



# Journal

## **Under trusted, over trusted, or just right? The fairness of (in)congruence between trust wanted and trust received**

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Abstract:	<p>The nascent literature on feeling trusted has focused on the notion that it is a benefit to employees and their organizations, with several studies demonstrating a link to improved job performance. It is not surprising, therefore, that the prevailing assumption is employees will react positively when their supervisors trust them more as opposed to less. Recent research, however, suggests the benefits of feeling trusted are accompanied by strains, which some employees may be unwilling to bear. Drawing on seminal theorizing on fairness, we propose that employees will perceive their supervisors as being more mindful of their needs—acting more fairly—when there is a fit between trust wanted and trust received, even when the fit is at low levels of trust. By extension, when trust received exceeds or falls short of an employee's desire for trust, the employee should perceive the supervisor as less fair. We build a model in which the overall fairness perceptions resulting from the trust wanted–received interplay influence employee performance. Our model is supported by a multi-source, three-wave field study and an experiment.</p>

**UNDER TRUSTED, OVER TRUSTED, OR JUST RIGHT?****THE FAIRNESS OF (IN)CONGRUENCE BETWEEN TRUST WANTED AND TRUST****RECEIVED**

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11 employees and their organizations, with several studies demonstrating a link to improved job  
12 performance. It is not surprising, therefore, that the prevailing assumption is employees will react  
13 positively when their supervisors trust them more as opposed to less. Recent research, however,  
14 suggests the benefits of feeling trusted are accompanied by strains, which some employees may  
15 be unwilling to bear. Drawing on seminal theorizing on fairness, we propose that employees will  
16 perceive their supervisors as being more mindful of their needs—acting more fairly—when there  
17 is a fit between trust wanted and trust received, even when the fit is at low levels of trust. By  
18 extension, when trust received exceeds or falls short of an employee’s desire for trust, the  
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3           *Feeling trusted*—the sense that another party accepts vulnerability to an individual’s  
4 actions—is a socioemotional resource that conveys to employees they are valued and perceived  
5 positively (Baer, Dhensa-Kahlon, Colquitt, Rodell, Outlaw, & Long, 2015; Brower, Lester,  
6 Korsgaard, & Dineen, 2009; Lau, Lam, & Wen, 2014). The literature has focused on the notion  
7 that feeling trusted is a benefit to employees and their organizations, with several studies  
8 demonstrating a link to improved job performance (Brower et al., 2009; Deutsch Salamon &  
9 Robinson, 2008; Lau et al., 2014). Accordingly, it is intuitive that scholars have suggested  
10 supervisors should allocate as much trust as possible to their employees (Kahn, 1990; Lawler,  
11 1992; Mishra & Mishra, 2012; Pfeffer, 1998; Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999). Likewise, it would be  
12 natural to assume that employees will positively perceive supervisors who provide higher levels  
13 of trust (Skinner, Dietz, & Weibel, 2014).

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15           Despite the intuitiveness of this assumption, we propose it may be incomplete and  
16 inaccurate. This assumption is predicated on the conceptualization of trust as an *intention* based  
17 on positive expectations (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). In practice, however, a  
18 supervisor’s trust manifests to employees as *behaviors*, such as relying on their judgments and  
19 abilities or depending on them for assistance with important issues (Brower, Schoorman, & Tan,  
20 2000; Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999). Consequently, the benefits of being trusted can be accompanied  
21 by significant demands on employees’ time and energy (Baer et al., 2015). Although many  
22 employees likely accept these tradeoffs, might some employees want a lower level of trusting  
23 behaviors? If so, how might these employees react to a supervisor who, despite their preferences,  
24 exhibits a high level of trust in them? If all employees do not want a high level of trusting  
25 behaviors, then the match (or mismatch) between the amount they want and the amount they  
26 receive may have important implications, regardless of the absolute level of trust received.

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3 We propose that insight into these dynamics may live in a “forgotten” thread from  
4 seminal theorizing on the fairness of resource allocations (Deutsch, 1975; Leventhal, 1976a).  
5 Foundational theorizing by Deutsch and Leventhal posited that employees rely on three rules  
6 when evaluating the fairness of distributions: the equity rule, wherein higher performers receive  
7 a higher allotment, the equality rule, wherein all employees receive the same allotment, and the  
8 need rule, wherein allotments are determined by employees’ idiosyncratic needs. Current  
9 recommendations regarding trust are implicitly based on the equity and equality rules. This is not  
10 terribly surprising, given that the need rule has been “lost in the shuffle” in fairness research  
11 (Conlon, Porter, & Parks, 2004; Rupp, Shapiro, Folger, Skarlicki, & Shao, 2017). Yet, Deutsch  
12 and Leventhal argued that the equity and equality rules are insufficient for explaining employee  
13 reactions to socioemotional resources, such as trust. Reflecting on the unique case of these  
14 resources, Deutsch (1975: 147) noted, “To allocate resources equally or according to the relative  
15 contributions of its members rather than according to need would obviously be disruptive of any  
16 group that has a primary concern for the development and welfare of its members.”  
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35 Drawing from this seminal theorizing, we propose that a mismatch in trust levels will  
36 result in a sense of unfairness because it signals a failure to follow the need rule—to be  
37 considerate and mindful of an employee’s needs. Building on this proposal, we suggest that the  
38 perceived fairness of a supervisor’s trusting behaviors is determined by congruence between the  
39 amount the recipient wants and the amount that is received. For an employee who desires a lower  
40 level of trusting behaviors, a supervisor who provides a lower level might be perceived as more  
41 considerate—and therefore more fair—than a supervisor who provides a high level. Given that  
42 research has assumed employees want a high level of trusting behaviors, current theorizing does  
43 not provide insight into the notion that employees might perceive a lower level as fair, nor that  
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3 they might perceive a lower level as fairer than a high level. Our proposal also introduces the  
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5 notion that employees might feel *over* trusted. To emphasize the organizational relevance of  
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7 these dynamics, we explore the impact of trust (in)congruence on employees' task performance  
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9 and citizenship behavior, through overall fairness.  
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12 Our research makes several contributions to the nascent literature on being trusted, as  
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14 well as to the fairness and person–environment (P-E) fit literatures. An exclusive consideration  
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16 of received trust levels—while ignoring potential variation in wanted trust levels—is likely to  
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18 have produced an incomplete and incorrect consensus on the dynamics of being trusted. By  
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20 identifying the (in)congruence between trust wanted and received, our investigation provides a  
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22 clearer understanding of how employees experience the receipt of trust and how it affects their  
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24 performance. Our investigation is facilitated by our focus on supervisors' trusting *behaviors*,  
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26 which is a departure from the literature's focus on trusting *intentions* (McEvily & Tortoriello,  
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28 2011). When trust is conceptualized and operationalized as an intention based on positive  
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30 expectations, it is intuitive that employees would uniformly desire their supervisor's trust. When  
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32 examined as a behavior, it becomes apparent why some employees would have varying desires  
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34 for trust. Our approach extends the literature by demonstrating that some employees do feel over  
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36 trusted and that they hold their supervisors responsible for that situation.  
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42 Our research also contributes to the fairness literature. Although early theorizing on  
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44 fairness acknowledged that needs factor heavily into employees' fairness perceptions, this notion  
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46 has resided in the background of the fairness literature. As a recent review observed, our  
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48 understanding of what constitutes fair distributions “may have inadvertently yet inappropriately  
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50 narrowed over the decades” (Rupp et al., 2017: 928; see also Conlon et al., 2004; Törnblom &  
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52 Kazemi, 2015). We suggest that a complete and accurate understanding of being trusted requires  
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3 that the role of need consideration from early fairness theorizing be brought back to the  
4 foreground. Our results provide evidence that, as proposed by Deutsch and Leventhal,  
5 socioemotional resources are evaluated against the need rule, suggesting that future research may  
6 similarly benefit by considering allocation rules other than equity and equality.  
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12 Although our primary contributions are to the trust and fairness domains, we also  
13 contribute to the P-E fit literature. To date, person–supervisor fit research has been centered on  
14 “the match between employees’ characteristics and those of their supervisor” (van Vianen, 2018:  
15 80). Given the person–supervisor fit literature’s focus on matching characteristics, this research  
16 does not provide sufficient insight into whether a deficiency or excess of socioemotional  
17 resources will be perceived as unfair. We extend the fit literature by providing experimental  
18 evidence that the effects of trust (in)congruence do not influence employee performance through  
19 the mechanisms that are traditionally invoked in the P-E fit literature, thereby demonstrating the  
20 value of introducing overall fairness into this literature. Likewise, although needs play a  
21 prominent role in both early theorizing on justice rules and continued research on P-E fit, the two  
22 literatures have developed in ways that have neglected need *consideration*. Specifically, the P-E  
23 fit literature addressing needs has fixated on need *fulfillment*, whereas the justice literature has  
24 largely relegated needs to the background. When integrating these perspectives through the lens  
25 of the need rule, we demonstrate that the mere consideration of needs (regardless of the  
26 *fulfillment* of basic needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness) is enough to “move the  
27 needle” on employees’ fairness perceptions. In the sections that follow, we outline these  
28 theoretical contributions as well as the practical implications of our work.  
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## 51 THEOREY DEVELOPMENT

### 52 **Trusting Behaviors Versus Trusting Intentions**

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3 Trust is a willingness, or intention, to accept vulnerability to another individual (Mayer et  
4 al., 1995; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). A supervisor's trusting *intentions* are not  
5 readily apparent, given that they are an internal phenomenon (Lau & Lam, 2008). Accordingly,  
6 employees must infer the level of their supervisor's trust by observing the supervisor's trusting  
7 *behaviors* (Baer et al., 2015; Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999). Addressing this notion, Skinner et al.  
8 (2014: 218) argued that trusting behaviors are the "only credible demonstration of trust and  
9 hence its definitional realization." As a supervisor engages in behaviors that evidence a  
10 willingness to be vulnerable, employees receive data on the extent to which they are trusted  
11 (Brower et al., 2000; Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). For example, employees who are regularly  
12 asked to provide input on important projects, are relied on to represent the supervisor in  
13 meetings, or are depended upon for their skills and abilities are likely to interpret these behaviors  
14 as a signal of the supervisor's trust (Gillespie, 2011; Mayer et al., 1995). Conversely, employees  
15 who are rarely asked to provide assistance with important tasks are likely to conclude that the  
16 supervisor does not have a high level of trust in them.

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36 Whereas research on *trusting* focuses on the intentions of the trustor, research on being  
37 *trusted* necessarily focuses on behaviors that demonstrate those intentions to the trustee (Brower  
38 et al., 2000). Drawing on this distinction, we define *trust wanted* as the extent to which an  
39 employee desires a supervisor to engage in trusting behaviors. The assumption in the literature  
40 that employees desire a high level of trust stems from the focus on trust as an intention rather  
41 than on how it manifests to employees—as behaviors. It is likely that virtually all employees  
42 would indicate that they want their supervisors to have positive, confident expectations of their  
43 behavior (e.g., Rousseau et al., 1998). Yet, in practice, these positive expectations are  
44 inextricably linked to trusting behaviors, which employees may not uniformly want.

