
- My team members disagreed about resource allocation.

Ethical Climate: Caring

- The most important concern is the good of all the people in the company as a whole.
- Our major concern is always what is best for the other person.
- What is best for everyone in the company is the major consideration here.
- In this company, people look out for each other's good.

Ethical Climate: Rules

- It is very important to follow the company's rules and procedures here.
- Everyone is expected to stick by company rules and procedures.
- Successful people in this company go by the book.
- People in this company strictly obey the company policies.

Ethical Climate: Independence

- The most important concern in this company is each person's own sense of right and wrong.
- In this company, people are guided by their own personal ethics.
- Each person in this company decides for themselves what is right and wrong.

Team Identification

- I think that this team and I value the same things.
- When I think about this team, I have a strong sense of identification with it.
- If this team were criticized, it would influence how I thought about myself.
- My self-identity is based in part on my membership in this team.
- My sense of self overlaps with the identity of this team.

Study 3

Full Items

Conduct-oriented and Outcome-oriented Team Moral Identity

- These characteristics are some of the most important qualities of my team.
- As a team, we frequently think about these values.
- These qualities define who we are as a team.
- As a team, we take great pride in having these characteristics.

Team Engagement

- My team members and I really throw ourselves into our work.
- I find nearly every team member devotes a lot of effort and energy to our work.
- My team members and I gain considerable pride from performing our jobs well.
- Nearly everyone in our team feels passionate and enthusiastic about our jobs.
- Performing work in my area as a whole is so absorbing that we often forget about the time.
- My team members and I tend to be highly focused when doing our job.

Task Conflict

- My team members experienced conflict of ideas.
- My team members frequently had disagreements about the task we were working on.
- My team members often had conflicting opinions about the task we were doing.

Relationship Conflict

- My team members experienced relationship tension that was not related to the task.
- My team members often got angry while working in this team.
- My team members experienced emotional conflict.

Process Conflict

- My team members had disagreements about who should do what.
- My team members experienced conflicts about task responsibilities.
- My team members disagreed about resource allocation.

Study 4

Study Material

In this lab exercise, you will be working with other students as a team. As you do, we want you to keep the values assigned to your team, as you are the only team that's been assigned with these five specific values. Once again, during your team activity, we want you to act according to these principles as much as possible. The success of this study depends on your team's ability to act according to these values, so we ask you to be very thoughtful about these values and to take the entire exercise very seriously. Please proceed to the next page to begin your first team task.

YOUR FIRST TEAM TASK: *Please create a team name and team mission statement that reflect the norms and values assigned to your team*. For your reference, your assigned norms and values are:

(1) Tolerance of each other
(2) Honesty
(3) Respect of each other
(4) Caring of each other
(5) Fairness

Or

(1) Being socially impactful
(2) Committing to making a difference
(3) Benefiting others
(4) Helpful to others
(5) Being a positive force for good

You have 6 minutes to complete this section of the study. You will be automatically proceeded to the next section of the study - please be attentive to the time limit.

– Please enter your team name below.

– Please enter your team mission statement below.

After years of declining sales, the University of Washington has decided to close the auxiliary bookstore in the Husky Union Building (HUB). The store occupies about 10,000 square feet on the first floor of the HUB. The school administration has yet to decide what to do with the space.

YOUR TASK: Together as a team, develop as many solutions that the University of Washington can take to address this problem. You have 10 minutes to create as many solutions as possible. The number of solutions that you generate will be directly related to our measure of your team's performance.

- Please use the space below to list and number your team's solutions. You will be automatically advanced to the next stage after 10 minutes.

YOUR TASK: Here's the list of ideas that your team submitted. Please rank order top five ideas based on their quality. You will be automatically advanced to the next section after 5 minutes.

- Please use the space below to rank order your team's top five ideas. You will be automatically advanced to the next stage after 5 minutes.

YOUR TASK: Here's the top five ideas that your team submitted. Please select the one idea that best represents your team. Then provide as many details as you can about how this idea would be implemented.

Idea Evaluation Items (Measured by Third-party Evaluators)

Idea Creativity

- The plan involves new solutions to the problem.
- The plan proposes useful solutions to the problem.
- The plan is a creative solution to the empty space problem.

Idea Ethicality

- The plan considers ethical aspects to this decision.
- The plan is trying to achieve ethical results.
- The plan would not violate any ethical or moral principles.

Study 5

Full Items

Conduct-oriented and Outcome-oriented Team Moral Identity (Employee measured)

- These characteristics are some of the most important qualities of my team.
- As a team, we frequently think about these values.
- These qualities define who we are as a team.
- As a team, we take great pride in having these characteristics.

Team Engagement (Employee measured)

- My team members and I really throw ourselves into our work.
- I find nearly every team member devotes a lot of effort and energy to our work.
- My team members and I gain considerable pride from performing our jobs well.
- Nearly everyone in our team feels passionate and enthusiastic about our jobs.
- Performing work in my area as a whole is so absorbing that we often forget about the time.
- My team members and I tend to be highly focused when doing our job.

Task Conflict (Employee measured)

- My team members experienced conflict of ideas.
- My team members frequently had disagreements about the task we were working on.
- My team members often had conflicting opinions about the task we were doing.

Relationship Conflict (Employee measured)

- My team members experienced relationship tension that was not related to the task.
- My team members often got angry while working in this team.
- My team members experienced emotional conflict.

Process Conflict (Employee measured)

- My team members had disagreements about who should do what.
- My team members experienced conflicts about task responsibilities.
- My team members disagreed about resource allocation.

Team Moral Performance (Supervisor measured)

- Members of this team are truthful to each other.
- Members of this team are considerate of each other and their ideas and work.
- Members of this team are always fair in their dealings with each other.