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Distrust in the Balance: The Emergence and Development of Intergroup Distrust in a Court of Law

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Despite recent attention to trust, comparatively little is known about distrust as distinct from trust. In this paper, we drew on case study data of a reorganized court of law, where intergroup distrust had grown between judges and administrators, to develop a dynamic theory of distrust. We used insights from the literatures on distrust, conflict escalation, and professional–organization relations to guide the analysis of our case data. Our research is consistent with insights on distrust previously postulated, but we were able to extend and make more precise the perceptions and behaviors that make up the elements of the self-amplifying cycle of distrust development, how these elements are related, and the mechanisms of amplification that drive the cycle. To help guide and focus future research, we modeled the process by which distrust emerges and develops, and we drew inferences on how it can be repaired.

Keywords: distrust; trust–distrust distinction; intergroup distrust; determinants of distrust; self-amplifying cycle of distrust development; trust–distrust repair

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Introduction

Trust is widely recognized as having important organizational and interpersonal consequences (Fox 1974, Mayer et al. 1995, Zucker 1986). A large volume of work examines trust at the interpersonal, organizational, and interorganizational levels (for reviews, see Dirks and Ferrin 2002, Rousseau et al. 1998, Schoorman et al. 2007), and theorizing has begun to coalesce around a set of core definitions, constructs, and critical variables.

Distrust as a distinct concept, however, has attracted far less attention. Scholars have yet to define distrust's core construct or causal dynamics, even though the available studies of distrust have identified a wide variety of its potentially severe consequences for organization members (Sitkin and Roth 1993, Tomlinson and Lewicki 2006), for relations between groups (Glynn 2000, Sitkin and Stickel 1996), and for the organization as a whole (Fox 1974). Distrust has been related to a lack of cooperation (Cho 2006), avoidance of influence (Sheppard and Tuchinsky 1996), avoidance of interaction (Bies and Tripp 1996), unwillingness to share views and preferences (Bijlsma-Frankema 2004, March and Olsen 1975), information distortion and disbelief (Kramer 1994), stigmatization (Sitkin and Roth 1993), paranoia (Kramer 2006), hostility to distrusted others (Chambers and Melnyk 2006), and intractable intergroup conflicts (Fiol et al. 2009, Tomlinson and Lewicki 2006).

Yet despite the recognition of these ill effects, little is understood about how organizations can identify distrust and its antecedents, and how this destructive force develops. And although the concept of *interpersonal* distrust has seen increased interest (Chan 2003, Cho 2006), relatively little work explicitly examines distrust at the intergroup level (Glynn 2000, Kramer 2004, and Sitkin and Stickel 1996 are a few exceptions).

To address these gaps, we analyze the distinctive features of the phenomenon of distrust in general and intergroup distrust in particular, and we model how distrust originates and is reinforced. At this early stage of research, only two distinct characteristics of distrust have been commonly accepted; these will act as points of departure in our own theorizing. First, distrust involves *pervasive negative perceptions and expectations* of the other(s) (Cho 2006; Dimoka 2010; Kramer 1994, 1996; Lewicki et al. 1998; Sitkin and Stickel 1996). Second, distrust develops in a *self-amplifying cycle* (Fox 1974, Sherif et al. 1961, Sitkin and Stickel 1996, Zand 1972), a dynamic for which *pervasiveness* and *intensification of negative perceptions and behaviors* (Sherif et al. 1961) are central elements.

A Social Interactionist Approach

To inductively build an understanding of intergroup distrust emergence and development within organizations,

we conducted a case study of the restructuring of a court of law, taking a social interactionist approach to trace the emergence and evolution of distrust between groups in this organization. Commonly used in studies of spiraling processes (e.g., Andersson and Pearson 1999), social interactionism highlights the mutually reinforcing nature of behaviors, perceptions, and interpretations, both within and between groups (Becker and Geer 1961, Blumer 1969). Between groups, the development and escalation of negative relations represent processes that grow through interparty interactions. In our case, intergroup distrust provides a lens through which actions of the other group are selectively perceived and interpreted as negative. These negative interpretations, in turn, serve to justify negative actions toward the other group, to which that group reacts with its own negative interpretations and subsequent actions that continue the spiral. In several rounds, we systematically compared conclusions we developed from the case data to theoretical insights from an array of literatures to arrive at a more complete and empirically informed understanding of how intergroup distrust manifests within organizations. To supplement theory in the sparse distrust literature, we consulted related literatures on intergroup conflict and conflict escalation and intractability. We also drew on the literature about professionals within organizations (Von Glinow 1983) because of the professional nature of the group of judges in our case study.

Conceptual Challenges

Several conceptual challenges arose as we designed the study. First, we had to decide whether to conceptualize distrust as distinct from trust in general and low trust specifically. The literature contains two distinct approaches to this issue. One group of trust scholars portrays distrust as the low end of a trust continuum (Hardin 2004, Luhmann 1979, Mayer et al. 1995, Robinson 1996, Rotter 1980), defining distrust and low trust as the same phenomenon. Another group of trust scholars (Benamati et al. 2006, Chang and Fang 2013, Cho 2006, Dimoka 2010, Komiak and Benbasat 2008, Lewicki et al. 1998, Ou and Sia 2010, Sitkin and Roth 1993, Sitkin and Stickel 1996, Tomlinson and Lewicki 2006) argue that the concepts of distrust and (low) trust must be carefully distinguished, given their different antecedents, consequences, and process dynamics.

Empirical tests of the trust–distrust distinction and the distinct causes and effects of trust and distrust (see the appendix for a summary) tend to support the delineation of distinct constructs, thanks to evidence from early measurement construction and validation studies (Clark and Payne 1997, Constantinople 1969, Wrightsman 1974) and, more recently, from advanced construct discrimination tests (Benamati et al. 2006, Chang and Fang 2013, Cho 2006, Ou and Sia 2010). Several studies in the field of e-commerce, moreover,

find distinct determinants and consequences of customer trust and distrust (Benamati et al. 2006, Chang and Fang 2013, Cho 2006, Komiak and Benbasat 2008, Ou and Sia 2010); in fact, one study used neuroimaging to show that trust and distrust activate different brain areas (Dimoka 2010). These results encourage serious consideration and further exploration of the distinction between (low) trust and distrust.

Developing a systematic understanding of intergroup distrust from the existing literature and our own data presented a number of other conceptual challenges as well. Primary among these was the *selection of a set of concepts* that together would capture the initial emergence of intergroup distrust and its subsequent development. The literatures concur on the conceptualization of distrust emergence, but the distrust and conflict literatures disagree on the number of concepts tracing the process of intergroup distrust development. The distrust literature identifies a handful of concepts; the intergroup conflict and conflict escalation/intractability literatures, an abundance. Coleman (2003), for instance, finds 50 concepts related to intractable conflicts. After considerable sifting and comparison, we subsumed many of the factors within three broad conceptual categories.

Part of the challenge was to include one or more concepts that capture the reciprocating nature of intergroup distrust. Despite pleas for research on two-way interactions between groups in situations of escalating negativity (e.g., Stott and Reicher 1998), such studies are scarce (Andersson and Pearson 1999, Glynn 2000). Most studies in the distrust, conflict, escalation/intractability, and professional–organization literatures concentrate simply on how a focal group reacts to the actions of another group. Our goal is to build an understanding of the role interactions play in the development of intergroup distrust.

Modeling Challenges

Regarding conflict escalation, Coleman et al. (2007, p. 1456) conclude that “the field has yet to put forward a theoretical model that links this multitude of variables and processes to underlying structures and dynamics.” Given the scarcity of models that trace the development of negative relations between two parties, our next challenge was twofold: (1) how to model the relations between the selected concepts and (2) how to arrive at a valid representation of the process dynamics of distrust development once it initially emerged.

Although behaviors and perceptions have been identified as relevant concepts in the development of negative relations between parties, these have seldom been conceptually related in a systematic way. Especially in a two-way modeling of interactions between groups, the role of behavior is paramount because distrust is conveyed through behaviors (as distinct from perceptions)

that are observable to the other group. We needed to address this gap.

Next we had to create a precise conceptual description of how pervasiveness and self-amplification, the two commonly agreed-upon characteristics of distrust and its development (Cho 2006; Dimoka 2010; Fox 1974; Kramer 1994, 1996; Lewicki et al. 1998; Sherif et al. 1961; Sitkin and Roth 1993; Sitkin and Stickel 1996; Zand 1972), become manifest as process characteristics in distrust development. The literature is largely silent on this process.

The rest of this paper is structured in four sections. In the next section, we review the literature on intergroup conflict and conflict escalation in general and on intergroup distrust and distrust amplification specifically. We then summarize data gathered from organization members through interviews and informal conversations. Next, we analyze our observational data, comparing them to the insights gathered from the literatures, to extract a dynamic theory of intergroup distrust development amenable to later testing. Finally, we discuss our contribution to the literature, the limitations of our study, and directions for future research on distrust and distrust repair practices.

Theoretical Notes

The Concept of Distrust

Most authors agree that positive expectations and the willingness to become vulnerable are critical elements of trust: “Trust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another” (Rousseau et al. 1998, p. 395). Lewis and Weigert (1985) argue that trust enables actors to take a “leap of faith” beyond what reason alone would warrant. In such a leap, the actor suspends doubt that another’s action will meet the positive expectations on which trust is built, and the actor acts as if his or her own vulnerability is minimal. As long as trust is in place, to a lower or higher degree, such a leap of faith is possible. The studies we drew on suggest that distrust is distinct from trust because distrust is engendered when actors do *not* take the leap of faith, because they, in full awareness, do not accept the level of vulnerability the distrusted others represent. Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003) build on this point to propose distinct referents: “Low trust signals low confidence in things hoped for, whereas distrust signals a sense of assurance regarding things feared” (p. 5). Unlike (low) trust, which is typified as domain-specific (Mayer et al. 1995, Zand 1972), distrust has been proposed to involve *pervasive negative perceptions and expectations* regarding the behavior or intentions of distrusted others (Dimoka 2010; Kramer 1994, 1996; Lewicki et al. 1998; Sitkin and Roth 1993).