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3 Supervisors express trust with behaviors such as requiring employees to extend  
4 themselves, asking them to weigh in on important decisions, or relying on them for assistance  
5 with critical tasks (Baer et al., 2015; Gillespie, 2011; Mayer et al., 1995; Mishra & Mishra, 2012;  
6 Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999). Although these trusting behaviors are beneficial to employees via a  
7 sense of pride (Baer et al., 2015) and increased self-esteem (Lau et al., 2014), Baer et al. (2015)  
8 found that these behaviors also contributed to significant strains for trusted employees, namely  
9 increased workload and concerns about maintaining a positive reputation. Lower trust wanted  
10 might also stem from weak self-efficacy (Skinner et al., 2014) or individual differences in the  
11 ability to handle the responsibilities that accompany trusting behaviors (Baer et al., 2015). In  
12 sum, it is likely that some employees will not want a high level of trust and, consequently, may  
13 react negatively when a supervisor's trusting behaviors exceed their preferences.  
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### 28 **Overall Fairness and the Need Rule**

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30 Seminal theory on fairness (Deutsch, 1975; Leventhal, 1976a) provides a helpful lens for  
31 understanding those reactions, including the downstream effects on employee performance.  
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33 Recent work has reiterated that *overall fairness* is a global evaluative judgment of the  
34 supervisor's adherence to accepted rules for allocating resources (for reviews see Ambrose, Wo,  
35 & Griffith, 2015; Colquitt & Rodell, 2015; Cropanzano, Fortin, & Kirk, 2015). Deutsch and  
36 Leventhal argued that individuals generally rely on equity, equality, and need rules to form this  
37 evaluation. Despite this early work emphasizing three rules, the fairness literature has focused  
38 almost exclusively on the notion that employees evaluate fairness against the equity rule (for  
39 reviews see Rupp et al., 2017; Törnblom & Kazemi, 2015). Reflecting on this point, Rupp et al.  
40 (2017: 928) summarized, "nearly all contemporary treatments of distributive justice consider  
41 outcomes to be fair when they have been distributed equitably" (underlining in original).  
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3 A return to seminal theorizing on fairness suggests that a critical element of the perceived  
4 fairness of distributions is whether they “fit the recipient’s desires” (Leventhal, 1976a: 125).  
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6 Delving into this notion, Deutsch (1975) argued that members of a group have varying needs that  
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8 are unlikely to be met if resources are solely allocated according to what is equitable or equal. He  
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10 emphasized that this is particularly true of socioemotional resources. For example, if a supervisor  
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12 only offered care and concern to the highest performers, many employees might never receive  
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14 these relational resources. Additionally, consider a supervisor who, based on her positive  
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16 expectations of their behavior, allocates high-profile but challenging assignments to two high-  
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18 performing employees. According to the equity and equality rules, the allocation of these  
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20 assignments should be perceived as fair. However, what if one employee does not want the high-  
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22 profile assignment that resulted from his supervisor’s trust? Although the trusting behavior is  
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24 both equitable and equal, it also indicates a lack of concern for the employee’s preferences.  
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26 Consequently, it is not surprising Deutsch and Leventhal argued that if a supervisor is concerned  
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28 with an employee’s development and well-being, “need will be the dominant principle of  
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30 distributive justice” (Deutsch, 1975: 143).  
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38 This early work on need rule adherence largely focused on the allocator’s perspective,  
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40 detailing when and why a supervisor might rely on a particular distribution rule. For example,  
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42 Leventhal’s work on “needs-matching distributions” primarily addressed the notion that  
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44 supervisors could avoid wasting their own limited resources by matching resource distributions  
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46 to needs (Leventhal, 1976a, 1976b, 1980; Leventhal, Karuza, & Fry, 1980). Despite focusing on  
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48 the allocator, this work highlighted that need rule adherence is essential because employees  
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50 evaluate fairness against this rule, with the assessment having critical implications for their  
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52 continued contributions to group success. Given that the fairness literature has largely ignored  
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3 the need rule, has focused on economic resources, or has centered on the allocator's assessment  
4 of needs, our theorizing constitutes a novel and useful extension to prior work.  
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### 7 **Trust Wanted and Received—Deficiency and Excess Versus Fit**

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10 We first contrast situations of deficient trusting behaviors received with situations in  
11 which there is fit between trust wanted and received. The implications of a deficiency in desired  
12 resources flow naturally from the literature, so we discuss those only briefly before turning to  
13 situations of excess and fit. Definitionally, trusting behavior is a discretionary act of risk taking  
14 (Mayer et al., 1995). When trust received is lower than trust wanted, employees are likely to  
15 interpret that deficiency as an avoidable failure to be mindful of their needs, thereby violating the  
16 need rule underlying fairness perceptions. Consequently, employees who receive fewer trusting  
17 behaviors than they want should perceive the supervisor as less fair.  
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28 We now shift to the impact of excess trust received, in comparison to fit between trust  
29 wanted and received. The literature has only recently addressed the notion that receiving trusting  
30 behaviors might be detrimental. In a conceptual article, Skinner et al. (2014: 214) proposed that  
31 employees might desire a lower level of trust because trusting behaviors come with strings  
32 attached, noting that “to be trusted constrains the choices of the trust recipient and can be  
33 unwelcome.” To date, the only empirical research exploring potential downsides of trust focused  
34 on the strains that stemmed from higher absolute levels of feeling trusted (Baer et al., 2015).  
35 Although this research indicates that feeling trusted may be stressful, it provides little insight into  
36 how employees might react to the person who supplies those trusting behaviors.  
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49 Trust received is typically characterized as a beneficial resource (Lawler, 1992; Mayer et  
50 al., 1995; Mishra, 1996; Pfeffer, 1998). Given that recipients generally perceive that more  
51 benefits are fairer than less (Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 1996; Colquitt et al., 2013), the receipt of  
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3 trusting behaviors—an ostensibly valuable socioemotional resource—should increase  
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5 perceptions of fairness. When considered through the lens of the need rule, however, employees  
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7 might perceive the receipt of excess trusting behaviors as a failure to be mindful of their  
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9 individual needs—a violation of the need rule. For example, consider an employee who does not  
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11 want a high level of trust, perhaps due to individual differences or a desire to avoid additional  
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13 responsibilities (Skinner et al., 2014), yet still receives a high level of trusting behaviors from the  
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15 supervisor. Although those behaviors likely carry some benefits, such as pride (Baer et al., 2015)  
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17 or organization-based self-esteem (Lau et al., 2014), they violate the need rule because they do  
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19 not “fit the recipient’s desires” (Leventhal, 1976a: 125).  
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24 In contrast, when trust received matches trust wanted, employees are likely to interpret  
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26 this congruence as the supervisor being aware of and attentive to their preferences. Importantly,  
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28 fit at both high–high *and* low–low levels of trust wanted–trust received should be preferable to  
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30 conditions of both deficiency and excess. To illustrate, again consider the employee who, for a  
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32 variety of reasons, might desire a lower level of trusting behaviors. From this employee’s  
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34 perspective, the provision of a lower level of trusting behaviors shows consideration for the  
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36 idiosyncratic desire for that resource. Theorizing on the equity and equality rules does not  
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38 provide insight into this notion. Indeed, through the lens of those rules, a low level of trusting  
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40 behaviors may be considered unfair. In contrast, through the lens of the need rule, the supervisor  
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42 has acted more fairly than if she had provided a high level of trusting behaviors. From a fairness  
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44 standpoint, congruence between trust wanted and trust received—even at low–low levels—  
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46 should be more beneficial than deficiency and excess.  
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51 *Hypothesis 1: Incongruence between trust wanted and trust received will be negatively*  
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53 *related to perceptions of overall fairness, such that overall fairness will be lower when*  
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3 *there is a deficiency or excess of trust received.*  
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### 5 **Trust Wanted and Received—Comparing Fit at High–High versus Low–Low**

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8 Although we theorize that fit at all levels of trust wanted and trust received is preferable  
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10 to deficiency and excess, there is reason to believe that high–high and low–low fit will not be  
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12 perceived as equally fair. Scholars have argued that a foundational element of fairness is a  
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14 *conscious* effort to consider another person’s needs, noting that employees are assessing whether  
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16 supervisors are “trying to be fair” (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998: 191; see also Folger &  
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18 Cropanzano, 2001). We draw on this proposal to argue that trust wanted–received fit achieved  
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20 through more concerted effort (high–high fit) will be perceived more fairly. Put differently,  
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22 supervisors are likely to receive more credit for satiating a salient need for trust (by engaging in  
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24 trusting behavior) than for being considerate of an employee’s low need through inaction.  
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29 In line with this proposal, Ross (1977: 196) posited that the typical person “attends to  
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31 actions or occurrences in forming inferences but neglects to consider the information conveyed  
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33 when particular responses or events do not occur.” Scholars have built on this notion to argue  
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35 that behavior, in comparison to a lack of behavior, tends to have more informational value and is  
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37 more likely to affect subsequent perceptions (Cioffi & Garner, 1996; Fazio, 1987; Nisbett &  
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39 Ross, 1980; Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1987). Thus, the action required of a supervisor to  
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41 achieve high–high fit may be more strongly related to perceptions of overall fairness than is the  
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43 relative inaction inherent in low–low fit. High trust wanted indicates that the employee actively  
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45 desires the responsibilities that trusting behaviors entail. High trust received requires the  
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47 supervisor to engage in trusting behaviors—to “go out on a limb” to provide the employee with a  
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49 desired resource. Because high trust received is more effortful, employees with high trust  
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51 wanted–high trust received fit should be more likely to perceive that the supervisor is actively  
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3 considering their need and, therefore, behaving fairly.  
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5           In comparison, low–low fit requires less concerted effort from the supervisor, making it a  
6 less salient indicator of supervisor’s effortful need consideration. In comparison to inaction,  
7 action contains more concrete information, thereby increasing the likelihood it affects subsequent  
8 perceptions (Nisbett & Ross, 1980; Ross, 1977). For example, whereas an employee might  
9 interpret a supervisor’s lack of criticism as approval, the employee is almost certain to interpret a  
10 supervisor’s praise as approval. Likewise, consider an employee who wants a low level of trust  
11 and the supervisor does not ask him to handle important issues on her behalf. This could be  
12 interpreted as an active consideration of that employee’s preferences, but it might also reflect  
13 that the supervisor simply did not have an important issue that needed to be handled. Given that  
14 the supervisor did not necessarily have to devote thought or effort into matching the employee’s  
15 preference, the trust wanted–trust received fit may be perceived as somewhat less consideration,  
16 relative to fit at high levels. In contrast, if an employee wants and receives the opportunity to  
17 handle important issues on the supervisor’s behalf, the employee should be more likely to  
18 interpret that action as a more conscious consideration of his need, relative to fit at low levels. In  
19 sum, we propose that employees are more likely to interpret high–high fit as a supervisor “trying  
20 to be fair,” suggesting the supervisor should be considered fairer than a supervisor who is  
21 mindful of employee needs through relative inaction.  
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44           *Hypothesis 2. Perceptions of overall fairness will be higher when trust wanted and trust*  
45           *received are both high compared to when trust wanted and trust received are both low.*  
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#### 49 **Overall Fairness and Employee Performance**

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51           Scholars’ and organizations’ interest in overall fairness has, in large part, been driven by  
52 its beneficial impact on organizationally relevant outcomes such as task performance and  
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3 citizenship behavior. Much of this work has focused on the notion that overall fairness exerts  
4 these effects through a social exchange process (for narrative and quantitative reviews see  
5 Colquitt et al., 2013 and Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). Effective social exchange relationships depend  
6 on both parties' sense that the unspecified favors and benefits they are providing will eventually  
7 be repaid (Blau, 1964). These relationships are inherently risky, as the unspecified nature of the  
8 favors and benefits creates the possibility that the parties might take advantage of one another  
9 (Lind, 2001). Fairness is an indicator that supervisors are likely to engage in an even-handed  
10 exchange of benefits with the employee (Organ, 1990), thereby increasing the likelihood that  
11 employees will enter into an exchange relationship (Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels, & Hall,  
12 2017; Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001).

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26 As overall fairness strengthens the employee–supervisor relationship, employees tend to  
27 feel an increased desire to engage in reciprocative behaviors toward the supervisor (Cropanzano  
28 et al., 2017; Organ, 1990). Employees generally feel more comfortable providing those behaviors  
29 to fair supervisors, given that they are likely to “repay” employees who go above and beyond the  
30 call of duty. At work, this reciprocation generally takes the form of in-role and extra-role  
31 performance (Colquitt et al., 2013). Beginning with in-role performance, although such  
32 behaviors are a formal requirement of the job, scholars have suggested that employees might  
33 view *exemplary* in-role performance as an opportunity to reciprocate (Colquitt et al., 2013). As  
34 such, employees may devote increased attention to their task performance as they strive to  
35 discharge their obligations. In sum, the congruence between trust wanted and trust received  
36 should lead to an increase in overall fairness that improves employee task performance.

