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de Jong, B.A.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation has focused on intrateam trust and peer control and their implications for team performance. Trust and peer control have become increasingly important as organizations have become flatter and more team-centered and as managers' capacity to exercise formal control has diminished (Devine, Clayton, Philips, Dunford, & Melner, 1999; Jones & George, 1998; Lawler, Mohrman, & Ledford, 1995; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Ouchi, 1980). While trust and peer control have both been recognized as pervasive phenomena that can have a profound impact on the functioning of teams (Kiffin-Petersen, 2004; Loughry, in press), there is a lack of systematic scholarly attention for the joint implications of trust and peer control within teams. As a consequence, many important issues are still unclear, as the literature review in Chapter 1 shows. In order to fill these gaps, the present dissertation has been aimed to advance theoretical and empirical understanding of intrateam trust and peer control within teams by addressing the following questions:

- 1) *What* is the nature of intrateam trust and peer control? That is, what are their underlying components or properties?
- 2) *When* do intrateam trust and peer control matter to teams? That is, under which conditions do they promote or inhibit team processes and performance?
- 3) *How* do intrateam trust and peer control affect team performance? That is, through which processes do they affect team performance?

To address these questions, we conducted three empirical studies, the details of which are reported in the preceding chapters. In the next sections, the main findings of each of these studies are summarized, followed by a reflection on the major strengths and potential weaknesses of these empirical investigations. In the subsequent section, the theoretical and practical implications of our findings are discussed. We conclude this chapter by identifying several opportunities for future research. Both the implications and future research sections will be organized around the issues of *What*, *When* and *How* that this dissertation set out to address.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the three studies are summarized in Table 5.1 and described in more detail next. In the first study, reported in Chapter 2, we focused on the implications of intrateam trust for team performance. Prior research on trust and teams suggested that (1) the effects of trust on team performance may be transferred by team processes that act as mediating mechanisms, and (2) teams are often simultaneously engaged in multiple team processes, many of which are likely to be affected by the level of trust within the team (Langfred, 2004; Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001; Schippers, 2003; Spreitzer, Noble, Mishra, & Cooke, 1999). We drew on these ideas to advance understanding of *how* intrateam trust affects team performance. Building on a typological framework of team processes and prior research on intrateam trust, we focused on three team processes – team reflexivity, team monitoring and team effort – and found that each of these processes is positively influenced by trust. We also showed that trust is positively related to the performance of ongoing teams. Additionally, we showed that trust has distinct indirect effects on performance through monitoring and effort; both team processes

partially mediated the trust-performance relationship. Contrary to prior research, we did not find support for the mediating role of team reflexivity.

Chapter 3 reports the second study we conducted, which focused on the team performance implications of peer control within teams. Past research in this area suggested that (1) peer control may involve multiple peer control mechanisms, (2) these control mechanisms may interact to affect outcomes, and (3) control can have both a psychological and behavioral impact on those subjected to it (Barker, 1999; Jaworski, 1988). In this study, we drew on these ideas to move forward understanding of *what* peer control is, and *when* and *how* it affects team performance. We focused on two specific peer control mechanisms – peer pressure and norm consensus – and demonstrated that teams vary in the extent to which they rely on these mechanisms, yielding different combinations of high/low peer pressure and of low/high norm consensus across teams. Additionally, we showed that peer pressure has contingent effects on team processes and outcomes, depending upon the level of norm consensus within the team. More specifically, peer pressure was found to become more beneficial for the amount of effort put forward by team members as norm consensus increases and less detrimental for the amount of trust among team members. Finally, we found that the relationship between peer pressure and norm consensus on the one hand and team performance on the other hand is mediated by trust. Consistent with Study 1, we found evidence for the mediating role of effort in intrateam trust-team performance relationship, but in contrast to our predictions, we did not find support for the mediating role of effort in peer pressure-norm consensus-team performance relationship.

Study 3a and 3b, reported in Chapter 4, focused on the implications of both trust and peer control for teams. Past research suggested that (1) trust is likely to have differential effects on team performance, (2) peer monitoring – a central component of peer control – is likely to have

differential effects on intrateam trust, and (3) there is likely to be within-team dispersion in trust and monitoring and this may have a moderating effect (Bijlsma-Frankema, De Jong, & Van de Bunt, 2008; Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002; Langfred, 2004). We built on these ideas to advance understanding of *what* trust and peer control is and *when* their relationship with each other and with team performance may be stronger or weaker. We distinguished between mean and dispersion levels of trust and monitoring and demonstrated that team members can differ substantially in their perceptions of trust and monitoring. We also showed that within-team dispersion acts as a moderator that accounts for the differential effects of mean levels of monitoring on trust as well as for the differential effects of mean levels of trust on team performance. Specifically, we found that the relationship between monitoring and trust becomes weaker for lower levels of dispersion in monitoring. We also found that the positive relationship between mean trust and team performance becomes stronger as dispersion in trust decreases. Finally, we provided initial evidence that relationship between mean monitoring and team performance is partially mediated by mean levels of trust and moderated by dispersion in both monitoring and trust.