Pervasiveness, signifying that negative perceptions in one domain of the relationship tend to spread to other domains, leads to an all-encompassing psychological state regarding distrusted others, typified in the literature as risk awareness, skepticism, watchfulness, vigilance, and sometimes perceptions of threat and fear (Cho 2006; Kramer 1994, 1996; McKnight et al. 2004; Lewicki et al. 1998; Sitkin and Roth 1993; Sitkin and Stickel 1996). Thus, distinct from low trust, which reflects the lower end of a continuum of positive expectations, distrust appears to occupy its own cognitive state, a pervasive negative lens through which others are perceived.

Based on these insights, we define *intergroup distrust* as the shared unwillingness of a group to accept vulnerability, based on pervasive negative perceptions and expectations of the other group’s motives, intentions, or behaviors.

Determinants of Intergroup Distrust

The distrust literature commonly suggests (Sitkin and Roth 1993, Sitkin and Stickel 1996, Tomlinson and Lewicki 2006) and shows (Chambers and Melnyk 2006) that distrust arises under conditions of perceived value incongruence, or the belief that others (individuals or groups) do not accept the actor’s core values¹ and adhere to values that are perceived as incompatible with these core values. These others are seen as unpredictable, raising the focal actor’s feelings of uncertainty and vulnerability as well as negative expectations about their future actions (Sitkin and Roth 1993). As Tomlinson and Lewicki (2006, p. 222) note, “We expect that we have little in common with the other and that the other is a committed adversary who is out to harm us.” If this expectation of harm raises the perceived vulnerability to a point where actors become unwilling to accept it, distrust—the unwillingness to be vulnerable—arises.

Professional–organization studies also propose that value incongruence can trigger conflict. When the values of professionals and organizational values are perceived as incompatible, professional–organization conflict can occur (Sorensen and Sorensen 1974). In such conflicts, mutual distrust may develop (Fiol et al. 2009, Fox 1974, Glynn 2000). Along this line, Vandenberg and Scarpello (2006, pp. 535–536) note that the professional value system stresses values such as “collegial and self control and authority over the occupation, compliance to occupational objectives and standards, autonomy, and client orientation and loyalty,” whereas the organizational value system tends to emphasize “bureaucratic or hierarchical control and authority, conformity to organizational goals, norms and regulations, and organizational loyalty.” It has also been noted (e.g., Fiol et al. 2009, Wallace 1995) that the professional–organization literature focuses on fully established conflicts; little work investigates why problems between groups develop only

sometimes into conflicts and why only some conflicts become intractable.

The conflict and conflict escalation literatures similarly highlight the critical role of divergent or incompatible values (e.g., Pruitt and Kim 2004, Riek et al. 2006). The conflict literature identifies perceived gaps between in-group and out-group values as a source of uncertainty, perceived threat, and other negative perceptions and expectations concerning the other group (Riek et al. 2006). We therefore examine perceptions of value incongruence as a potential determinant of intergroup distrust resulting from the tendency of these perceptions to raise felt vulnerability and produce negative expectations. To our knowledge, perceived value incongruence has never been proposed as an antecedent of low(er) trust, only as a determinant of distrust.

Intergroup Distrust Development

The extant literature has established that once the distrust frame is in place, a self-amplifying cycle of escalating distrust begins (Fox 1974, Sherif et al. 1961, Sitkin and Roth 1993, Sitkin and Stickel 1996, Zand 1972). Yet neither the distrust nor the intergroup conflict/escalation streams has developed a theoretical model of the variables contributing to such a cycle and how these relate and function. In this section, we discuss theoretical insights about elements of the cycle and how these relate to each other; later, we will use these insights as a theoretical benchmark for comparison with our case data observations.

Selection of Concepts. The distrust literature identifies several consequences of distrust, and the conflict literature proposes factors that may contribute to intergroup conflict and conflict development, including Coleman's (2003) 50 factors related to intractable conflicts. We propose, however, that many of these variables overlap conceptually and fall into three broad categories: negative perceptions, negative behaviors, and within-group convergence.

Negative perceptions, the first category, refer to attributions of negative intentions and motives to the other group and negative expectations regarding their future behavior. Both the distrust (March and Olsen 1975, Sitkin and Stickel 1996) and conflict and escalation (Friedman and Currall 2003, Pruitt and Kim 2004) literatures discuss these perceptions. Negative perceptions may also be negative distinctions made between two groups. The distrust and professional–organization literatures refer to these perceptions as perceived value incongruences/incompatibilities (Sitkin and Roth 1993, Sitkin and Stickel 1996, Sorensen and Sorensen 1974), and the conflict literature refers to them as in-group/out-group biases (e.g., Brewer 1999, Gaertner and Dovidio 2000, Labianca et al. 1998).

Second, *negative behaviors* toward the other group tend to be reciprocated in a process labeled as negative

reciprocity in both the distrust (Serva et al. 2005) and conflict (Andersson and Pearson 1999, Friedman and Currall 2003, Labianca et al. 1998, Pruitt and Kim 2004, Youngs 1986) literatures.

A third category, *within-group convergence*, characterizes processes within groups that contribute to intergroup distrust development. For instance, a group in conflict tends to increasingly share negative perceptions of the other group and perceive its own negative behavior as appropriate. Unlike negative perceptions and negative behaviors, which are applicable to distrust in any relation, within-group convergence of negative perceptions is specific to intergroup distrust. Because this concept has not received much attention in the distrust literature, we drew on the conflict literature for insights (Nelson 1989, Pruitt and Kim 2004).

Relationships Between Perceptions and Behaviors. After delineating concept categories, we addressed the causal relationships among them because there is little in the literature that systematically relates negative intergroup perceptions and behaviors. Our social interactionist approach suggested that one group's distrust of another group acts as a lens through which the actions of the others are selectively interpreted as negative, and that these negative perceptions serve to justify negative actions toward the other group. In turn, the other group interprets those negative actions as justifying their own negative reaction and thus engenders a process of negative reciprocity. As intergroup interaction continues, negative actions and perceptions accumulate and intensify from both sides.

Conflict Development: A Two-Stage Process

A further challenge in modeling the process of distrust development was to determine how a self-amplifying cyclical process, in which pervasive negative perceptions play a central part, can be distinguished theoretically from processes that are not self-amplifying or cyclical. We built on studies of conflict dynamics that attempt to characterize conflict escalation in general (Coleman et al. 2007) or in terms of specific organizational traits such as incivility (Andersson and Pearson 1999), silencing conflicts (Perlow and Repping 2009), and dispute exacerbation through email (Friedman and Currall 2003). These studies propose two distinct stages in conflict development and escalation, separated by a threshold (Coleman et al. 2007, Friedman and Currall 2003), or tipping point (Andersson and Pearson 1999, Perlow and Repping 2009), that changes the nature of the conflict process in an abrupt, punctuated way.

In stage 1, relations between antecedents and the degree of negativity/conflict are linear, and the reactions to negative actions of the other party are proportional: the more negative the behavior of the other(s), the more negative the response. In this stage, the process between

the parties is multidimensional and domain-specific, such that issues remain distinct and linkages weak between cognitive, behavioral, and affective factors. Here, a violation in one domain does not necessarily spread to other domains and thus cannot be considered pervasive. A violation, furthermore, can be compensated for (dampened) by positive action in another domain.

Once the tipping point has been reached, the parties enter stage 2, in which disproportionate reactions to violations and a nonlinear, self-amplifying dynamic ensues. The process changes from loose to tight coupling between domains and between cognitive, behavioral, and affective factors. Pervasiveness is encountered when a violation in one domain negatively affects other domains (Andersson and Pearson 1999, Coleman et al. 2007, Friedman and Currall 2003, Perlow and Repping 2009), and reactions to violations become disproportionate, creating an integrated system with feedback loops that reinforce only the negative and that allow no possibility of compensation through positive actions (Coleman et al. 2007). This state is also called a “lock-in” (Friedman and Currall 2003).

Applying Conflict Escalation Insights to the Trust and Distrust Development Processes

Characterizing the two stages of conflict escalation may also shed light on how trust and distrust relate. Given the consistency in prior conceptualizations of stage characteristics with aspects of trust and distrust, we propose that the first stage of lowering trust may change abruptly into a second stage of increasing distrust. Our characterization of this second stage mirrors the prior literature’s description of the self-amplifying cycle of distrust escalation: *pervasiveness* and the *cyclical* nature of the process (e.g., Fox 1974, Sherif et al. 1961, Sitkin and Stickel 1996, Zand 1972), in which both pervasiveness (Sitkin and Stickel 1996) and the intensification of negative perceptions and behaviors (Sherif et al. 1961) are central.

The first stage may well represent a process of lowering trust. Building on theoretical work (Mayer et al. 1995), most authors model the relationship between trustworthiness (as the antecedent) and trust as *linear*—indeed, most empirical studies (Dirks and Ferrin 2001, 2002) find significant linear relations. Both theoretical and empirical work also acknowledges *multiple* dimensions of trustworthiness (e.g., ability, benevolence, integrity); *domain specificity* has been assumed (Mayer et al. 1995) and empirically found (Ferrin et al. 2007), indicating a lack of pervasiveness. Next, trust repair research commonly agrees that if trust is violated (resulting in low trust), then raising the level of trustworthiness (i.e., “the perceived trust-relevant qualities of the trustee”; see Kim et al. 2009, p. 402) will raise trust. This approach implies a linear model of trust repair after violation and is consistent with the idea of *proportional*

reactions to violations. Finally, evidence suggests that positive actions in one domain compensate for negative actions in another, which is a characteristic of the first stage of escalation: trust in one domain has been shown to help actors overcome adverse reactions to negative events in another domain (Brockner et al. 1997).

This striking parallelism, and our earlier contention that distrust is triggered by perceived value incongruence, suggests that low trust abruptly changes into distrust once a threshold of value incongruence is reached. In stage 1 (the stage of trust), negative experiences in one or more domains may reduce trust and promote isolated, specific observations of value incongruence and related vulnerability. Because domain specificity still applies in this stage, high trust in other domains can serve to dampen negative effects. But if negative experiences increase, trust is negatively affected, and as trust is lowered, its dampening capacity can decrease as well.