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51 *Hypothesis 3. The relationship between trust wanted and trust received will have an*  
52 *indirect effect on task performance, through perceptions of overall fairness.*  
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3 Turning to extra-role performance, a desire to reciprocate often manifests as an increase  
4 in the willingness to “go the extra mile,” such as lending unsolicited assistance to a supervisor  
5 (Lee & Allen, 2002). Given that citizenship behavior is not part of the formal job description, it  
6 constitutes a discretionary opportunity to repay the supervisor’s contribution to the relationship  
7 (Moorman, 1991). Consequently, fair treatment should increase citizenship behavior by  
8 conveying to employees that their extra-mile efforts will ultimately be repaid while also creating  
9 a desire to reciprocate the positive treatment they have received (Moorman, 1991; Organ, 1990;  
10 Organ & Konovsky, 1989). By extension, the interplay between trust wanted and trust received  
11 should indirectly impact citizenship behavior through overall fairness.  
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24 *Hypothesis 4. The relationship between trust wanted and trust received will have an*  
25 *indirect effect on citizenship behavior, through perceptions of overall fairness.*  
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## 28 **STUDY 1: METHOD**

### 29 **Participants and Procedures**

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31 We collected data from employees in administrative, non-academic positions at two large  
32 public universities in the southeastern and southwestern United States. Eligible participants were  
33 identified through a manual scrape of the universities’ Microsoft Outlook contact lists. The invite  
34 noted that eligible employees needed to work full-time, interact frequently with their direct  
35 supervisor, and invite their supervisor to participate in the study. Employees received a \$5  
36 Amazon.com gift card for each survey they completed and a \$10 bonus for full participation  
37 across time periods. Supervisors received a \$10 Amazon.com gift card for completing the  
38 survey. We set the online survey to automatically close when we had received 400 responses at  
39 Time 1. Out of the 400 responses at Time 1, 396 employees completed the survey. These  
40 participants held 171 different titles within the universities, indicating that we captured a wide  
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3 range of roles. The 396 participants reported to 360 different supervisors. Although our data had  
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5 minimal nesting, we examined ICC values for each of our variables to ensure that no substantial  
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7 variance could be explained by a shared supervisor. Results revealed that no variables exhibited  
8  
9 a significant amount of variance attributable to nesting within supervisor.  
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12 We collected data in three waves, with four weeks separating the first and second wave  
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14 and six weeks separating the second and third wave. At Time 1, employees rated trust wanted  
15  
16 and trust received (396 responses). At Time 2, employees rated overall fairness and, to facilitate  
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18 additional analyses, need consideration (342 responses; 86% response rate). At Time 3, 298  
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20 supervisors rated task performance and citizenship behavior for 333 employees (83% response  
21  
22 rate). Based on available data, our analyses ranged from 342 to 291 employees. Average  
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24 employee tenure at the organizations was 5.6 years ( $SD = 5.96$ ), and average tenure with the  
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26 supervisor was 2.8 years ( $SD = 3.30$ ). The average age was 38.7 years ( $SD = 11.46$ ) and 79.4  
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28 percent of our sample was female.  
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### 32 33 **Measures**

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35 The instructions for measures at each time period were explicitly time-bound, asking  
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37 participants to consider the last few weeks as they completed each measure.  
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40 ***Trust wanted and trust received.*** Following best practices for testing needs–supplies fit  
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42 (e.g., Cable & Edwards, 2004; Edwards & Rothbard, 1999), we utilized an atomistic approach  
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44 whereby individual needs (i.e., trust wanted) and environmental supplies (i.e., trust received)  
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46 were assessed with parallel items (Edwards, Cable, Williamson, Lambert, & Shipp, 2006). We  
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48 utilized the behavioral trust inventory (Gillespie, 2011) to capture trust wanted and trust received  
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50 at Time 1. In line with previous atomistic approaches to fit, we assessed trust wanted ( $\alpha = .88$ ) by  
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52 asking employees how much of each trusting behavior was wanted (1 = *to an extremely small*  
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3 extent to 7 = to an extremely large extent). The five-item measure was: “I want my supervisor to  
4 rely on my work-related judgments,” “I want my supervisor to rely on my task-related skills and  
5 abilities,” “I want my supervisor to depend on me to handle important issues on his/her behalf,”  
6  
7 “I want my supervisor to rely on me to represent his/her work accurately to others,” and “I want  
8 my supervisor to depend on me to back him/her up in difficult situations.” We measured trust  
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10 received ( $\alpha = .87$ ) in a parallel manner by asking employees how much of each trusting behavior  
11 was received. The five items were: “My supervisor relies on my work-related judgments,” “My  
12 supervisor relies on my task-related skills and abilities,” “My supervisor depends on me to  
13 handle important issues on his/her behalf,” “My supervisor relies on me to represent his/her work  
14 accurately to others,” and “My supervisor depends on me to back him/her up in difficult  
15 situations.”  
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28 **Overall fairness.** We assessed employees’ perceptions of overall fairness ( $\alpha = .97$ ) at  
29 Time 2 using Colquitt, Long, Rodell, and Halvorsen-Ganepola’s (2015) three-item measure.  
30 Employee responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = to a very small extent to  
31 5 = to a very large extent). Items were “Does your supervisor act fairly?,” “Does your supervisor  
32 behave like a fair person would?,” and “Does your supervisor do things that are fair?”  
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40 **Task performance.** Supervisors rated employee task performance ( $\alpha = .89$ ) at Time 3  
41 using three items from MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Fetter (1991). Using a five-point scale (1 =  
42 strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), supervisors rated their agreement with the following  
43 statements: “My subordinate is one of the best at what he/she does,” “My subordinate is very  
44 good at his/her daily job activities,” and “In general, my subordinate is a good performer.”  
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51 **Citizenship behavior.** Supervisors rated employee citizenship behavior ( $\alpha = .85$ ) at Time  
52 3 using three items from Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990). Using a five-point  
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3 scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*), supervisors rated their agreement with the  
4 following statements: “My subordinate helps me when I have heavy workloads,” “My  
5 subordinate is always ready to lend a helping hand,” and “In general, my subordinate willingly  
6 helps me with work-related problems.”  
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12 ***Need consideration.*** The fairness literature has tended to operationalize either justice rule  
13 adherence (e.g., distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice; Colquitt, 2001)  
14 or overall fairness, rather than both (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015; Cropanzano et al., 2015; for  
15 exceptions, see Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Rodell, Colquitt, & Baer, 2017). Scholars have  
16 recommended that investigations which do not make predictions that distinguish between the  
17 various facets of justice might take a gestalt approach that utilizes a measure of overall fairness  
18 (Colquitt, 2012). Nonetheless, the “active ingredient” underlying overall fairness in our model is  
19 employees’ perception that the supervisor considered their needs. Accordingly, we developed a  
20 generalized measure of need consideration to provide evidence that our results replicate when we  
21 substitute need consideration for overall fairness in our analyses. We started by following Hinkin  
22 and Tracey’s (1999) content validation procedures with a sample of 116 participants from  
23 Amazon’s Mturk. In accordance with this procedure, we first created three items that reflected  
24 the definition of need consideration. Items were: “My supervisor is mindful of my needs,” “My  
25 supervisor is concerned about my needs,” and “My supervisor is considerate of my needs.”  
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Participants then rated how well each item matched the definition using a seven-point scale (1 = *item does an extremely bad job of measuring need consideration* to 7 = *item does an extremely good job of measuring need consideration*). According to established benchmarks for this technique (Colquitt, Sabey, Rodell, & Hill, 2019), our items exhibited a strong definitional correspondence (average = 6.06 out of 7.00), thereby providing evidence of content validity.

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3 We next conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a different sample of 229  
4 employees to provide evidence of our measure's nomological network as well as its convergent  
5 and discriminant validity (Hinkin, 1998; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2011).  
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10 Participants were recruited through Prolific Academic; eligibility was limited to employees who  
11 had a direct supervisor. We started by selecting constructs that underlie fairness judgments.  
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14 Accordingly, we included distributive justice, procedural justice, informational justice, and  
15 interpersonal justice (Colquitt, 2001) as well as a measure of equality rule adherence. Although  
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17 the fairness literature has frequently referenced the importance of the equality rule, empirical  
18 research on that rule has largely been experimental. Thus, it was necessary to adapt a four-item  
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20 manipulation check of equality rule adherence from Goncalo and Kim (2010); a sample item is,  
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22 "My supervisor gives all members of my work group equal rewards, regardless of their  
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26 contributions to the group." We also included a measure of individualized consideration (Bass &  
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28 Avolio, 1995) and three constructs that a meta-analysis of the justice literature (Colquitt et al.,  
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31 2013) highlighted as oft-evoked proximal outcomes of distributive, procedural, interpersonal,  
32  
33 and informational justice—leader–member exchange (LMX; Liden, Wayne, & Stilwell, 1993),  
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36 perceived organizational support (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001),  
37  
38 and organizational commitment (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). Finally, we included a measure  
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40 of need fulfillment (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000; competence, autonomy, and  
41  
42 relatedness) to provide evidence that need *consideration* and need *fulfillment* are distinct. The  
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45 zero-order correlations, descriptive statistics, and reliabilities of all constructs are in Table 1.  
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50 Insert Table 1 about here  
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54 We utilized Mplus for the CFA, modeling all variables with item-level indicators. This  
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3 13-factor model provided acceptable fit to the data:  $\chi^2(1574) = 2460.68$  ( $p < .01$ ), CFI = .901,  
4  
5 RMSEA = .050, SRMR = .052. To demonstrate the distinctiveness of need consideration, we ran  
6  
7 12 alternative models in which we constrained the relationship between need consideration and  
8  
9 the other latent variables to unity (1). We utilized a Wald chi-square test to compare the chi-  
10  
11 square values from the alternative models and the hypothesized model. As indicated by  
12  
13 significant chi-square values ( $p < .001$ ), our hypothesized model fit the data better than all 12  
14  
15 alternative models. None of the need consideration items exhibited substantive cross loadings  
16  
17 with the other constructs (i.e., all Mplus modification indices were below 10), suggesting that  
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19 need consideration is distinct at both the scale- and item-levels. These analyses provide evidence  
20  
21 of need consideration's position within the literature while indicating its unique nature.  
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24 Employees assessed need consideration with our three-item measure at Time 2 ( $\alpha = .92$ ; 1 =  
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26 *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).27  
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31 ***Molecular measure of trust (in)congruence.*** Atomistic approaches, like the one we  
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33 apply in our primary analysis, examine perceptions of resources received and resources wanted  
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35 as separate entities and combine the two empirically (an indirect approach). In contrast,  
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37 molecular approaches assess the perceived comparison of resources received and resources  
38  
39 wanted (a direct approach). To facilitate a supplemental analysis that provides converging  
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41 evidence for our predictions, we also included a molecular measure of trust wanted–trust  
42  
43 received congruence at Time 1. Given that the correspondence between atomistic and molecular  
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45 approaches in prior research has often been weaker than might be expected (see Edwards et al.,  
46  
47 2006), our dual-pronged approach provides a strong robustness check on our proposals. Our  
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49 molecular measure captured participant perceptions of being under-trusted, trusted the right  
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51 amount, or over-trusted (Edwards et al., 2006). Utilizing the same five items from the behavioral  
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3 trust inventory (Gillespie, 2011), we asked employees to rate their receipt of each behavior  
4 relative to how much they desire (seven-point scale; -3 = *much less than I want* to 3 = *much*  
5  
6 *more than I want*). Ratings were used to create two separate variables—over-trust and under-  
7  
8 trust—that ranged from 0–3 (for similar approaches, see Umphress, Labianca, Brass, Kass, &  
9  
10 Scholten, 2003; Venkataramani & Dalal, 2007). Specifically, for any negative value on the scale,  
11  
12 over-trust takes on a value of 0, and under-trust takes on the absolute value of the rating. For  
13  
14 example, an employee with a score of -2 on the molecular measure would have an over-trust  
15  
16 score of 0 and an under-trust score of 2. For any positive value on the scale, over-trust takes on  
17  
18 the value of the rating and under-trust takes on a value of 0. An employee with a score of 3  
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20 would have an over-trust score of 3 and an under-trust score of 0.  
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## 26 **Analyses**

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28 Following best practices for testing congruence predictions (e.g., Edwards, 2002;  
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30 Edwards & Parry, 1993), we utilized polynomial regression and response surface methodology to  
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32 test Hypotheses 1 and 2 (for similar, see Edwards & Cable, 2009; Lambert, Tepper, Carr, Holt, &  
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34 Barelka, 2012; Matta, Scott, Koopman, & Conlon, 2015; Vogel, Rodell, & Lynch, 2016; Wilson,  
35  
36 Baumann, Matta, Ilies, & Kossek, 2018). The mediator variable (overall fairness) was regressed  
37  
38 on the five polynomial terms ( $b_1$  trust received,  $b_2$  trust wanted,  $b_3$  trust received squared,  $b_4$  trust  
39  
40 received  $\times$  trust wanted, and  $b_5$  trust wanted squared). We estimated the following equation:  
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$$44 \quad F = b_0 + b_1R + b_2W + b_3R^2 + b_4(RW) + b_5W^2 + e \quad (1)$$