Once those isolated perceived value incongruences and related perceptions of vulnerability, as a set, surpass a vulnerability threshold, distrust will be triggered, and the perceived value incongruences will merge into an undifferentiated, negative lens through which the previously isolated, acceptable value incongruences are perceived. Low trust can thus transform into distrust in a punctuated way, setting in motion the self-amplifying cycle of distrust. In this cycle, distrust can pervade domains in the relationship that did not figure in the initial triggering of distrust.

Within-Group Processes

Where negative perceptions and behaviors apply to distrust development in any relationship, within-group processes can specifically contribute to the cycle of intergroup distrust. Given the scarcity of intergroup distrust studies, our understanding of characteristics of groups that can contribute to intergroup distrust development—over and above the factors discussed so far—is limited. Thus, we drew on intergroup relations and escalation literature, which argues that groups in conflict tend to exhibit more extreme thinking than individuals (Pruitt and Kim 2004). Other conflict authors argue that increasing intergroup polarization correlates with increasing in-group *convergence of negative perceptions* of the other group. As within-group negative perceptions converge, norms that legitimize negative behavior toward the other group grow stronger; at the same time, peer pressure to conform to these shared negative perceptions of the other group—and to display behaviors that comply with these norms—is applied more strongly to members who hold dissimilar perceptions (Labianca et al. 1998, Nelson 1989). Within-group convergence of negative perceptions thus contributes to the intensification of negative perceptions over and above the development of negative perceptions by individual group members. This effect also leads to convergence and intensification of negative behaviors.

Research Design and Methodology

Research Site

Two years before our study began, the Dutch Ministry of Justice reorganized its courts into 19 regional organizations, each through a merger with a public prosecutor's office and one or two cantonal courts. These changes are summarized in Table 1.

When severe problems between the judges and a newly appointed group of administrators surfaced in one of these reorganized courts, the ministry selected that court for an intervention, hoping to restore more productive working relationships. The first author, acting as project leader and perceiving an opportunity to study an extreme, revelatory case (Yin 1990) in which the dynamics of intergroup relations and distrust would be highly visible and accessible, requested that the intervention be research-based. The site offered favorable conditions for the study. First, after consultation, the judges and administrators fully supported the research-based approach, and both groups promised to fully cooperate in the project. Thus, researchers obtained full access to perceptions and behaviors of both groups through observation

and interviews, but they could also verify consistency of the various parties' accounts. Second, because intergroup relations between new administrators and established professionals were so new, researchers could unpack intergroup problems unencumbered by prior history. As the project developed, it became clear that the situation enabled the study of developing intergroup distrust—a rare opportunity. Because the organization itself was not an outlier in any discernable way, the site allowed for exploration that would produce theoretically generalizable insights that could later be put to more rigorous context-independent testing.

The reorganization changed the internal structure of all the courts from a collective of judges who covered all aspects of law to a divisional structure whereby judges (presided over by a vice president) and clerks (managed by a unit manager) were assigned to units, each covering a single area of law (i.e., criminal, commercial, family, and public administration law). Under this new system of dual authority, judges governed the content of verdicts while a newly appointed group of administrators governed other aspects of the work. The reorganization did not alter the formally independent position of the

Table 1 Summary of Changes During Reorganization

Type of change	Before reorganization	After reorganization
Merger	Stand-alone court	Court was merged with two cantonal courts and a public prosecutor's office to form a regional organization.
Shift in senior management structure	President of the court	Local board was formed, consisting of the president of the court, a general manager, two cantonal judges representing their courts, and a public prosecutor.
No change in independent position and responsibility for content of verdicts	Judges are appointed for life and are formally independent. Judges are responsible for the content of verdicts.	Judges are appointed for life and are formally independent. Judges are responsible for the content of verdicts.
Decentralization of authority on administrative matters	The ministry decides on major administrative matters. A collective of judges, presided over by the president plus the head of staff, decided on judicial matters and minor administrative matters.	Newly appointed administrative authorities composed of a general manager (former head of staff), a guiding middle manager of the court, and five heads of staff departments (general and technical services, messenger services, personnel, finance, information technology) decide on administrative affairs. A collective of judges, presided over by an executive committee of the president and four vice presidents, decide on judicial matters. In addition, these meetings are now attended by the court's middle manager.
Modification in oversight of the clerks' daily work	Judges guide the daily work of clerks who worked for them.	Judges guide the judicial content of the clerks' work. Unit managers (and their superiors) guide the administrative side of the clerks' daily work.
Decentralization of authority to decide on budgets	The ministry decides on budgets and allocation of budgets.	National criteria for caseload per judge have been developed to support allocation of resources within and across units and across regional courts based on output quantity. Yearly planning and control contracts formed between the local board and ministry, specifying output goals, performance improvements, and the total budget. The local board decides on the allocation of budgets within the new regional organization.
Shift from collective to divisional structure	A collective of judges cover all areas of law, allocating cases to judges and assigning clerks to cases.	Judges, clerks, and administrative staff are assigned to units covering one area of law (criminal, commercial, family, public administration); the judges are presided over by a vice president, and the clerks and administrative personnel are supervised by the unit manager.

judges, who are appointed for life, nor their responsibility for the content of verdicts. As before, the judges collectively determined their affairs in meetings presided over by an executive committee of the vice presidents and the president.

The reorganization decentralized the court's administration. Before the reorganization, the central office of the ministry handled most administrative and budget matters, whereas the collective of judges, together with the head of the support staff, dealt with judicial and minor administrative matters. The judges broadly guided the daily work of the support staff, including, for instance, allowing clerks to have flexible work hours. Under the new system, the former head of staff acts as general manager and supervises the court's middle manager and the heads of the staff departments (general and technical services, messenger services, personnel, finance, and information technology). The middle manager, in turn, supervises the work of the unit managers in the units of law. The unit managers guide the daily operations of the judicial and administrative clerks.²

The Ministry of Justice now sets each court's goals for output, performance improvements, and budgets per unit through yearly planning and control contracts. Criteria for caseloads per judge and per unit have been reformulated so that quantitative performance can be compared nationally across units and across regional courts, and resources are then allocated between units based on output quantity. A five-member board (general manager, court president, two senior cantonal judges, and the highest-ranking public prosecutor) plans and manages contracts with the ministry and allocates budgets. The ministry left much discretion to the 19 courts to structure their activities within the prescribed framework. New specifications were to be agreed upon between vice presidents (representing the judges in their unit) and newly appointed unit managers, between the president (representing the across-unit collective of judges) and the court's middle manager, and among members of the board.

Interview and Research Methodology

We studied distrust at the court of law through a social interactionist lens (Blumer 1969, Woods 1983), focusing on organization members' perspectives and reported (re)actions.³ We developed case data from interviews with 70 of the 200 court employees, as well as field notes from other encounters. For the interviews, the president, vice presidents, and all newly appointed administrators were key informants. Interviewees were selected by a stratified random sampling method with professional group, hierarchical position, and units of law as strata, yielding a 100% response. Of the 30 judges, 10 were interviewed, in addition to the president. During the research period, the project leader attended meetings to observe interactions between the two groups, and the researchers engaged in informal conversations

with members of all groups. Before the interviews, reorganization documents were studied to determine what had changed and why the ministry deemed the changes necessary.

The interviews addressed a broad array of organizational topics.⁴ The effects of the reorganization on all types of relationships and daily work experiences were allowed to surface. Our analysis focuses on intergroup relations, particularly those between judges and administrators and the strategies both groups employed to cope with the new situation. The interviews followed Kvale's (1996) topic-guided methodology, which aims to get long answers by posing short, nondirective questions. Each topic is approached in a nondirective way to uncover the perspectives of the interviewees.⁵ To introduce a topic, a nondirective, general question was asked (e.g., "Within this court, are there many different groups?"). After this introductory question, interviewers used the interviewees' wording to phrase follow-up questions, repeating what was said and then asking for (i) an explanation (e.g., Why do you feel this way? Why did this happen?), (ii) an example, or (iii) the sequence of events (e.g., Did this happen before or after...? What happened next? How did they react?). When no new information surfaced on the topic through open-ended questions, the interviewer then asked more directive questions, mostly to check information received in other interviews. The interviews lasted between 60 and 150 minutes.

Interviews were taped, transcribed verbatim, and together with field notes from observations and personal conversations entered into a qualitative data matrix, with topics listed in the columns and respondents in the rows (Miles and Huberman 1984). A team of three researchers analyzed the data. Every part of the matrix was checked by a second researcher for accuracy. Ambiguities in interpretation were discussed in a meeting with a third researcher and resolved by follow-up informal conversations with the respondent and one or more other members of the group until no doubt about the interpretation remained. This procedure was also applied to arrive at an agreement on the theoretical inferences drawn from the data.

To analyze the data, our interpretative approach drew on Blumer's (1969) methodology, Schutz's (1973) concept and theory formation, Silverman's (2001) analytical induction, and the work of Lee (1991) and Orton (1997) on the integration of theory in interpretative organizational research methods. Lee, following Schutz, proposes a three-level model in which meaning-giving by organizational members is validated and then gradually and systematically transformed into theoretical understandings.⁶ The goal was not to force data into categories but to allow the matching of data and theoretical concepts and to allow new categories to emerge from the data where prior research had not revealed such aspects

of phenomena. Following this model, in the first, purely inductive phase, we systematically compared data from individual members and described the data in the language of the respondents in each group. These descriptions were later used to conduct a member check for accuracy.

In the second research phase, the data were ordered into broad second-order categories, derived from the sensitizing concepts of perspective and strategy. The first question asked of the interview material was, *which aspects of the relationship did both groups mention as problematic or positive?* The column "Participant description of the relationship" in Table 2 summarizes aspects of the intergroup relation that were discussed as issues (all problematic) in the eyes of the own group by several group members and which were not invalidated by others. The next question was, *why did they perceive these aspects as problematic?* Participant explanations were examined to determine why each aspect was perceived as a problem (see the columns under "Participant perceptions"). The third question was, *which behaviors were seen as related to each perceived problem?* For each perceived problem, interview passages were studied that referred to how the own group (re)acted to handle this problem (see the columns under "Participant actions") and how the other group reacted.

In the third phase, the theory–data comparison phase, the data, ordered in these second-order categories, were in several rounds systematically compared with theoretical ideas from the literature to build a theoretical understanding of the intergroup relations in the concepts of the researcher (e.g., third-order categories). Because there were several signals that mutual distrust suffused the intergroup relation, a first set of analytical rounds was to determine whether the phenomenon observed was indeed intergroup distrust. A second set focused on the emergence of distrust; a third set, on distrust development. In the first two sets of rounds, we examined the third-order concepts needed to grasp distrust as a phenomenon, its antecedents, and consequences. For instance, the broad category of perceptions was divided into the third-order constructs: value incongruence perceptions and negative attributions (see the columns under "Participant perceptions" in Table 2 for an overview). In the third set of rounds, focusing on concepts to grasp distrust development, we found several aspects in the data that could not be explained adequately by insights from the distrust literature, such as the escalation of negative behaviors in the sequence of negative reciprocity. The intergroup relations and the conflict escalation literature both pointed to overmatching or disproportional reactions, a mechanism we determined should be included in our model. In the analysis section, we more fully describe the source of the model's concepts.

Before we used the interview and conversation data to inductively construct a theoretical understanding of

this process, we checked the validity of the data and whether our sample was representative of the groups. We presented a detailed report to all organization members, documenting the interview data for each group in its own terms, with researchers' interpretations of intergroup relations included in a separate section. The report was discussed in all groups within the organization. No modifications in the description of the data or in the interpretations were requested, and all groups confirmed that the report accurately represented their situation.

Results Concerning the Emergence and Development Of Intergroup Distrust

This section summarizes the data from the interviews and conversations to present judges' and administrators' perspectives on the new structure and intergroup relations.

A Framework for Contrasting the Perspectives of the Two Groups

Three organizational changes surfaced in both groups as primary reasons for the negative effects on their working relations: (i) the "double" character of the new structure (dual authority), (ii) the newly installed quantitative output control system, and (iii) the reorganization process. Exhibiting the familiar attributes of out-group studies, both groups interpreted their own actions as guided by positive values and motives and the other group's actions and motives as more negative—a pattern that in the subsequent analysis suggested that mutual distrust had developed.

Overall, judges interpreted the reorganization in terms of threats to quality and their ability to control quality, two things they highly valued. They saw the reorganization as favoring the quantity of verdicts over the quality of verdicts and as impairing their ability to regulate work through dialogue and mutual adjustment. Administrators initially saw the reorganization as an opportunity to design and implement administrative processes to increase the court's efficiency and effectiveness. As the process unfolded, however, they experienced the hostility of judges and clerks to the new hierarchy as barriers to the success of the reorganization and their own role in it. They felt that two things they highly valued were threatened: the effectiveness/efficiency of work processes and the hierarchy as a means to regulate work.

Contrasting Perceptions of "Double Structure"

Judges. The judges' interpretation of the new double structure points to three problem foci: relations with the newly appointed administrative authorities, relations with support staff (especially clerks), and operations of the newly installed local board. The judges explained that the high value they attach to the quality of verdicts made them test any measure taken in the new

Table 2 Intergroup Relationship: Descriptions, Interpretations, and Actions

Participant description of the relationship	Participant perceptions		Participant actions	
	Perceptions of value incongruence and vulnerability ^a	Negative attributions	Diminished cooperation	Avoidance of interaction
<p>Judges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — They insist on a quota of verdicts. — They make poor decisions that do not promote the quality of verdicts. — They fence off their power domain, make decisions over our heads. — They are unwilling to improve decisions that negatively affect quality. — They are unwilling to explain decisions. — They shun responsibility for failures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — <i>They undermine our core value of quality.</i> — They will not respect the integrity of the judiciary. — They threaten our reputations/careers. — <i>They undermine our core value of quality.</i> — They value unilateral direction over dialogue to solve problems and disagreements. — They do not respect our valued and fundamental judicial practice of dialogue to solve problems and resolve disagreements. — They do not value explanations to legitimate decisions. — They do not respect dialogue. — They do not value responsibility for and transparency regarding errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — They do not care for the integrity of the judiciary. — They intentionally reject improving poor decisions through dialogue. — They intentionally resist explaining decisions. — They do not show responsibility for and transparency regarding errors. — They are motivated by power. — They do not accept responsibility for their actions. — They do not value efficiency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Contesting quotas and other criteria — Contesting decisions — Noncompliance with senseless bureaucratic measures — Reversing decisions through the president — Contesting unexplained decisions — Spreading secondhand rumors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Retreating from battle zones — Closing ranks — Retreating from battle zones — Closing ranks — Within-group interactions to discuss noncompliance — Making private telephone calls to share outrage — Retreating from battle zones — Closing ranks — Retreating from battle zones — Closing ranks — Making telephone calls on weekends to share moral outrage — Avoiding of direct interaction — Refusing to explain or legitimize decisions (the less you say, the less can be contested) — Not directly confronting them but going behind their backs to gain compliance
<p>Administrators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — They contest our decisions. — They meddle in our affairs. — They obstruct improvements. — They do not comply with administrative procedures. — They collectively acted to overturn a decision of the general manager through the president. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — <i>They undermine our authority.</i> — They prefer individual autonomy over organizational efficiency. — They threaten the success of reorganization and our careers. — They do not respect the value of administrative criteria of effectiveness. — They threaten our ability to do our jobs well. — <i>They undermine our authority.</i> — They do not respect authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — They intentionally obstruct our initiatives for improvements. — They intentionally impede implementation of decisions out of self-interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Ignoring their objections to impose discipline through unit managers and clerks — Conveying clearly we decide, you don't — Obstructing their planned actions by appealing to higher authorities or removing options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Refusing to explain or legitimize decisions (the less you say, the less can be contested) — Not directly confronting them but going behind their backs to gain compliance

Note. The italicized text indicates the perceptions of value incongruence that initially triggered distrust.

structure against its effects on the quality of their work outcomes. Judges said that under the double structure, administrators took “poor measures” that undermined verdict quality and attempted to “fence off their power domain” (J6),⁷ resisting dialogue with the judges, particularly about clerks’ assignments. As one judge noted, “They begin with a statement of power: ‘I decide and you don’t. If you want to say something about it... I will listen to you, but I am the one who decides and no one else’” (J6). Where before they had controlled the quality of the administrative support, judges now felt they were forced to accept whatever support was offered, regardless of the consequences on the quality of their own work. Under the new system, for example, administrators imposed a strict 9-to-5 workday, leaving little time for informal meetings or for working after 5 P.M. This was a change that frustrated both judges and clerks, who were used to coordinating their efforts through dialogue—a process both groups highly valued.

Judges also complained that they were now sometimes left out of the administrative decision loop, purportedly “to free them from time-consuming meetings” (J1). But they suspected that the real reason was to allow the general manager to gain strategic power in the local board. The judges felt that they could not prevent the board from playing “these sly tricks” (J8). But on a few occasions they did fight back. For example, when a cutback in the number of clerks was threatened, judges shared their outrage in private weekend telephone calls and then displayed their collective outrage to the president, who eventually forced the general manager to change the decision.

Administrators. By contrast, administrators saw the new double structure as a positive change that offered them the authority to rebuild court processes into a “well-oiled machine” that could handle far more cases than before. As noted by one administrator, “With the decentralization, we finally have gained control over our own organizational processes. Now it is up to us to make it work” (A1). Administrators resented that their ability to shape the organization was limited by the judges’ independent position: “To get [the judges’] cooperation, I personally have to convince each individual judge that the project is beneficial for them or for the organization... If only they had a boss who could tell them to cooperate, our work would be much easier” (A3). Thus, where the judges valued dialogue, the administrators saw it as an impediment that threatened the court’s potential for efficiency. They also saw the judges’ collective rebellions as undermining the hierarchical authority that administrators so deeply valued.

Conflicting Interpretations of Quantitative Output Control

Judges. Judges’ pride in their performance turned into severe worry that a growing emphasis on the quantity

of verdicts would threaten the quality of their work and, by extension, their reputations, independence, and even careers (if rushed verdicts were later overruled by a higher court). Under the new system, contracts “set by bureaucrats” (J9) allowed little time or discretion to debate unclear laws or to align verdicts with other judges and courts. Judges even questioned the effect of this output control on society: “Preserving the citizens’ feelings that they live in a society where justice is done is our responsibility... If the trustworthiness of justice is lost, the steadiness of society will suffer” (J1).

Administrators. Administrators saw the system of output control as a means to promote the court’s effectiveness and efficiency: “Output quantity is an efficient and transparent base for allocation of resources between units. Without measuring output, it would become much harder to run an organization like this” (A1). Although they noted that judges objected to both the idea of output criteria and its measurement, administrators did acknowledge the ministry’s cumbersome design: “The planning and control instrument in itself is very good, but it is not developed on the level where people must deal with it on a daily basis. It is developed on the 17th floor of the ministry, so to speak” (A2). Some administrators said that they, like the judges, valued the quality of verdicts as an important criterion for effectiveness of the court. They did not see this goal as incompatible with efficiency but worried that the new structure could prove unworkable if the judges refused to comply with output norms.

Problems with the Reorganization Process and Their Effect on Intergroup Relations

Judges. To judges, the reorganization introduced “a host of problems” (J4), such as administrators who were unwilling to engage in dialogue about the measures taken or decisions made and, unlike how judges perceived themselves, did not take responsibility for failures. In particular, they felt that the newly formed departments (personnel, finance, information technology, and services) lacked a client-centered attitude. Information, provisions, and services were now delivered only after long delays and troubleshooting, and when judges tried to get more involved, administrators tended to accuse judges of being “meddlesome in affairs that are out of their jurisdiction” (A2). As a result, judges described their troubled relations with administrators as “clouded by distrust” (J2). One judge explained her colleagues’ feelings: “They do not trust the general manager. They think that he is eager to gather as much power as possible and that he will use it and may even aim to misuse it” (J7).