45  
46  $F$  represents overall fairness,  $R$  represents trust received, and  $W$  represents trust wanted. In line  
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48 with past work using polynomial regression and response surface methodology (e.g., Carter &  
49  
50 Mossholder, 2015; Cole, Carter, & Zhang, 2013; Matta et al., 2015; Wilson et al., 2018; Zhang,  
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52 Wang, & Shi, 2012), we mean centered our predictors—trust received and trust wanted—prior to  
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3 calculating the three second-order polynomial terms in order to eliminate non-essential  
4 multicollinearity and facilitate the interpretation of results (Aiken & West, 1991). Using the  
5 parameter estimates from this equation, we then plotted a three-dimensional response surface  
6 with trust received ( $R$ ) on the x-axis, trust wanted ( $W$ ) on the perpendicular y-axis, and overall  
7 fairness ( $F$ ) on the vertical z-axis. We also conducted tests of key features of the response  
8 surface corresponding to the predictions in Hypotheses 1 and 2.  
9

10  
11 For Hypothesis 1, which predicted that perceptions of overall fairness will be higher  
12 when trust wanted and trust received are equal, compared to when there is a deficiency or an  
13 excess of trust received, we tested the necessary criteria for establishing a congruence effect  
14 described in Edwards and Cable (2009; see also Cole et al., 2013; Matta et al., 2015; Wilson,  
15 DeRue, Matta, Howe, & Conlon, 2016; Wilson et al., 2018). First, in order to support Hypothesis  
16 1, the curvature along the incongruence line ( $R = -W$ ) should be negative and significant  
17 (resulting in an inverted u-shaped relationship along the incongruence line), such that values for  
18 overall fairness decrease when values for trust received ( $R$ ) and trust wanted ( $W$ ) deviate from  
19 each other in either direction (i.e., into regions of deficient or excess trust). This was empirically  
20 examined by testing the direction and statistical significance of the curvature along the  
21 incongruence line (calculated as  $b_3 - b_4 + b_5$ ) using procedures for testing linear combinations of  
22 regression coefficients (Cohen & Cohen, 1983; Edwards & Parry, 1993).  
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45 Second, in order to provide additional support for Hypothesis 1, we tested whether the  
46 ridge of the response surface ran along the congruence line, such that values of overall fairness  
47 were maximized at each and every level of trust wanted and trust received when values were  
48 congruent (i.e., 1-1, 2-2, 3-3, 4-4, 5-5, 6-6, 7-7). To support this contention, the first principal  
49 axis of the response surface (i.e., the ridge of the response surface in this case) should have a  
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3 slope ( $p_{11}$ ) of 1 and an intercept ( $p_{10}$ ) of 0 (Edwards, 2002; Edwards & Parry, 1993). Because this  
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5 involves evaluating the significance of a non-linear combination of regression coefficients, we  
6  
7 generated 10,000 bootstrapped samples to estimate 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for  $p_{11}$  and  
8  
9  $p_{10}$  (Edwards, 2002; Edwards & Parry, 1993).  
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12 To test Hypothesis 2, which predicted that perceptions of overall fairness will be higher  
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14 when trust wanted and trust received are both high, compared to when trust wanted and trust  
15  
16 received are both low, we tested whether the values for overall fairness increased moving along  
17  
18 the congruence line ( $R = W$ ) from congruence at low levels to congruence at high levels. This  
19  
20 was examined by testing whether the slope along the congruence line was positive and  
21  
22 significant (calculated as  $b_1 + b_2$ ) using procedures for testing linear combinations of regression  
23  
24 coefficients (Cohen & Cohen, 1983; Edwards & Parry, 1993).  
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28 To test the indirect effect of the interplay of trust received ( $R$ ) and trust wanted ( $W$ ) on  
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30 the downstream outcomes proposed in Hypotheses 3 and 4, we implemented the block variable  
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32 approach recommended by Edwards and Cable (2009; see also Cole et al., 2013; Lambert et al.,  
33  
34 2012; Matta et al., 2015; Wilson et al., 2018). Specifically, to estimate a single path representing  
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36 the joint effects of the five polynomial terms on the mediator (i.e., overall fairness), we  
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38 multiplied the five polynomial regression coefficients (from Equation 1 above) with the raw data  
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40 in order to create a weighted linear composite (i.e., block variable) which represents the  
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42 relationship between the five polynomial terms and the mediator (i.e., overall fairness). We then  
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44 regressed the mediator on the block variable to obtain a single parameter to be used as the first  
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46 stage in the indirect effect model when testing for the indirect effects of the five polynomial  
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48 terms on the downstream outcomes. The variance explained in the mediator (i.e., overall fairness  
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50 or need consideration) by the block variable is exactly equal to the variance explained by the five  
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3 polynomial terms (Edwards & Cable, 2009; Matta et al., 2015). We then utilized a Monte Carlo  
4 simulation with 20,000 bootstrapped samples to create 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals  
5 that assess the significance of each indirect effect between the block variable and the  
6 downstream outcome of interest.  
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### 11 12 **STUDY 1: RESULTS**

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14 We conducted a CFA to ensure that the constructs assessed in the study were  
15 distinguishable from each other. We estimated a five-factor model (i.e., trust wanted, trust  
16 received, overall fairness, task performance, and citizenship behavior) using item-level  
17 indicators. Because the trust wanted and trust received items captured identical item content, we  
18 followed recommendations from Cole, Ciesla, and Strieger (2007) to allow the residuals between  
19 corresponding items to covary (for a similar approach, see Tepper et al., 2018). Results revealed  
20 the following fit statistics:  $\chi^2(137) = 426.214$  ( $p < .05$ ), CFI = .915, RMSEA = .085, SRMR =  
21 .049. All indicators loaded significantly on their corresponding factor. The average standardized  
22 factor loading was .82 and ranged from .70 to .96. We also estimated a model in which the trust  
23 wanted and trust received items loaded on a single factor. That model did not provide acceptable  
24 fit to the data— $\chi^2(141) = 960.299$  ( $p < .05$ ), CFI = .760, RMSEA = .141, SRMR = .084—and  
25 added significant misfit relative to our proposed five-factor model:  $\Delta\chi^2(4) = 534.085$  ( $p < .05$ ).  
26 Thus, analyses demonstrated the dimensionality and discriminant validity of our constructs and  
27 indicated that trust wanted and trust received are best operationalized as distinct constructs.  
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46 The means, standard deviations, and correlations among the study variables are presented  
47 in Table 2. Notably, simple mean differences for each employee (trust wanted versus trust  
48 received) showed that 24% of participants received a higher level of trusting behavior than they  
49 wanted, 57% received less than they wanted, and 19% received the amount they wanted. The  
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3 polynomial regression analysis used to test Hypotheses 1 and 2 (corresponding to Equation 1) is  
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5 presented in Table 3; hypothesized parameters are bolded.  
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9 Insert Tables 2 and 3 about here  
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12 Hypothesis 1 predicted that perceptions of overall fairness will be higher when trust  
13 wanted and trust received are equal compared to when there is a deficiency or an excess of trust  
14 received. In support of Hypothesis 1, the curvature along the incongruence line ( $R = -W$ ) was  
15 negative and significant (curvature  $[b_3 - b_4 + b_5] = -.11, p < .05$ ), suggesting an inverted u-shape  
16 relationship wherein the values of overall fairness decreased when values deviated from equal  
17 trust wanted and trust received to either deficiency or excess (see Figure 1).  
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27 Insert Figure 1 about here  
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31 To provide further support for Hypothesis 1, we also tested whether the ridge (or peak) of  
32 the response surface ran along the congruence line. Confirming our proposal, the 95%  
33 confidence interval for the slope of first principal axis ( $p_{11}$ ) included 1 (.333, 3.303) and the 95%  
34 confidence interval for the intercept of first principal axis ( $p_{10}$ ) included 0 (-1.667, 3.862).  
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40 To provide additional evidence for our proposals, we tested Hypothesis 1 once again, this  
41 time utilizing our measure of need consideration in place of the more gestalt assessment  
42 represented by overall fairness. Consistent with our theorizing, our results replicated. The results  
43 of the polynomial regression analysis with need consideration are presented in Table 4 and the  
44 response surface plot is depicted in Figure 2. The curvature along the incongruence line for need  
45 consideration was negative and significant (curvature =  $-.14, p < .05$ ). Turning to the ridge of the  
46 response surface, the 95% confidence interval for the slope of first principal axis ( $p_{11}$ ) once again  
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3 included 1 (.730, 6.553), and the 95% confidence interval for the intercept of first principal axis  
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5 (p<sub>10</sub>) once again included 0 (-5.075, .337).  
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9 Insert Table 4 and Figure 2 about here  
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12 Hypothesis 2 predicted that perceptions of overall fairness will be higher when trust  
13 wanted and trust received are both high compared to when trust wanted and trust received are  
14 both low. In support of Hypothesis 2, the slope along the congruence line ( $R = W$ ) was positive  
15 and significant (slope  $[b_1 + b_2] = .14, p < .05$ ), suggesting that the values of overall fairness  
16 increased when moving from congruence at low levels of trust wanted and trust received to high  
17 levels of trust wanted and trust received. Turning to need consideration, Figure 2 illustrates that  
18 the slope along the congruence line for the response surface predicting need consideration was  
19 positive and significant (slope = .14,  $p < .05$ ). Thus, our pattern again held when we tested our  
20 model with need consideration in place of overall fairness.  
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33 Hypotheses 3 and 4 predicted that the joint effects of trust wanted and trust received will  
34 have an indirect effect on task performance (Hypothesis 3) and citizenship behavior (Hypothesis  
35 4) through overall fairness. We regressed the mediator on the block variable (see *Analyses*) to  
36 obtain a single standardized parameter to be used as the first-stage path in the indirect effect  
37 model (standardized  $\beta = .21, p < .05$ ). The coefficients (see Table 3) between overall fairness and  
38 task performance (unstandardized  $B = .10$ , standardized  $\beta = .13, p < .05$ ) as well as citizenship  
39 behavior (unstandardized  $B = .14$ , standardized  $\beta = .19, p < .05$ ) represent the second-stage path  
40 in the indirect effect. Results of the bootstrapping analysis supported Hypotheses 3 and 4, as the  
41 standardized indirect effect of trust wanted and trust received on task performance via overall  
42 fairness was .03, and the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval excluded 0 (.005, .064). The  
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3 standardized indirect effect of trust wanted and trust received on citizenship behavior via overall  
4 fairness was .04, and the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval excluded 0 (.015, .080).  
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8 Next, we tested these indirect effects with need consideration substituted for overall  
9 fairness. We regressed need consideration on the block variable to obtain the first stage path  
10 coefficient of the indirect effect (standardized  $\beta = .28, p < .05$ ). We then used the path  
11 coefficient of the indirect effect (standardized  $\beta = .28, p < .05$ ). We then used the path  
12 coefficients from need consideration to task performance (unstandardized  $B = .11$ , standardized  
13  $\beta = .15, p < .05$ ) as well as citizenship behavior (unstandardized  $B = .20$ , standardized  $\beta = .27, p$   
14  $< .05$ ) as the second-stage paths. The standardized indirect effect of trust wanted and trust  
15 received on task performance via need consideration was .04, and the 95% bias-corrected  
16 confidence interval excluded 0 (.010, .084). Likewise, the standardized indirect effect of trust  
17 wanted and trust received on citizenship behavior via need consideration was .07, and the 95%  
18 bias-corrected confidence interval excluded 0 (.038, .125). In sum, we found support for our  
19 hypotheses using both our predicted mechanism of overall fairness and a more direct  
20 operationalization of the active ingredient underlying fairness in our model.  
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### 35 Supplemental Analyses