Administrators. The administrators also cited problems with the reorganization. They saw the ministry as

limiting the very autonomy it decentralized to them, imposing disruptive, time-consuming initiatives (such as information-gathering “best practices” projects) that often required “selling” (A3) ideas to uncooperative judges. The administrators felt that judges’ increased complaints (“as if they were entitled to a say in these matters”; (A1)) arose partly from a lack of clarity about the allocation of power and responsibilities between the judges and themselves. For the administrators, not only did “meddlesome” (A2) judges blame administrators for anything that went wrong, they frequently bypassed administrative department heads to complain directly to the general manager without giving administrators a chance to explain. This was interpreted by some administrators as suggesting that judges “feel too good to deal with us in person” (A6). Since administrators’ performance would be assessed based on their success in this new organizational format, they complained that the contestations “hit us hard” (A2). Administrators reacted most negatively when the judges “undermined hierarchy” (A3) with collective pressure on the president to make the general manager reverse an unpopular decision.

Both Sides at an Impasse

Administrators and judges agreed on one point: “There is a lot of mutual distrust between the judiciary and administrative managers in this organization” (A2).

Judges. The judges did not see how these intergroup problems could be solved. They reported “retreating from the battle zones” (J7), contesting decisions, closing ranks and occasionally showing collective outrage to get a decision reversed, and playing the rumor network to get even. They resisted cooperating with administrative initiatives, especially those they perceived as irrelevant to the quality of justice (for example, a number of judges refused to obey a new rule that required internal mail to list a room number beside the name of an addressee). According to one judge, “We do not comply with senseless bureaucratic procedures. But, on the other hand, if a procedure promotes quality of our verdicts, we will willingly cooperate” (J9).

Administrators. Administrators feared that if judges did not accept the double structure, the reorganization would collapse. Administrators tried to discipline the judges through the unit managers and clerks, as well as by avoiding interaction or being vague about reasons for new measures; they felt that “the less you say, the less can be contested” (A4). They discussed the problems in the seclusion of their own group. They agreed that they should prevent losing ground by standing firm on administrative decisions, signaling that they had the authority to conduct administrative affairs, not the judges.

Analyzing the Emergence and Development of Intergroup Distrust

In this section, we draw on the distrust, intergroup conflict, and escalation/intractability literatures to formulate theoretical constructs that accurately reflect the data and to develop the building blocks of a dynamic theory of distrust development.

Three analytical questions guided our analysis: (1) Is this intergroup distrust? (2) How did distrust initially emerge? (3) How did distrust develop?

Is This Intergroup Distrust?

The data showed numerous cues that the relation between the groups was negatively laden. But is it mutual distrust? We think the data clearly indicate so, for several reasons. First, the simplest indicator⁸ was that the groups themselves explicitly labeled the relation as such. The judges mentioned distrust of administrators. The administrators spoke of mutual distrust.

Second, cues could be observed that represented characteristics of distrust. We built on the common understanding that distrust is characterized by *pervasive negative perceptions and expectations* regarding the behavior or intentions of distrusted others. As Table 2 shows, negative perceptions regarding the other group abounded in both groups, a condition that is consistent with the pervasive character of distrust—the notion that distrust, once triggered, spreads from one domain to another. In this case, however, pervasiveness took a definite form. We observed *not a single positive perception* in the data. All aspects of the relation the groups found relevant to mention in the interviews were perceived negatively by both groups. This finding is consistent with the tenet from conflict escalation that after the threshold is reached, strong links will forge all elements of the process coherently into an integrated, simple system (Coleman et al. 2007). This observation supports the notion that distrust, once developed, fully generalizes, leaving no room for positive observations on which trust can be built.

Based on these observations, we formulated two propositions, to be tested in future research.

PROPOSITION 1. *Distrust is pervasive across domains throughout the relationship.*

PROPOSITION 2. *Distrust obviates the positive observations on which trust can be built.*

More specific propositions on pervasiveness (Propositions 7 and 8) are formulated below.

How Did Distrust Emerge Initially?

On the basis of agreement across the conflict and distrust literatures, we contend that perceptions of (core) value incongruence trigger distrust if a threshold is reached. Under these conditions, groups make a punctuated switch from a lower(ed) trust frame to a distrust

frame. In our case, interpretations of the other group's actions as signaling value incongruence, raising serious concerns in both groups, were conspicuously present throughout the data (see the "Perceptions of value incongruence and vulnerability" column in Table 2). Both groups explained that early in the reorganization process, they came to realize that one of their core values (see italicized text in Table 2) at the heart of their beliefs and sense of their professional codes and identity was threatened by the other group's attitudes and behaviors. That, in their eyes, the administrators focused on quantity of verdicts, made poor administrative decisions to the detriment of quality, and were unwilling to change decisions to minimize these negative effects was perceived by the judges as a threat to their core value of quality verdicts. The administrators, in turn, perceived the judges as undermining their core value of hierarchy by "meddling" in administrators' affairs and contesting their decisions.

The values at stake in both groups are consistent with the contrasting values discussed in professional-organization studies. The judges reflected studies of professionals as committed to high occupational standards and as valuing autonomy, collegial control, and self-control (Vandenberg and Scarpello 2006). By contrast, the administrators, in valuing hierarchical control and authority and conformity to organizational goals, reflected commitment to organizational values (Vandenberg and Scarpello 2006).

Both groups said their perceptions of value incongruence emerged from initial worries about the actions of the other group and its members' motivations. These initial perceived incongruences were initially isolated and too mild to trigger distrust. Both groups sought working interactions, signifying that they were still in a trust frame, in the first stage of conflict escalation as described by Coleman et al. (2007), Friedman and Currall (2003), and others, given the domain specificity of problems and the possibility of compensating actions. The judges tried to persuade the administrators to engage in dialogue—their prized problem-solving mechanism—about the quality of verdicts and quality consequences of decisions. The administrators tried to persuade the judges to cooperate in the new structure and in specific projects. When these bridging attempts did not succeed, the reactions of the other group were negatively perceived and further interpreted as yet another signal of a core value incongruence, appearing to cumulate into a level of vulnerability that triggered distrust. Over time, perceived value incongruences and related vulnerability perceptions pervaded the values of both sides. The judges came to understand their value of dialogue as a problem-solving mechanism, of explaining decisions and taking responsibility for errors, as incongruent with the administrators' values. The administrators gradually saw their value of efficiency and administrative effectiveness

as incongruent with the judges' values (see the "Perceptions of value incongruence and vulnerability" column in Table 2).

Value incongruence perceptions are especially unsettling because they often invoke feelings of uncertainty, perceived threat, and other negative expectations of the other group (Riek et al. 2006, Sitkin and Roth 1993). These negative expectations increase perceived vulnerability concerning the future actions of the other(s). The data showed that both groups' value incongruence perceptions were related to negative expectations of the other group's behavior, such as the expectation that the others would not respect one's own core values or that the others would threaten resources (judges) or career opportunities (administrators).

We posit that, as value incongruence perceptions and subsequent negative expectations strengthen, they will raise increasingly severe feelings of vulnerability until a threshold is reached and distrust, the unwillingness to accept this level of vulnerability, is triggered. However, our data do not provide for a test of punctuated triggering of distrust, because distrust had already emerged by the time our research began. We therefore formulated Proposition 3, to be tested in future research.

PROPOSITION 3. *Perceptions of (core) value incongruence trigger distrust if a threshold level is surpassed.*

We do not posit a universal threshold. Instead, we expect that the level of value incongruence necessary to trigger distrust will vary across contexts and groups. Contextual factors include the level of risk involved in tasks or cultural characteristics such as the tendency to tolerate cultural differences (Fukuyama 1995). Group factors include shared risk taking (Sitkin and Pablo 1992) or shared norms regulating distrust as a legitimate reaction to the actions of others.

How Did Distrust Develop?

The third question concerns the process by which distrust develops. In this case, what may have started as a single negative perception regarding one aspect of the relationship, after crossing the threshold, appears to have pervaded all aspects and coalesced into a pervasive negative lens.

Components of the Self-Amplifying Cycle of Distrust

The data are consistent with the notion that *amplification* is central to the cycle of distrust. In the course of the analysis, we will distinguish four mechanisms of amplification: pervasiveness, the spread of negative perceptions across domains in the relationship, and three intensification mechanisms (intensification of negative behaviors through overmatching, intensification of negative perceptions through negative reciprocity, and intensification of negative perceptions through within-group convergence). *Overmatching* refers to the tendency to react to negative behaviors of others with

more extreme negative behaviors. Intensification through *negative reciprocity* refers to increasingly negative perceptions resulting from the perceptual processing of increasingly negative behaviors and the accumulation of negative perceptions as the sequence of actions and reactions unfolds. Intensification through *within-group convergence* refers to increasingly negative perceptions resulting from the tendency of groups in conflict to increasingly share their negative perceptions of the other group.

Based on our conceptual analysis, we earlier distinguished three broad categories of factors that may play a part in an amplifying cycle of intergroup distrust: negative perceptions (and expectations), negative behaviors, and within-group convergence. In line with this categorization, we found that the data could be exhaustively captured in these three categories. We observed two types of negative perceptions: (i) negative attributions of events, intentions, and motives to the other group and (ii) perceived value incongruences and related vulnerabilities. These appeared to have intensified and pervaded in the course of distrust development (see the "Participant perceptions" columns in Table 2), in which within-group convergence played a part. In the course of the interaction between the groups, two specific distrust-based behaviors, diminished cooperation and avoidance of interaction, seem to have amplified as well (see the "Participant actions" columns in Table 2), with negative reciprocity as the underlying dynamic. In line with social interactionist theorizing, moreover, we observed that the other group's actions were negatively perceived and that these perceptions, in turn, served to justify one's own group reactions to the actions of the others. Figure 1 models the components and relations between components of the distrust cycle we discuss below.