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37 As a general robustness check, we examined whether our results may have been  
38 influenced by outliers, using the criteria outlined by Aguinis, Gottfredson, and Joo (2013).  
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40 Cook's D and DFBETAS did not flag any outliers in our sample. Examining DFFITS values  
41 suggested the presence of two outliers. We re-ran our analyses without these cases. Our results  
42 did not change when removing these outliers, so we retained them in our final models.  
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49 In our primary analyses, we followed suggested best practices and tested Hypothesis 1  
50 using an atomistic measure of trust congruence and polynomial regression. To allow for a second  
51 examination of the relationship, however, we also tested our proposals with our molecular  
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3 measures by regressing overall fairness on the two variables capturing over-trust and under-trust.  
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5 In line with our predictions, over-trust negatively predicted overall fairness ( $B = -.69, p < .05$ )  
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7 and under-trust also negatively predicted overall fairness ( $B = -.32, p < .05$ ). We repeated this  
8  
9 analysis with need consideration as the outcome variable. Over-trust negatively predicted need  
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11 consideration ( $B = -.50, p < .05$ ) and under-trust negatively predicted need consideration ( $B = -$   
12  
13  $.52, p < .05$ ). Thus, our molecular approach replicated the results from our atomistic approach for  
14  
15 both overall fairness and need consideration.  
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19 We tested Hypotheses 1 and 2 by examining key features of the response surface. In line  
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21 with recent work that has employed this approach (e.g., Matta et al., 2015; Wilson et al., 2018),  
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23 we mean centered trust received and trust wanted to facilitate interpretation of the first-order  
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25 coefficients (Aiken & West, 1991). As a robustness check, we reran our analyses centering both  
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27 trust received and trust wanted at the midpoint of their means (e.g., Lambert et al., 2012). With  
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29 this approach, the line of congruence ( $R = W$ ) consisted of exact matches on the absolute value  
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31 of trust received and trust wanted. The coefficients of our polynomial terms predicting overall  
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33 fairness and need consideration remained substantively unchanged.  
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38 To further probe our relationships, we examined the indirect effects relevant to the  
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40 specific features of the response surface. The curvature of the incongruence line exhibited  
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42 significant indirect effects on task performance ( $-.01$ ;  $CI = -.032, -.001$ ) and citizenship behavior  
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44 ( $-.02$ ;  $CI = -.039, -.003$ ) via overall fairness. The slope of the congruence line exhibited  
45  
46 significant indirect effects on task performance ( $.01$ ;  $CI = .002, .037$ ) and citizenship behavior  
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48 ( $.02$ ;  $CI = .005, .045$ ) via overall fairness. We repeated this procedure with need consideration.  
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50 We found that the curvature of the incongruence line exhibited significant indirect effects on task  
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52 performance ( $-.02$ ;  $CI = -.042, -.002$ ) and citizenship behavior ( $-.03$ ;  $CI = -.060, -.006$ ), and the  
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3 slope of the congruence line exhibited significant indirect effects on task performance (.02; CI =  
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5 .003, .040) and citizenship behavior (.03; CI = .009, .058).  
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8 Finally, core to our theorizing is the notion that overall fairness perceptions stemming  
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10 from trust congruence are guided by adherence to the need rule. As such, throughout our  
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12 hypothesis tests, we have noted that the pattern of our results consistently holds when overall  
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14 fairness is replaced with need consideration. Although our approach is consistent with the  
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16 fairness literature, which typically operationalizes either justice rule adherence (e.g., distributive,  
17  
18 procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice) or overall fairness, as a final robustness  
19  
20 check we conducted a supplemental analysis that positioned need consideration as a “micro  
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22 mediator” of the effects of trust wanted and trust received (i.e., trust wanted/received → need  
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24 consideration → overall fairness → task performance/citizenship behavior). Our pattern of  
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26 effects on task performance and citizenship was identical to those in our primary analyses, and  
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31 all of our hypotheses were supported at the same level of significance.  
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### 33 **STUDY 2: INTRODUCTION**

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35 Study 1 had several strengths, including time separation at each stage of the model,  
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37 multiple sources, replication of our results with both overall fairness and need consideration, and  
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39 convergent effects with atomistic and molecular approaches. Notwithstanding these strengths,  
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41 field methodology cannot definitively rule out alternative explanations nor establish internal  
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43 validity. Our field study also did not include other rules that underlie perceptions of overall  
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45 fairness, such as procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational justice, or equality rule  
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47 adherence. Although that approach is typical in field studies examining overall fairness, it is a  
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49 potential limitation. Accordingly, we conducted a scenario experiment to provide further  
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54 evidence for the effects of trust (in)congruence on overall fairness. Mirroring Study 1, we first  
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3 tested our proposals with overall fairness and then replicated our analyses with need  
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5 consideration. We also tested whether our hypothesized congruence effects exhibited with other  
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7 potential mechanisms that are typically invoked in the justice and P-E fit literatures.  
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## 10 **STUDY 2: METHOD**

### 11 **Participants and Procedure**

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14 We collected data from 225 participants from Prolific Academic. Our inclusion criteria  
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16 specified that participants needed to currently be employed, 18 years or older, and located in the  
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18 United States. All participants were employed full-time (95.6%) or part-time (4.4%); they  
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20 reported working an average of 40.9 hours per week ( $SD = 9.24$ ). The sample was 46.7 percent  
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22 female and the average age was 38 years ( $SD = 11.16$ ). We employed a 2 x 2 design in which  
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24 participants were randomly assigned to trust wanted (high or low) and trust received (high or  
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26 low) conditions.  
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31 Prior to the manipulation, participants were presented with a scenario designed to place  
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33 participants “in the shoes” of an employee in a typical organization. The full scenario was:  
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35 You are an employee at Pinnacle Financial—a professional services firm that offers  
36 various consulting and financial services to its clients. You’ve been working with the  
37 firm for about two years and have generally enjoyed the work that you do. Your work is  
38 focused on the consulting side of the business. Although you spend a lot of time working  
39 directly with clients, you can do that work from your office, so you rarely have to travel.  
40 You work at company headquarters on the 18th floor of a skyscraper in the middle of a  
41 busy city. Your floor has an open office where people work in a shared space. You don’t  
42 mind this arrangement because you tend to get along well with your coworkers. During  
43 your two years at the firm, you’ve had the same supervisor—Riley Jensen. Because you  
44 work in an open office, your supervisor’s desk is located close to your own desk. As a  
45 result, your supervisor has frequent opportunities to interact with you.  
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49 Once a year, the human resources department asks you to complete a 360-degree  
50 feedback survey. This survey asks you to evaluate your coworkers and your supervisor. A  
51 few minutes ago, you received an email from HR asking you to complete the survey by  
52 the end of the day. You start by rating all of your coworkers. After rating your coworkers,  
53 the survey asks you to evaluate your supervisor. As you reflect on your work-related  
54 interactions with your supervisor, you focus on two things. First, you think about the  
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3 behaviors you want from your supervisor. Second, you think about the behaviors you  
4 actually receive from your supervisor.  
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6 Participants were then asked to reflect on the behaviors that they wanted and received  
7 from their supervisor, which we manipulated to create four conditions (see Table 5). These  
8 manipulations directly reflected the measure of trust we utilized in Study 1 (Gillespie, 2011).  
9 Participants then completed the 360-evaluation of their supervisor in the scenario.  
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17 Insert Table 5 about here  
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## 20 **Measures**

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22 To test our hypotheses, participants utilized the same measures from Study 1 to rate the  
23 supervisor's overall fairness ( $\alpha = .97$ ) and need consideration ( $\alpha = .98$ ), as well as trust wanted ( $\alpha$   
24 = .99) and trust received ( $\alpha = .99$ ) as a formal manipulation check. All measures were rated on a  
25 five-point scale. Overall fairness and trust levels were rated from 1 = *to an extremely small*  
26 *extent* to 5 = *to an extremely large extent*, and need consideration was rated from 1 = *strongly*  
27 *disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.  
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36 To ensure that we created a scenario of sufficient realism, we included a three-item  
37 scenario realism check created for this purpose by Chen, Sharma, Edinger, Shapiro, and Farh  
38 (2011). Items were: "It is realistic that I might experience a supervisor like this," "It is realistic  
39 that I might experience a situation like this," and "At some point during my career, I will  
40 probably encounter a situation like the one described above" ( $\alpha = .92$ ). The mean was high for all  
41 three items (3.89 to 4.02 out of 5) and a ANOVA indicated that there was not a significant  
42 difference in scenario realism across the four conditions:  $F(3) = 2.00, ns$ . Our means compare  
43 very favorably to prior uses of this measure (Chen et al., 2011; Farh, Lanaj, & Ilies, 2017).  
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54 ***Alternative mechanisms.*** To provide additional evidence for our proposals, we included  
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3 several other global attitudes that might act as alternative mechanisms. We first selected  
4 variables that Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson's (2005) meta-analysis of the fit  
5 literature identified as oft-evoked outcomes of fit: job satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction,  
6 organizational commitment, organizational identification, LMX, and stress. We also included the  
7 dominant approach to justice rule adherence in the literature, consisting of distributive,  
8 procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice (Colquitt, 2001). We modeled justice rule  
9 adherence as a higher-order construct (for similar, see Sherf, Venkataramani, & Gajendran,  
10 2019; Zhang, LePine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014). Finally, we included a measure of need  
11 fulfillment. Taken together, this set of variables includes supervisor-, organization-, and job-  
12 referenced constructs, thereby capturing a broad range of global attitudes identified in prior  
13 person-supervisor fit, person-organization fit, person-job fit, and justice research. Measures  
14 were: job satisfaction (Edwards & Rothbard, 1999;  $\alpha = .93$ ); supervisor satisfaction (adapted  
15 from Edwards & Rothbard, 1999;  $\alpha = .96$ ); affective commitment to the organization (Meyer et  
16 al., 1993;  $\alpha = .95$ ); organizational identification (Mael & Ashforth, 1992;  $\alpha = .92$ ); LMX (Liden  
17 et al., 1993;  $\alpha = .93$ ); stress (Motowidlo, Packard, & Manning, 1986;  $\alpha = .92$ ); justice rule  
18 adherence (Colquitt, 2001;  $\alpha = .97$ ); and need fulfillment (La Guardia et al., 2000;  $\alpha = .91$ ).

## 40 **STUDY 2: RESULTS**

### 41 **Manipulation Checks**

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44 Analysis of variance (ANOVA) demonstrated that our manipulations exhibited strong  
45 effects. Participants in the high trust wanted condition indicated wanting significantly more trust  
46 than those in the low trust wanted condition ( $F = 2598.87, p < .001; M = 4.62$  vs.  $1.20$ );  
47 participants in the high trust received condition rated their received trust as significantly higher  
48 than those in the low trust received condition ( $F = 2143.65, p < .001; M = 4.50$  vs.  $1.29$ ).

## Hypothesis Testing

We tested Hypotheses 1 and 2 with post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Sidak adjustment. The means of each condition are presented in Table 6 and depicted in Figure 3.

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Insert Table 6 and Figure 3 about here  
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As shown in Table 6 and Figure 3, participants in congruent conditions—both at high–high and low–low levels—rated their supervisor as higher in overall fairness and need consideration, in comparison to conditions of deficiency and excess. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. In support of Hypothesis 2, participants in the high trust wanted–high trust received condition, in comparison to the low trust wanted–low trust received condition, rated their supervisor as significantly higher in overall fairness and need consideration.

***Robustness checks and discussion.*** We next conducted post hoc comparisons with the Sidak adjustment to explore whether pairwise differences reflected the congruence effect we found for overall fairness and need consideration. To offer evidence that a given construct is a viable alternative mechanism for our congruence effect (Hypothesis 1), these post hoc comparisons would need to demonstrate that the means in *both* the high–high and low–low conditions were higher than in the high–low (deficiency) and low–high (excess) condition. In order to provide support for Hypothesis 2, this first condition would need to be satisfied *and* the means in high–high condition would need to be higher than in the low–low condition. The first condition was not satisfied for any of the alternative mechanisms—the low–low condition was not significantly different than conditions of deficiency or excess (complete results are available from the first author upon request). In other words, only overall fairness and need consideration exhibited a pattern of effects consistent with our hypotheses and our results from the field study.