Negative Reciprocity

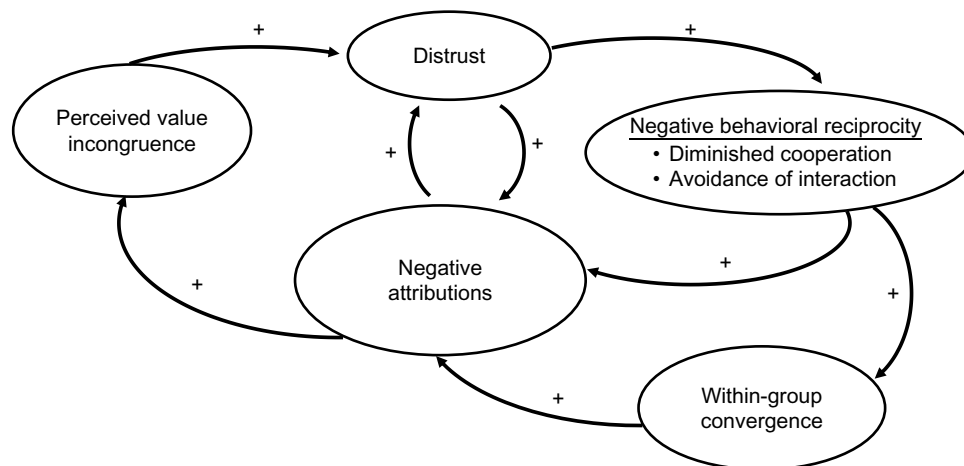
As a psychological state, intergroup distrust, once triggered, is not visible to the target group until the distrusting

group expresses its distrust through manifest behaviors. These behaviors stimulate the other group to demonstrate distrust in return, creating a pattern of reciprocated negative behaviors ("negative reciprocity") (Serva et al. 2005). Whereas reciprocity has been discussed as a driver of conflict escalation (Friedman and Currall 2003, Pruitt and Kim 2004, Youngs 1986), only a few studies have explicitly or implicitly referred to negative reciprocity as a process that operates as an amplifier of distrust (e.g., Fox 1974, Serva et al. 2005). Gouldner's (1960) work on the norm of reciprocity suggests that recipients of harm may feel a normative justification (or even obligation) to respond in kind, thus reciprocating harm with harm. Youngs (1986), who built on Gouldner to distinguish proportional and disproportional "overmatching" forms of negative reciprocity, demonstrated overmatching to be a conflict-escalating (intensifying) mechanism. If negative reciprocity develops, behaviors and behavioral reactions of both groups become more harmful. These conflict escalation studies also found disproportional reactions typical of the stage 2 process. This insight helped us to understand the intensification of negative behaviors, since prior distrust development research had identified but not explained that process. We therefore formulated Proposition 4.

PROPOSITION 4. *Distrust promotes the distruster's tendency to "overmatch" in reaction to perceived negative behaviors of the distrusted.*

The tendency to overmatch negative behaviors of the other group helps to explain not only the intensification of negative behaviors but also the intensification of negative attributions to the others that build on these negative behaviors. The more harmful the other group's behaviors are perceived to be, the more negative the attributions. Intensification of negative attributions in the course of a process of negative reciprocity is also promoted by repetition and the accumulation of negative perceptions

Figure 1 The Self-Amplifying Cycle of Intergroup Distrust



resulting from it. Under these conditions, each negative action of the other group is perceived as a cumulative addition to a chain of previous negative actions, which makes it appear more certain and more harmful than if it were perceived in isolation as well as increasingly more harmful than the previous set of actions.

Own group reactions are legitimized by negative attributions to the other group and resulting value incongruence perceptions. Each negative perception of the other group's actions intensifies negativity, which also legitimizes the group's own increasingly harmful actions. Intensifying negatively reciprocal actions is thus cyclically related to the process of intensifying negative perceptions, which, in turn, feed into and reinforce distrust (see Figure 1).

The case data provided indicators of intensifying negative behaviors and perceptions as the sequence of negative reciprocity unfolded. The judges, for instance, explained that they initially asked for explanations of administrative decisions, but when administrators resisted, the judges' willingness to cooperate with projects decreased, and later they refused to comply with what they characterized as "senseless" bureaucratic measures. However, when procedural standards were violated by the general manager and, as a consequence, resources were taken from the court, the judges felt things had gone "too far." Only then did they describe the collective outrage that stimulated them to pressure the president to make the general manager reverse the unfavorable decision. Of all the actions taken by the judges, the administrators considered this to be the most harmful to their position.

Administrators, in turn, said that they started out explaining measures to the judges, but when the judges wanted to discuss every measure, the administrators started to explain less to avoid objections, which they perceived as threatening their success and their rightful exercise of authority. When the administrators made clear that they planned to decide without consultation, the judges took this stance as a considerable threat to their core values. As the process developed, each group came to perceive their valued goals and careers as being threatened by the behavior of the other.

In this case, distrust led to actions of negative overmatching reciprocity, intensification of negative attributions, and subsequent value incongruence perceptions as an amplifying mechanism. Hence, Proposition 5 follows.

PROPOSITION 5. *Negative reciprocity promotes intensification of negative attributions to distrusted others.*

The case data show that the negative actions and reactions of the groups appear to take two forms: *diminished cooperation in the realm of formal, organizationally prescribed relations* and the *avoidance of interaction in the realm of informal relations*.

Diminished Cooperation. Theories of trust and distrust recognize cooperation as a key consequence (Deutsch 1971, Fox 1974), and our case data show diminished cooperation to be a major distrust-related behavior. Both groups explained that over time they grew more unwilling to meet the other group's preferences and requests, signifying a reciprocal diminishing willingness to act cooperatively to support the other group's values and valued goals. For example, judges restricted their cooperation to projects they found relevant and refused to comply with "senseless" bureaucratic measures; administrators in turn grew unwilling to discuss their actions and decisions.

Avoidance of Interaction with the Other Group. Although avoidance has been called a distrust-based behavior (Bies and Tripp 1996, Bijlsma-Frankema 2004, March and Olsen 1975) and a factor in intergroup conflict and escalation (Friedman and Currall 2003, Riek et al. 2006), it has not been proposed as a form of negative reciprocity or as part of a cycle of amplification, as we observed in this case of organizationally embedded groups. Here, the groups could not avoid all contact because they were required to meet and work together in organizationally prescribed relations. But they avoided informal interaction. Both groups saw this avoidance as a way to prevent greater vulnerability to the other group's actions and as a way to sidestep unpleasant encounters. The message conveyed (and reciprocated) was an increasingly lowered willingness to engage in spontaneous interaction with the other group. Judges closed ranks and sought the seclusion of their own group. Administrators did the same. In the end, the groups ceased interacting informally, even in unavoidable formal meetings.

The intensification of negative behaviors in the process of negative reciprocity also appeared to promote *within-group convergence* of negative perceptions of the other group, leading to increasingly shared and intensified negative attributions (and subsequent perceptions of value incongruence), another mechanism of amplification. The literature on intergroup conflict acknowledges growing within-group coherence in negative perceptions of the others as a mechanism in intergroup polarization (Bies and Tripp 1996, Labianca et al. 1998, Nelson 1989, Pruitt and Kim 2004). In our case, both groups not only reacted to diminished cooperation and increasing avoidance of the others with intensified negative attributions but also minimized the opportunity to convey contradictory data or alternative explanations that could reduce or correct the negative perceptions—both effects contributing to intensification of negative attributions through growing within-group convergence. Hence, Proposition 6 follows.

PROPOSITION 6. *Negative reciprocity (diminished cooperation and avoidance of interaction with distrusted*

others) promotes intensification of negative attributions through growing within-group convergence.

Negative Perceptions

The data suggest that the pervasiveness and intensification of negative perceptions are important amplification mechanisms (see the “Participant perceptions” columns in Table 2). Negative perceptions include negative attributions and perceptions of value incongruence.

Negative attributions to the other group’s actions, seen as producing negative effects and being guided by negative motives (Doherty 1982), have been frequently mentioned in the distrust (Kramer 1996, March and Olsen 1975, Sitkin and Roth 1993) and conflict (Friedman and Currall 2003, Pruitt and Kim 2004) literatures. Distrust, once engendered, promotes pervasiveness of negative attributions about distrusted others as a mechanism of amplification. Negative attributions, in turn, affect distrust either directly or through their effect on value incongruence perceptions (see Figure 1), and they legitimize negative actions toward the other group.

The data demonstrate that all perceptions of the other group were negatively laden, indicating that pervasiveness had taken definite form. Negative attributions often manifested as one group perceiving negative events as being caused by the other group, even in the presence of disconfirming data. The following is just one striking example: When the judges found out about a decision to reduce the number of clerks, they suspected one administrator to have influenced this decision. The administrator showed them the minutes of the meeting to convince them this was not so, but the judges told the project leader, “We saw the evidence, yet we still believe that he was involved, one way or another.” In several other instances, both groups attributed actions as intentional and based on negative motives (see the “Negative attributions” column in Table 2). For example, the judges interpreted the administrators’ unwillingness to engage in dialogue (about what the judges saw as poor administrative decisions) as the administrators’ intentional refusal to explain decisions. The administrators saw judges as intentionally obstructing improvements that the administrators thought were important and viewed judges’ noncompliance with administrative procedures as intentionally impeding the implementation of decisions. Negative motives were also cited: judges said that the administrators were motivated by power, and administrators said that the judges were motivated by self-interest. We therefore formulated Proposition 7.

PROPOSITION 7. *Distrust promotes pervasiveness of negative attributions.*

Perceptions of Value Incongruence and Related Vulnerabilities

Negative attributions to the other group have been found to translate into and reinforce perceptions of value

incongruence (Sitkin and Roth 1993, Sitkin and Stickel 1996), increasing negative interactions between groups and expanding the number of topics at issue (Pruitt and Kim 2004). Where negative attributions are reactions to behaviors already displayed, perceived value incongruence (and the vulnerability concerns it raises) encompasses negative *expectations of future behaviors* of the other group. Based on attributions made, actors form deeper interpretations of the other group’s values as underlying mechanisms that produce their negative behaviors. Pervasive and intensified negative attributions can thus be expected to promote pervasive and intensified value incongruence interpretations.