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3 The alternative mechanisms only exhibited differences between the high–high condition and the  
4 other conditions. Specifically, the high–high condition had significantly higher means than all  
5 three other conditions for job satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, affective commitment to the  
6 organization, organizational identification, LMX, justice rule adherence (distributive, procedural,  
7 interpersonal, and information justice), and need fulfillment. There were no significant  
8 differences across conditions for stress. Additional analyses showed that when justice rule  
9 adherence was separated into its four facets, this pattern replicated for distributive justice,  
10 procedural justice, and informational justice. For interpersonal justice, high–high was  
11 significantly higher than the deficiency condition but not the low–low or excess conditions.  
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24 In summary, Study 2 replicated the findings from Study 1 while helping to rule out  
25 alternative mechanisms and providing evidence of the internal validity of our model. Our results  
26 further demonstrated that need consideration lies at the core of overall fairness in our  
27 investigation, given that we found an identical pattern of results when either overall fairness or  
28 need consideration was the dependent variable. This notion is further supported by our analyses  
29 showing that other constructs which underlie overall fairness perceptions (e.g., distributive,  
30 procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice; equality rule adherence) did not exhibit the  
31 same congruence effect. These results also provide evidence that the effects of trust  
32 (in)congruence on downstream employee attitudes and behaviors likely cannot be explained by  
33 the global attitudes that are typically invoked in the P-E fit literature. Accordingly, our  
34 introduction of overall fairness as a conveyance of fit dynamics represents a unique contribution  
35 to the P-E fit literature.  
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## 51 **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

### 52 **Theoretical Implications**

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3           Being trusted can be a positive experience that contributes to satisfaction, commitment,  
4 and performance (Brower et al., 2000). It is intuitive, therefore, that theoretical and practical  
5 treatments have emphasized the positives of being trusted for employees and their organizations  
6 (Deutsch Salamon & Robinson, 2008; Lau et al., 2014; Mishra & Mishra, 2012). Yet, this  
7 prescription may rely on an untenable assumption—that all employees want a high level of  
8 trusting behaviors from their supervisors. Drawing on seminal theorizing from the fairness  
9 literature, we argued that for employees who want a lower level of trusting behaviors, a high  
10 level of trusting behaviors would be perceived as a failure to consider their needs, contributing to  
11 the sense that the supervisor who “over trusted” them behaved unfairly. Our results across two  
12 studies supported our proposal. We found that these lowered perceptions of fairness had  
13 detrimental downstream effects on employees’ in-role and extra-role performance. Prior  
14 theorizing on trust dynamics would suggest that over *trusting* is only a legitimate concern for the  
15 trustor, as it exposes the trustor to potential exploitation (Mayer et al., 1995). Given the  
16 literature’s assumptions regarding the benefits of trust to the trustee, the notion of being over  
17 trusted would be difficult to infer from the literature.

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19           Our second contribution to the trust literature is to challenge the current consensus that  
20 receiving a lower level of trusting behaviors is undesirable. Our results suggest that a lower level  
21 of trusting behaviors is not inherently perceived negatively by employees. Rather, lower trust  
22 received was only detrimental when it did not match trust wanted. As expected, congruence  
23 between trust wanted and trust received had the most beneficial impact on perceptions of the  
24 supervisor’s overall fairness, even when trust wanted and received were both lower. This finding  
25 provides additional evidence that, when it comes to being trusted, a consideration of employees’  
26 needs rather than a sole focus on absolute levels of trusting behaviors is a critical concern.

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3 Indeed, when trust wanted and received were both lower, employees had more positive  
4 perceptions of the supervisor's fairness than when trust received was high but trust wanted was  
5 lower. Although conditions of congruence were uniformly more beneficial than conditions of  
6 incongruence, we expected that fit at high–high levels, as compared to low–low levels, would be  
7 viewed as more fair because of the greater concerted effort associated with considering the trust  
8 needs. As predicted, our results demonstrated that high–high fit was perceived as more fair than  
9 low–low fit. Taken together, these findings highlight that a complete understanding of  
10 employees' reactions to being trusted likely requires the use of a congruence lens.  
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22 These contributions were also facilitated by our departure from the trust literature's focus  
23 on trusting intentions. Given that prior trust research has been primarily interested in the trustors'  
24 side of the equation (trusting), it has been natural to focus on intentions, which can be accurately  
25 rated by the trustors themselves. When research is interested in the trustee's side of the equation  
26 (being trusted), our results suggest some inquiries may benefit from a focus on how those  
27 intentions manifest to employees—as behaviors. Our proposals were based on the notion that  
28 some employees would be unwilling to bear the responsibilities inherent in trusting behaviors.  
29 We suggest it is unlikely that these insights would have been uncovered if we had relied on the  
30 traditional operationalization of trust as a willingness to be vulnerable based on positive  
31 expectations of the trustee. Accordingly, our research contributes to the trust literature by  
32 indicating that scholars should take care to match the operationalization of trust—intention or  
33 behavior—to the research question. This is particularly critical for research on being trusted,  
34 given that measuring supervisors' actual behavior, rather than their intentions, may be a more  
35 precise way to capture the phenomenon.  
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53 Our work also contributes to the fairness literature. Despite the centrality of employee  
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3 needs in early theorizing on fairness (e.g., Deutsch, 1975; Leventhal, 1976a, 1976b, 1980;  
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5 Leventhal et al., 1980), subsequent research has largely relegated the need rule to the  
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7 background. Fairness scholars have been increasingly advocating for a return to these early  
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9 proposals (Colella, 2001; Conlon et al., 2004; Grandey, 2001; Rupp et al., 2017; Törnblom &  
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11 Kazemi, 2015). Following these calls, we drew on this early work to suggest that need rule  
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13 adherence would play a central role in fairness perceptions. Our proposals would be difficult to  
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15 extrapolate from the literature, given that excess trust does not violate the distribution rules that  
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17 are commonly considered (e.g., equity and, to a lesser extent, equality). The fact that employees  
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19 considered excess trusting behaviors to be unfair, compared to situations of fit, indicates that  
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21 allocations which fail to consider employee needs can have a detrimental impact on employees,  
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23 even when those allocations are ostensibly beneficial. Indeed, employees' task performance and  
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25 citizenship behavior ultimately diminished in conditions of misfit. It seems supervisors interested  
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27 in maximizing performance must not only ensure they are providing employees with *enough*  
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29 trusting behaviors, but also that they are not providing *too many*. Our findings also suggest that  
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31 future fairness research, especially research centered on socioemotional resources, may benefit  
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33 from a more concerted focus on the role of needs.

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40 We also contribute to the P-E fit literature in several ways. First, research in the P-E fit  
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42 tradition (as well as work on growth needs and challenge stressors; Grant & Parker, 2009;  
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44 LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005) has tended to focus on job-related outcomes such as  
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46 motivation, satisfaction, and general affect, rather than on the relational dynamics between  
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48 employee and supervisor (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). We suggest that our predictions would be  
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50 difficult to extrapolate from the extant literature, which has focused on the job-related outcomes  
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52 associated with the receipt of excess or unwanted resources. In contrast, our research focused on  
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3 the relational implications of the congruence between what is wanted and received from the  
4 supervisor. Indeed, in our experiment, we ruled out many of the “usual suspects” from the P-E fit  
5 literature as alternative explanations for our findings. Second, in addition to moving beyond job-  
6 related outcomes, we shift the focus from matching employee and supervisor characteristics (the  
7 primary perspective applied in the person–supervisor fit literature; see van Vianen, 2018) toward  
8 a demonstration that deficient and excess socioemotional resources from supervisors will be  
9 perceived as unfair. Third, and perhaps most importantly, we borrowed the notion of need  
10 consideration from the fairness literature to extend work on needs in the fit literature. We showed  
11 that the mere *consideration* of needs (regardless of the *fulfillment* of basic needs, which is the  
12 focus in the fit literature) is enough to “move the needle” on employees’ fairness perceptions.  
13 We believe the concepts of need consideration and fairness forwarded in our work provide  
14 mechanisms that could advance P-E fit phenomena outside of the trust domain, particularly when  
15 the phenomena are socioemotional.

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33 We also extend the research on measurement approaches to P-E fit. Edwards et al. (2006)  
34 noted that the atomistic approach—a comparison of separate measures of person and  
35 environment—and molecular approach—a direct assessment of discrepancies between person  
36 and environment—are not necessarily interchangeable, finding imperfect correspondence  
37 between the two approaches. Although they urged future research to continue exploring the  
38 correspondence between these two approaches, the literature has largely failed to do so. Our  
39 exploration of both approaches in a field study paints a positive view of the extent to which they  
40 may be interchangeable. With respect to both overall fairness and need consideration, our results  
41 provided the same conclusions regardless of whether we applied an atomistic or a molecular  
42 approach. Given that very few studies have simultaneously utilized multiple measurement  
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3 approaches to P-E fit, our results are an important voice in this developing conversation.  
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### 5 **Practical Implications**

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7 Our work has several practical implications. The prevailing wisdom is that trusting in  
8 subordinates leads to beneficial outcomes for the subordinates, the supervisor, and the  
9 organization (for a review see Lyu & Ferrin, 2018). Understanding the situations in which  
10 trusting behaviors can be detrimental creates an opportunity for these drawbacks to be addressed.  
11  
12 Trusting employees is risky and effortful, requiring supervisors to be vulnerable to potential  
13 exploitation (Mayer et al., 1995). It is also difficult for supervisors to develop a deep, trusting  
14 relationship with all of their employees, especially when their span of control is large.  
15  
16 Differential supervisor–employee relationships regularly develop in work units (Liden & Graen,  
17 1980), in part due to the limited time and energy of the supervisor (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).  
18  
19 There simply may not be enough trusting behaviors to go around. Our results suggest that  
20 supervisors should allocate this behavior where it is most wanted. Trusting employees who do  
21 not want it may be worse than simply wasted effort—it may damage their performance.  
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25 Our attention now turns to how supervisors might utilize this information. Baer et al.  
26 (2015) noted that employees likely feel pressure to convey a high willingness to be trusted, given  
27 that to do otherwise might indicate that the employee is unmotivated. As such, it may be  
28 unproductive to ask employees how much they want to be trusted. Indeed, it is likely that a  
29 supervisor’s transparent poll of employees would indicate a relatively unanimous desire for a  
30 high level of trusting behaviors. It is also unlikely that supervisors want to encourage employees’  
31 preferences for lower levels of trust, given that trusting behaviors facilitate effective and efficient  
32 workplaces (Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). Given these issues, we focus on the  
33 notion that supervisors may be able to “change the equation” by increasing the amount of  
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3 trusting behaviors that employees want.  
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5           In some cases, supervisors may be providing employees with trusting behaviors but not  
6 providing the necessary support structure to tackle the new challenges associated with those  
7 behaviors. These supervisors' employees are likely aware of this discrepancy, which could  
8 explain a lower desire for trust. To the extent that supervisors can assure employees that  
9 increased trusting behaviors will be accompanied by a commensurate increase in support and  
10 understanding, employees may desire a higher level of trust. Relatedly, trust wanted might be  
11 increased if supervisors raised employees' awareness of the benefits that accompany being  
12 trusted. In light of the strains associated with being trusted, the benefits might go unnoticed. If  
13 supervisors more explicitly acknowledged the upsides of being trusted, such as increased  
14 opportunities for growth and advancement, employees might be more inclined to desire a higher  
15 level of trusting behaviors. Given that fit at high levels of trust wanted and received is the most  
16 advantageous condition, organizations would be wise to attend to these issues.  
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### 32 **Suggestions for Future Research and Limitations**

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35           In Study 1, we utilized a robust research design that included three waves of data  
36 collection and two sources. As a result, we had time separation, source separation, or both at  
37 each stage of our model. Additionally, our use of polynomial regression and response surface  
38 methodology provided a rigorous and comprehensive test (Edwards, 1994, 2001; Lambert,  
39 Edwards, & Cable, 2003). Notwithstanding these strengths, our study has several limitations that  
40 could be addressed in future research. First, our field study assessed trust wanted and trust  
41 received from the employee. Although this approach is consistent with prior fit research (e.g.,  
42 Lambert et al., 2012; Tepper et al., 2018), it is possible that the supervisor's trusting intentions  
43 are not aligned with the employee's perceptions of the supervisor's trusting behaviors. Future  
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3 research might explore the extent to which employee perceptions of trusting behavior are aligned  
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5 with supervisor-rated trusting intentions.  
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8 A second limitation is that our field study did not control for supervisors' justice rule  
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10 adherence (i.e., distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice). Although our  
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12 experimental study provides evidence that attenuates this concern, there are unanswered  
13  
14 questions. Given the important role justice rule adherence plays in overall fairness perceptions, it  
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16 may interact with the need rule to predict overall fairness. For example, if supervisors provide  
17  
18 high informational justice by thoroughly explaining their reliance on an employee and high  
19  
20 procedural justice by allowing the employee a voice in the situation, will employees who want  
21  
22 low trust still perceive the trusting behavior as unfair? Although our theorizing suggests they  
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24 will, it is possible that the concern signaled by providing information and an opportunity for  
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26 voice might compensate for not considering the specific trust need.  
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31 Because we were interested in employee responses to average trust wanted relative to  
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33 average trust received, we built and tested theory that is largely agnostic to the role of time. Our  
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35 hypothesis tests in both temporal conditions (i.e., the field and the lab) supported this notion.  
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37 Future research might consider the possibility of trust recalibration over time. Employees might  
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39 "update" their desired level of trust in response to changes in their non-work life, changes in  
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41 their supervisor, or changes in their skillset and self-efficacy. A supervisor's (un)timely  
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43 responsiveness to these fluctuations may impact employee perceptions of fair treatment.  
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45 Alternatively, scholars might explore whether there is a "negotiation process" as trust levels  
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47 become crystallized between employee and supervisor. Future work could examine how this  
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49 process unfolds over time to arrive at general levels of trust wanted and received.  
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54 Whereas we focused on the outcomes of trust (in)congruence, a logical next step is for  
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3 scholars to investigate the reasons that employees might desire a lower level of trust. Prior  
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5 conceptual work suggests that these reasons might revolve around the obligations that can  
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7 accompany being trusted (Skinner et al., 2014). Future research might explore the extent to  
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9 which trusting behaviors engender unwelcome obligations and how those obligations ultimately  
10  
11 affect employee attitudes and behaviors. Desired levels of trusting behaviors might also stem  
12  
13 from employees' idiosyncratic needs for achievement (McClelland, 1961). It is probable that  
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15 employees with a high need for achievement would be more accepting of trusting behaviors, as  
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17 receiving the supervisor's trust is likely to facilitate career achievement. Another factor affecting  
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19 employees' trust wanted may be their need for impact—a dimension of empowerment reflecting  
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21 the ability to influence work outcomes (Spreitzer, 1995). Given that trusting behaviors frequently  
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23 manifest as supervisors involving employees in important decisions and tasks, employees with a  
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25 need for impact may welcome a higher level of trust.  
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31 The literature would also benefit from research on additional outcomes of (in)congruence  
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33 in trust wanted and trust received. Whereas we found that excess trust received had a detrimental  
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35 impact on relational outcomes, it is possible it will have a beneficial impact on other outcomes.  
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37 For example, excess trust received may inspire employees to rise to the challenge by “stepping  
38  
39 up their game,” resulting in higher levels of engagement. Excess might also convey to employees  
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41 that the supervisor believes they can handle additional trusting behaviors, thereby enhancing  
42  
43 self-esteem (Leary & Baumeister, 2000). Likewise, although scholars have proposed that an  
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45 excess in autonomy (a potential outcropping of trust) may be detrimental to motivation  
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47 (Langfred & Moye, 2004), this excess autonomy might have spillover effects that ease burdens  
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49 in other domains. Future research is needed to test these proposals.  
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**TABLE 1**  
**Need Consideration Nomological Network: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations<sup>a</sup>**

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Need Consideration	3.96	0.76	(.89)												
2. Distributive Justice	3.55	1.07	.41*	(.96)											
3. Procedural Justice	3.54	0.83	.54*	.62*	(.88)										
4. Informational Justice	3.78	0.79	.66*	.52*	.71*	(.85)									
5. Interpersonal Justice	4.27	0.78	.58*	.40*	.52*	.66*	(.86)								
6. Equality Rule Adherence	3.16	0.99	.25*	.25*	.35*	.30*	.26*	(.93)							
7. Individualized Consideration	3.69	0.77	.60*	.34*	.54*	.63*	.50*	.34*	(.78)						
8. Leader-Member Exchange	3.82	0.72	.64*	.44*	.66*	.73*	.58*	.37*	.73*	(.89)					
9. Perceived Organizational Support	3.59	0.79	.51*	.46*	.50*	.43*	.28*	.23*	.46*	.49*	(.88)				
10. Organizational Commitment	3.30	0.99	.39*	.26*	.36*	.31*	.27*	.19*	.44*	.43*	.57*	(.89)			
11. Autonomy Need Fulfillment	3.72	0.86	.56*	.42*	.54*	.57*	.52*	.24*	.57*	.67*	.56*	.47*	(.75)		
12. Relatedness Need Fulfillment	3.30	0.92	.60*	.43*	.53*	.52*	.41*	.29*	.66*	.67*	.57*	.58*	.70*	(.86)	
13. Competence Need Fulfillment	4.25	0.75	.31*	.22*	.25*	.35*	.42*	.15*	.21*	.38*	.40*	.23*	.58*	.44*	(.87)

<sup>a</sup> N = 229. Coefficient alphas are on the diagonal.

\*  $p < .05$

TABLE 2

Study 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations <sup>a</sup>

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Trust Received	5.22	1.21	(.87)					
2. Trust Wanted	5.61	1.07	.52*	(.88)				
3. Overall Fairness	4.20	0.84	.11	.12*	(.97)			
4. Task Performance	4.39	0.62	.17*	.06	.15*	(.89)		
5. Citizenship Behavior	4.47	0.61	.08	.04	.20*	.62*	(.85)	
6. Need Consideration	4.06	0.82	.22*	.12*	.66*	.17*	.27*	(.92)

<sup>a</sup> N = 291 to 342 employees. Coefficient alphas are on the diagonal.

\*  $p < .05$

**TABLE 3**  
**Study 1: Polynomial Regression of Overall Fairness on Trust (In)congruence and**  
**Regression of Downstream Outcomes on Overall Fairness<sup>a</sup>**

Variable	Overall Fairness		Task Performance	Citizenship Behavior
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	4.20*	4.17*	3.95*	3.84*
<i>Polynomial Terms</i>				
$b_1$ Trust Received ( $R$ )	.04	.05	.12*	.05
$b_2$ Trust Wanted ( $W$ )	.07	.09	-.05	.01
$b_3 R^2$		-.03	.02	.02
$b_4 R \times W$		.09*	.00	.01
$b_5 W^2$		.01	-.01	.01
<i>Mediators</i>				
Overall Fairness			<b>.10*</b>	<b>.14*</b>
<i>Variance Explained</i>				
$R^2$	.02	.04	.05	.05
$\Delta R^2$		.03*		
<i>Congruence Line (<math>R = W</math>)</i>				
Slope ( $b_1 + b_2$ )		<b>.14*</b>		
Curvature ( $b_3 + b_4 + b_5$ )		.07		
<i>Incongruence Line (<math>R = -W</math>)</i>				
Slope ( $b_1 - b_2$ )		-.04		
Curvature ( $b_3 - b_4 + b_5$ )		<b>-.11*</b>		
<i>F for the 3 quadratic terms</i>		3.08*		

<sup>a</sup> N = 291 to 342 employees. Parameters are unstandardized. Parameters relevant to hypothesis tests are **bolded**.

\*  $p < .05$

**TABLE 4**  
**Study 1: Polynomial Regression of Need Consideration on Trust (In)congruence and**  
**Regression of Downstream Outcomes on Need Consideration <sup>a</sup>**

Variable	Need Consideration		Task Performance	Citizenship Behavior
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	4.06*	4.10*	3.90*	3.58*
<i>Polynomial Terms</i>				
$b_1$ Trust Received ( $R$ )	.15*	.11*	.11*	.04
$b_2$ Trust Wanted ( $W$ )	.00	.03	-.04	.01
$b_3 R^2$		-.08*	.03	.03
$b_4 R \times W$		.08*	.00	.00
$b_5 W^2$		.02	-.01	.01
<i>Mediators</i>				
Need Consideration			<b>.11*</b>	<b>.20*</b>
<i>Variance Explained</i>				
$R^2$	.05	.08	.05	.09
$\Delta R^2$		.03*		
<i>Congruence Line (<math>R = W</math>)</i>				
Slope ( $b_1 + b_2$ )		<b>.14*</b>		
Curvature ( $b_3 + b_4 + b_5$ )		.02		
<i>Incongruence Line (<math>R = -W</math>)</i>				
Slope ( $b_1 - b_2$ )		.08		
Curvature ( $b_3 - b_4 + b_5$ )		<b>-.14*</b>		
<i>F for the 3 quadratic terms</i>		3.16*		

<sup>a</sup> N = 291 to 342 employees. Parameters are unstandardized. Parameters relevant to hypothesis tests are **bolded**.

\*  $p < .05$

TABLE 5

**Study 2: Manipulation Passages for Trust Wanted and Trust Received**

<b>Trust Wanted</b>	
High	
	Beginning with what you want, you generally want your supervisor to rely on your work-related judgments, skills, and abilities. You want your supervisor to depend on you to handle important issues on his behalf. Also, you want your supervisor to rely on you to present his work to others. In difficult situations, you want your supervisor to depend on you to back him up.
Low	
	Beginning with what you want, you generally do not want your supervisor to rely on your work-related judgments, skills, and abilities. You do not want your supervisor to depend on you to handle important issues on his behalf. Also, you do not want your supervisor to rely on you to present his work to others. In difficult situations, you do not want your supervisor to depend on you to back him up.
<b>Trust Received</b>	
High	
	Turning to what you actually receive, your supervisor frequently relies on your work-related judgments, skills, and abilities. Your supervisor regularly depends on you to handle important issues on his behalf. Also, your supervisor frequently relies on you to present his work to others. In difficult situations, your supervisor often depends on you to back him up.
Low	
	Turning to what you actually receive, your supervisor almost never relies on your work-related judgments, skills, and abilities. Your supervisor rarely depends on you to handle important issues on his behalf. Also, your supervisor almost never relies on you to present his work to others. In difficult situations, your supervisor very infrequently depends on you to back him up.

TABLE 6

Study 2: Means Across Conditions and Mean Differences Among Conditions <sup>a</sup>