In our case, distrust was triggered initially by the interpretation of differences regarding one core value of each group. The judges felt their core value of quality of justice had been undermined, and the administrators felt similarly about their core value of authority. Both groups expected the behaviors of the other, which they perceived as undermining, to continue, thus triggering distrust of the other group. The data show that after distrust arose, other perceptions of (core) value incongruence (and vulnerability perceptions flowing from them) surfaced to pervade other domains (see the “Perceptions of value incongruence and vulnerability” column in Table 2). The judges perceived the administrators’ avoidance behavior as undermining their own core value of dialogue for problem solving and quality enhancement, but then they also believed that administrators threatened their reputations—the very essence of their core values—and hence their career opportunities. In parallel, the administrators perceived a threat to their core value of administrative efficiency and effectiveness in judges’ uncooperativeness and time-consuming, frequent contestations of the administrators’ decisions as well as an additional threat to the realization of their own goals—arising from their core values—and subsequent success in their own careers. So, in the fully developed cycle of distrust, both groups attributed several threats to their core values and the goals rooted in these values to the other group.

Furthermore, both groups interpreted their own actions as guided by positive values and motives and *all* of the other group’s actions and motives as guided by different motives and values, which, strikingly, they uniformly perceived as negative, signifying fully pervasive value incongruence perceptions. This phenomenon approaches mutual disidentification (defining oneself based on *not* being the other; see Dukerich et al. 1998) and is also what Fiol et al. (2009) describe as a characteristic of intractable identity conflicts. Indeed, in our case, both groups’ identities appeared to be threatened by the other group’s perceived values and the pursuit of their valued goals. We therefore formulated the following proposition.

PROPOSITION 8. *Pervasive and intensified negative attributions will promote pervasive and intensified value incongruence perceptions.*

Discussion and Contributions

In this paper, we analyze the distinctive features of intergroup distrust and model how it originates and is reinforced in organizations. Examining distrust in a Dutch court of law provided a rich research context. Building on comparisons of empirical data and insights from relevant literatures, we offer several significant extensions to the literature on organizational distrust processes.

Several conceptual challenges produced three key contributions. First, by extending the scattered insights from the trust, conflict, and professional–organization literatures and drawing on our empirical observations, we developed a more nuanced conceptual distinction between (low) trust and distrust. Second, drawing on distrust and intergroup conflict literatures and examining factors that may play a part in intergroup distrust dynamics, we designed categories to capture the many factors discussed across these literatures. Third, we analyzed how these factors, perceptions, and behaviors relate in a dynamic intergroup model, including interaction between groups. This analysis is a significant contribution given the scarcity of models in general and intergroup models in particular across these literatures.

Distinguishing Distrust from Trust

Our choice to treat distrust as a distinct concept from low trust was built on past conceptual distinctions (e.g., Sitkin and Roth 1993, Lewicki and Tomlinson 2003) and more recent research (Benamati et al. 2006, Chang and Fang 2013, Cho 2006, Dimoka 2010, Komiak and Benbasat 2008, Ou and Sia 2010). We took as our point of departure two commonly accepted characteristics of distrust and distrust development that had not been used to conceptualize (low) trust: *pervasive negative perceptions* and a *self-amplifying cycle*.

Our theoretical examination of the determinants of distrust across conflict and distrust literatures finds *value incongruence perceptions* to be a determinant of distrust—again a concept that to our knowledge has not been conceptualized as a determinant of (low) trust. In our search for more specific process characteristics of the self-amplifying cycle, we found allusions in several studies of conflict escalation/intractability to contrasting process types, representing two stages in conflict escalation with a threshold switch from the first to the second stage (Andersson and Pearson 1999, Coleman et al. 2007, Friedman and Currall 2003, Perlow and Repenning 2009). Based on comparison with what we know about (low) trust and distrust, we contend that low trust processes differ fundamentally from distrust processes and that the switch from low trust to distrust is

punctuated and thus is another feature that distinguishes distrust from trust. Also, given the pervasive character of distrust we observed, our results suggest that distrust obviates the possibility of trust, thus challenging the notion that trust and distrust, although distinct, can coexist (Lewicki and Tomlinson 2003). Further research should investigate how trust and distrust are related and if the differences proposed here hold and, if so, under what conditions.

Other areas of research may benefit from our proposed distinction between low trust and distrust. Studies of conflict escalation may profit from our more precise modeling and our insight that distrust may play a key role in self-reinforcing processes. Moreover, studies of professional–organizational conflicts, while acknowledging value incongruence perceptions as a determinant of these conflicts, argue that such conflicts can be accommodated by trust-related mechanisms in other domains—for instance, by strengthening organizational identification (Bamber and Iyer 2002). By contrast, our analysis suggests that these accommodating mechanisms may be effective in a situation of low trust but not if distrust has been triggered. Future research should test this contention.

Most professional–organization studies and studies of intractable (identity) conflicts address fully established conflicts (Fiol et al. 2009), and thus they neglect the question of why only some conflicts become intractable. In line with the theoretical work of Coleman et al. (2007), we hypothesize that intractable conflicts are more likely to involve pervasive distrust, whereas tractable conflicts are more likely to be characterized by low trust. This proposition is consistent with the Fiol et al. (2009) characterization of intractable identity conflicts as pervasive, or generalizing conflict to other domains. However, Fiol et al. note distrust but do not recognize distrust dynamics; neither do Coleman et al. allude to them. Given the dynamics of distrust we inferred from our case, it is not far-fetched to posit that amplification of distrust is a mechanism in the development of intractable conflicts.

Trigger of Distrust

The case data suggest that value incongruence perceptions triggered distrust and that value incongruence later spread to other perceptions of value incongruence and related vulnerabilities, such as the expectation that the other group would impede the attainment of the focal group's own goals. We were unable to directly ascertain that distrust was triggered in a punctuated mode. Our “tipping point” proposition (Proposition 3) was based on theoretical reasoning, and although retrospective data provide some support, we could not find strong evidence for the proposition because distrust had already emerged when our research began. Future studies will have to test our proposed phenomenon of punctuation and its

hypothesized causal effects. Future research should also carefully study how threshold levels and value incongruence perceptions arise, grow, and dissipate.

Our findings provide a rich opportunity for future exploration of links between perceived value incongruence and identity. Although social identity problems have received less attention in the distrust literature, core values are typically closely aligned with social identity. Our findings show that in the state of fully developed distrust, both groups seemed to engage in mutual disidentification, defining who one is based on not being the other (Dukerich et al. 1998).

A Dynamic Model of Distrust Development

Our dynamic analysis of the development of distrust extends the very general historical portrayal of a self-amplifying “spiral of distrust” (Fox 1974, Sherif et al. 1961, Sitkin and Stickel 1996, Zand 1972), partly by drawing upon the intergroup conflict/escalation and professional–organization literatures. We also conceptualize distrust development as a process of amplification; we specifically trace that process and define its components. We distinguish four amplifying mechanisms: pervasiveness, overmatching of negative behaviors, intensification of negative perceptions through negative reciprocity, and intensification of negative perceptions through within-group convergence. To our knowledge, the mechanisms we delineate have not been proposed together as amplifiers in the cycle of distrust. Our approach not only highlights attributions and interpretations of the other group’s actions but also addresses how these perceptions shape and justify behaviors toward the other group and how these behaviors in an action–reaction sequence intensify and, in turn, influence perceptions.

Implications for Repair Research and Practice

Trust repair studies (Dirks et al. 2009) have focused on repairing low(ered) trust situations, where actions that increase expectations of trustworthiness in a certain domain can be expected to restore trust and subsequently strengthen the willingness of individuals and groups to solve problems that have developed between them (Ferrin et al. 2007). By contrast, our work examines circumstances in which a pervasive negative distrust lens taints how even well-intentioned, trust-focused actions are perceived. These “blood-colored” lenses turn efforts to rebuild trust into suspicion-laden, negative attributions of malice, which reinforce distrust instead of paving the way to trust.

Together with our contention that low trust and distrust processes are distinct and separated by a threshold, our conceptualization questions the idea that trust can be repaired once distrust is engendered. We supply previously unavailable empirical examples of the cycle of negative reciprocity, amplifying attributions,

and value incongruence interpretations. The amplifying mechanisms we found at work in the cycle suggest that if value incongruence perceptions cross the threshold, the cycle will further develop. If this contention is correct, then the reduction of value incongruence to a level below this threshold will be key in halting or reversing the cycle, thus providing room for building trust. This finding would also have implications for trust repair studies. Future work should ascertain how distrust remedies may (or may not) differ from those required for trust repair and whether the foci we propose are necessary to reverse distrust.

Limitations

Ours is a theory-generating rather than a theory-testing study, though we entered the case analysis armed with extant theories from the distrust and intergroup relations literatures. Our analysis is based on a single case, with all of the limitations that this approach implies (Eisenhardt 1989, Yin 1990). Other limitations are more specific to our study. A first limitation is that we did not observe directly whether intergroup distrust was triggered in a punctuated way. Second, our study of distrust between two organizationally embedded groups raises questions about the generalizability of our model to nonorganizational contexts. Behaviors exchanged in negative reciprocity may reflect the limits organizational contexts pose to negative intergroup behaviors, such as diminished cooperation. In other contexts, distrust behaviors may grow more harmful. As for avoidance, several studies propose that it is also a factor in nonorganizational conflicts (Riek et al. 2006), so perhaps this aspect of our theory is readily generalized to nonorganizational contexts.

Future dynamic approaches to distrust emergence and repair should further unpack the process dynamics. Several theoretical and methodological extensions to our study might include multiple case studies, surveys, and experiments to test the implications and generalizability of our observations. Experiments are suitable for controlled testing of the precise causal relations among the variables in our model. Multiple case studies could confirm or negate the generalizability of our findings. Survey studies, using large samples, can systematically test these insights, along with contingencies such as levels of risk or differences in the cultural propensity to distrust.

Conclusion

This study offers a more refined and readily testable model of how distrust arises and grows and which factors should be addressed to halt or reverse the self-amplifying cycle of distrust. As a single case study, it can only be a springboard for more extensive future research. However, by systematically including both distrust perceptions and distrust-based behaviors in our

theorizing, we have created a model that extends the current understanding of what goes on between groups in a mutual distrust relationship. This approach also reveals how perceptions and behaviors coevolve, emphasizing trust and distrust as psychological states that manifest through interlocking cycles of action. Our results provide a springboard for future studies in which the

interrelatedness of actions and cognitions is central to the understanding of distrust and trust as relational phenomena.

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Appendix. Summary of Studies Examining the Trust/Distrust Distinction

Author (year)	Research question/aim	Context/methodology	Summary of results
Chang and Fang (2013)	To explore differences in trust and distrust formation and asymmetric behavioral outcomes.	Online survey; AVE and SEM analyses Sample: 1,193 online customers of several Web stores	AVE analyses show that trust and distrust are distinct constructs. Antecedent asymmetry: a disposition to distrust significantly affects distrust but has no effect on trust. Consequence asymmetry: the negative effect of distrust is stronger than the positive effect of trust on high-risk Internet behaviors.
Dimoka (2010)	To shed light on the nature, dimensionality, distinction, and relative effects of trust and distrust on economic outcomes (willingness to pay a price premium).	Experiments: buying on eBay; using psychometric measures of trust and distrust without and with functional neuroimaging (fMRI) Manipulation: four seller profiles of high/low (H/L) trust and H/L distrust Sample: 177 respondents in behavioral experiments; 15 in fMRI experiments	Distinct neural correlates (activated brain areas) of trust and distrust are identified, lending support to trust and distrust as distinct constructs. Trust is found in the reward, prediction, and uncertainty areas; distrust is found in the intense emotion and fear of loss areas. Prediction of price premiums respondents are willing to pay: neural correlates of distrust have a stronger (negative) effect (29%) than do correlates of trust (20%), explaining a medium-large difference in R^2 (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.18$). Data suggest that the trust–distrust distinction relates to intentional/autonomic types of responses, collected/frenzied natures of responses, and long-term/short-term time horizons: “These findings are consistent with the literature that views trust as developing slowly over time through careful deliberation, while distrust is quick and episodic, based on emotional cues” (p. 390).
Ou and Sia (2010)	To investigate the antecedents (evaluation of Web design attributes, functional perception, and motivational perception of website) and influences of trust and distrust on buying intentions, a theoretical framework is proposed. Asymmetric effects on and of trust and distrust are hypothesized.	Web survey, simulating buying electronic products at two real Web stores Discriminant validity tested in several ways, including AVE square roots and PCA factor analysis Structural model analyzed with PLS analysis Sample: 324 undergraduate and postgraduate students	“The trust and distrust measures show strong within-construct convergent and between-construct discriminant validities, suggesting that trust and distrust are two distinct and separate constructs” (p. 923). Asymmetric effects on trust and distrust are found: distrust is significantly influenced by functional perception but not by motivational perception. Trust is influenced by both functional and motivational perception. Functional perception has an asymmetric effect on trust and distrust, acting more strongly to lower distrust than to build trust. An asymmetric effect of trust and distrust is found: the effect of distrust on lowering buying intentions is greater than the enhancing influence of trust on buying intentions.

Appendix. (cont'd)

Author (year)	Research question/aim	Context/methodology	Summary of results
Komiak and Benbasat (2008)	“This paper theoretically proposes and empirically tests the notion that building trust and distrust in online recommendation agents (RAs) are two sets of distinct and separate processes” (p. 728).	Experimental and qualitative study; random distribution of participants to two conditions: a personalized condition and a nonpersonalized RA condition. Measurement and analysis based on process protocols of participants’ thinking aloud about RA websites. It is proposed that a personalized RA will evoke more trust than would a nonpersonalized RA. Sample: 49 business school students, average of 25-minute protocols; 1,062 processes of trust building and 947 of distrust building	The analysis shows that the pattern of trust and distrust processes differs similarly in the personalized and depersonalized conditions. Distrust is mainly related to a situation when participants become “aware of the unknown,” when the RA is judged incompetent, or when the RA is not matching individuals’ expectations. Trust is more strongly tied to judging RAs as competent, when their information sharing is evaluated in a positive way, and when third parties verify the impression of the respondent. Furthermore, a personalized RA evokes a higher proportion of trust and a lower proportion of distrust than a depersonalized RA.
Cho (2006)	To determine how consumer evaluations of an e-vendor’s businesses operations relate to consumer judgment of e-vendor trustworthiness, consumer trust and distrust of the e-vendor, and consumer behavioral intentions (self-disclosure and willingness to commit). Asymmetric determinants and effects of trust and distrust are hypothesized.	Web survey on books and clothing LISREL path analysis Sample: 593 book purchasers, 288 clothing purchasers	Discriminant validity of trust–distrust distinction by SEM model comparison (free and with a covariance constraint) “strongly indicated that trust and distrust are distinct constructs” (p. 30). Asymmetric determinants of trust and distrust found: benevolence impacted trust more significantly than did competence, whereas competence affected distrust more than did benevolence. Asymmetric effects of trust and distrust found: distrust affected self-disclosure more significantly than did trust, whereas trust had a more significant effect on the willingness to commit than did distrust.
Benamati et al. (2006)	To examine the “nature of trust versus distrust in [an online bank] to determine if they exist as separate—but related—constructs ... and the relative influence of both constructs on user intentions to transact” (p. 2).	Survey; data analyzed with SEM comparison of models and AVE comparison Sample: 513 university students	Discriminant validity of trust–distrust shown by a significant difference between both a free and covariance-restrained SEM model and AVE comparison. Trust is positively related, and distrust negatively related, to intentions to use online banking. Trust is a stronger predictor of use than is distrust.
Clark and Payne (1997)	“To examine the nature of propensity to trust as defined by the mapping sentence and to see whether or not the empirical data would reflect the structure of the definitional framework” (p. 209).	Facet approach used to generate a definitional framework of trust, exploratory phase: 44 interviews; hypotheses testing: survey study, correlations, and smallest space analysis (SSA) Sample: 428 colliery workmen in the British coal industry	“With regard to the distinction between trust and mistrust, evidence of the correlation and the SSA configurations suggest that they may represent two sub-constructs within the overall concept of trusting relations” (p. 222). “The distinction between trust and mistrust items is clearly illustrated in the three dimensional SSA solution: The Trust and mistrust items may be seen to form distinct regions. This is an interesting discovery, as the questionnaire items were designed with the notion that trust and mistrust were opposite ends of a continuum” (p. 215).

Appendix. (cont'd)

Author (year)	Research question/aim	Context/methodology	Summary of results
Wrightsmann (1974)	To reexamine the underlying dimensions of the 84-item Philosophies of Human Nature (PHN) scale, designed by the author in 1964.	Factor analysis of PHN scale items Sample: 530 undergraduates	Based on two separate factor analyses of PHN items, two factors emerged, a positive “beliefs that people are conventionally good” factor (10 items) and a negative factor labeled “cynicism” (10 items). The two factors were correlated to each other only to a limited degree (−0.27 and −0.33 in two samples, respectively), further supporting the notion of two distinct constructs. Wrightsmann recommends the use of these shorter scales for measuring trust and cynicism (distrust), respectively.
Constantinople (1969)	To “attempt to extend a self-concept measure based on E. H. Erikson’s theory . . . to a measure of personality development in late adolescence” (p. 357).	Survey Sample: 952 college students, ranging from freshmen to seniors	Validated scale with two subscales for basic trust and basic mistrust, derived from Erikson scale that theoretically and empirically distinguished trust from distrust. Differential effects on trust and distrust in support of construct distinction: men scored higher on trust and distrust than women. Seniors scored lower on mistrust than freshmen, whereas no class effect on trust was found.

Note. AVE, average variance extracted; PCA, principal component analysis; PLS, partial least squares; SEM, structural equations modeling.

Endnotes

¹Following Festinger (1954), we define *values* in this context as desired end states. *Core values* we define as values that are relevant to participants in a specific context, such as the work context. The social interactionist approach used in this study indicates relevance when respondents talk about these values unsolicited, make comparisons with perceived values of others, and react emotionally to perceived threats to these values.

²We use the term “administrators” to refer collectively to members of the general management team: the general manager, the court’s middle manager, and the managers of the staff departments.

³According to Woods (1983, p. 9), the concept of perspective is defined as “the way people define and interpret the situation they are in, which governs the way they behave in such a situation.” Perspectives are linked to action through strategies. Strategies are not isolated acts but packages of acts interrelated by intention to solve problems thrown up by the situation in the pursuit of valued aims (Woods 1983). Perspectives and strategies are social in nature and are shaped through ongoing interactions with others—in our case, the members of the groups, producing shared meaning-giving and common actions.

⁴The topics used in this study included one’s work situation, relations within one’s work unit, the management of one’s work unit, the management of the court organization, the relations between work units, the relations between professional groups (e.g., judges, administrators), the relation of the court to the environment, past changes in the organization, and expectations for the future.

⁵Kvale’s (1996) rationale is that by beginning with directed questions, the interviewer can create a demand effect and

obtain answers to questions the subjects do not themselves have but feel compelled to answer nonetheless. By starting with open-ended questions, the interviewer can discover what the respondent thinks of naturally and spontaneously. By using the respondent’s own terms in follow-up questions, the interviewer can still avoid imposing categories prematurely on the respondent. Only after the respondent has been given the opportunity and no new information surfaces through free recall (called “saturation”) can the interviewer explicitly ask directive questions in a structured way. In this way, all directive questions are answered while minimizing the chance of imposition of the interviewer’s preconceptions on respondents. Interviews may take a little longer, but they get as much or more information as a singularly structured, directive interview. Kvale also suggests that the unstructured, undirected portion of the interview focus on specific topics that the interviewer creates for the study. The goal in this study was to discover what the respondents liked and did not like about the changes, which aspects of the organization and the change they interpreted as positive or negative, and how and why they behaved the way they did regarding problems they reported.

⁶This is done in several iterations, as other authors advocate (Gioia et al. 2010, Pratt et al. 2006).

⁷Quotations from the interviews are indicated by a letter (“J” for judges and “A” for administrators) and a number indicating which specific interviewee. Where a quoted phrase was used by more than one source, no specific source identification is included.

⁸Lay use of the term “distrust” does not necessarily coincide with the scientific definition and use of the construct. But we would suggest that it can be used, as we have here, in conjunction with other, theoretically based indicators to assess its presence.

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