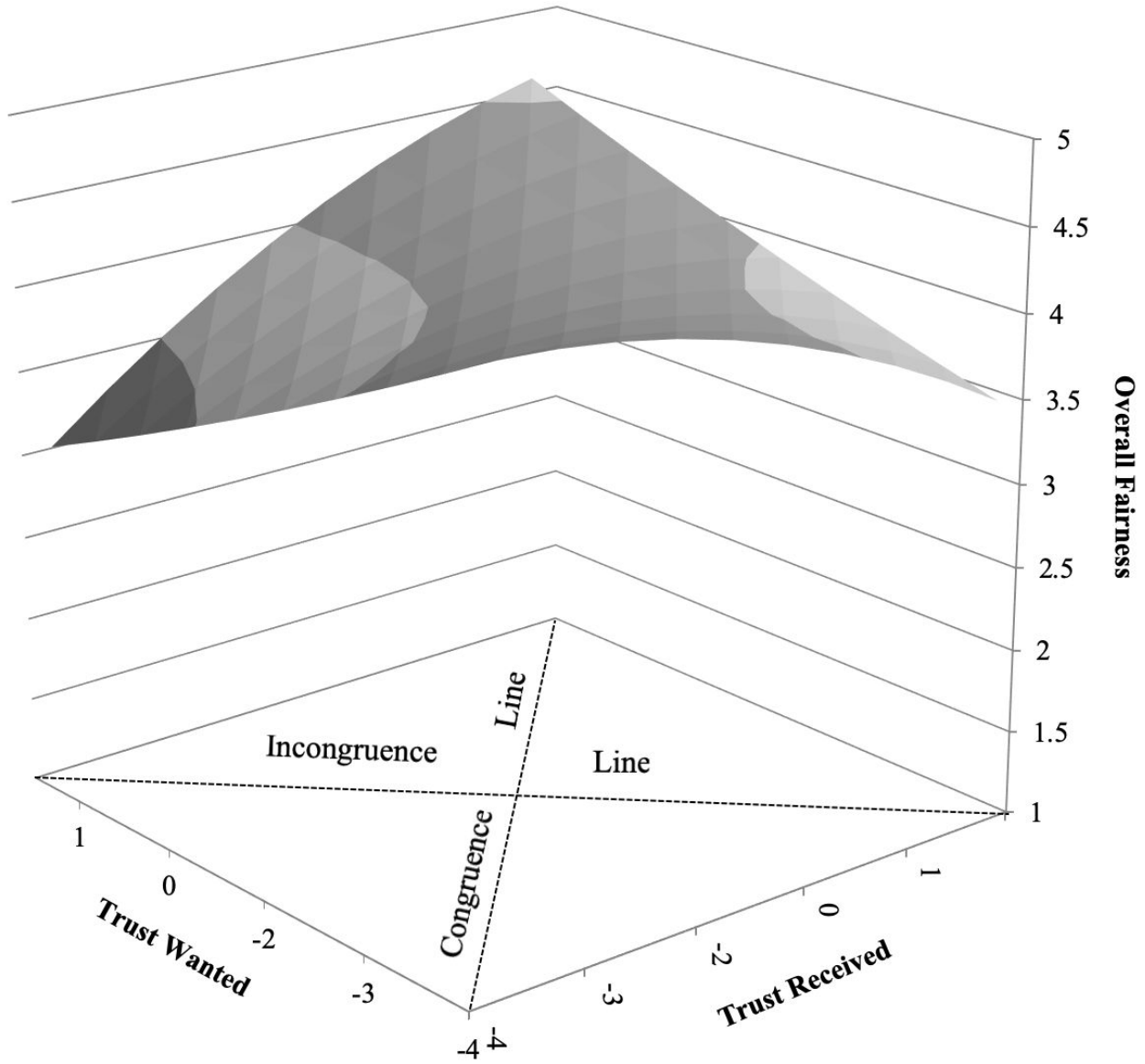
		Overall Fairness			
		Mean	Hypothesis 1: Mean Differences		Hypothesis 2: Mean Difference
			Vs. Deficiency	Vs. Excess	Vs. Low x Low
<b>Congruence</b>	High Trust Wanted x High Trust Received	4.24	1.99*	1.88*	.68*
	Low Trust Wanted x Low Trust Received	3.56	1.31*	1.20*	-
<b>Deficiency</b>	High Trust Wanted x Low Trust Received	2.25	-	-	-
<b>Excess</b>	Low Trust Wanted x High Trust Received	2.36	-	-	-
		Need Consideration			
		Mean	Hypothesis 1: Mean Differences		Hypothesis 2: Mean Difference
			Vs. Deficiency	Vs. Excess	Vs. Low x Low
<b>Congruence</b>	High Trust Wanted x High Trust Received	4.16	2.25*	2.15*	.71*
	Low Trust Wanted x Low Trust Received	3.45	1.54*	1.44*	-
<b>Deficiency</b>	High Trust Wanted x Low Trust Received	1.91	-	-	-
<b>Excess</b>	Low Trust Wanted x High Trust Received	2.01	-	-	-

<sup>a</sup> N = 225. Significance levels of the mean differences were tested using post hoc pairwise comparisons with the Sidak adjustment.

\*  $p < .05$

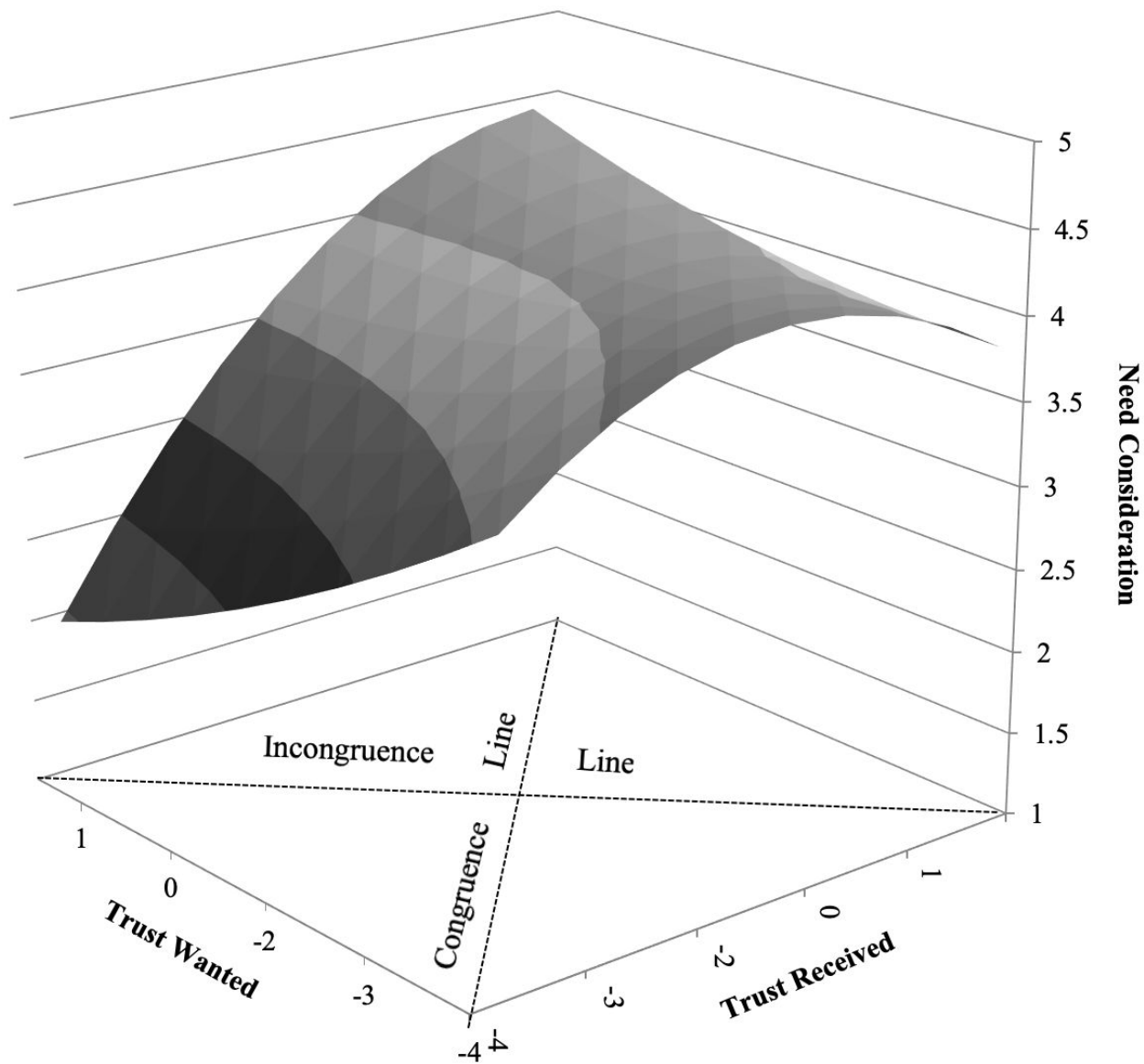
FIGURE 1

Study 1: Fit and Misfit Effects of Trust Wanted and Trust Received with Overall Fairness



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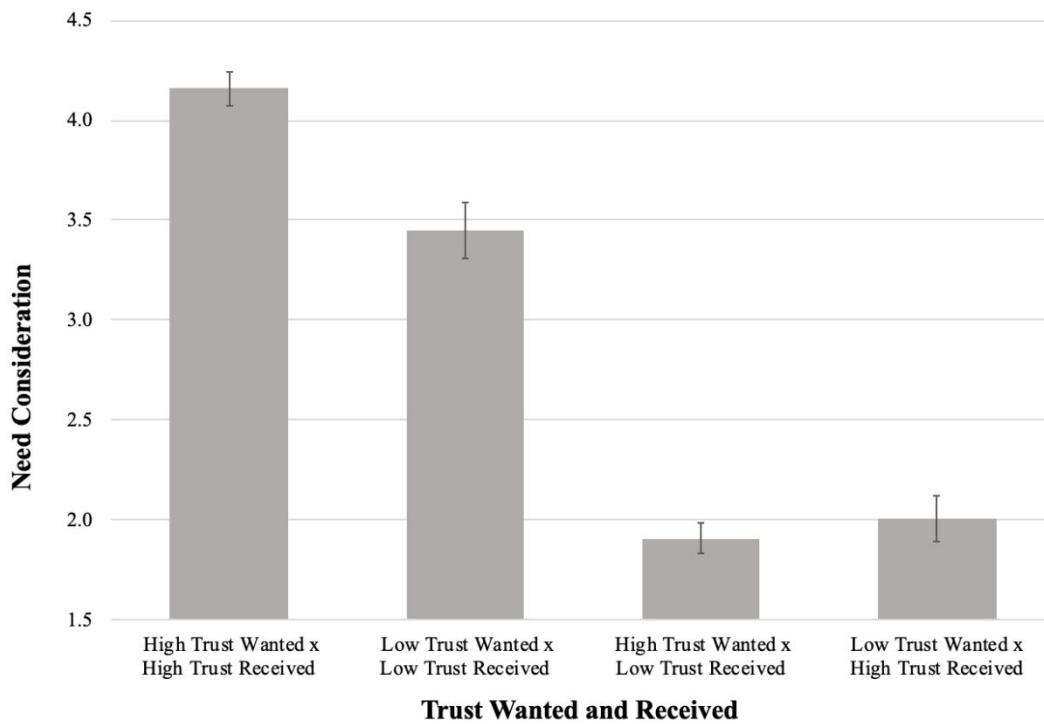
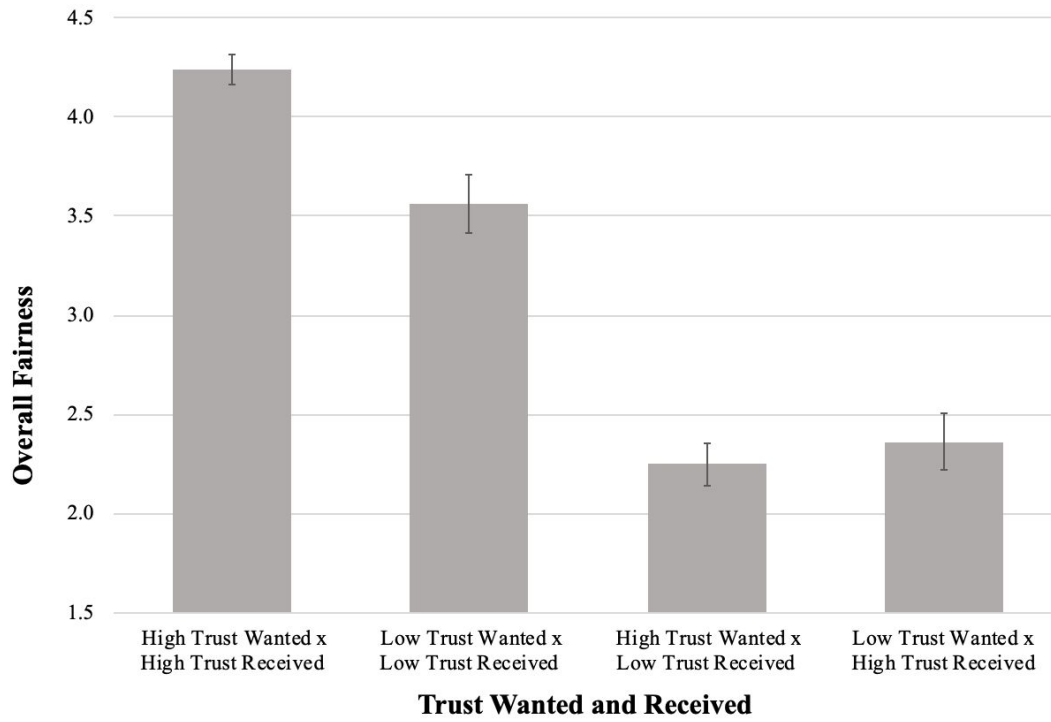
**FIGURE 2**  
**Study 1: Fit and Misfit Effects of Trust Wanted and Trust Received with Need**  
**Consideration**



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FIGURE 3

Study 2: Means Across Experimental Conditions for Trust Wanted and Trust Received



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## Response to Editor

**1. Clarifying language in the manuscript. Reviewer 3 (point 2) raises a valid concern that you are dealing with trusting behaviors not merely states. However, this aspect is not consistently emphasized in the manuscript, especially in the theory development and discussion sections. I request you to carefully go through the manuscript to ensure that your focus remains on trusting behaviors. That reviewer (point 4) is also questioning your characterization of the P-E literature, which you might want to address.**

We have taken care to consistently convey to the reader that our theoretical and empirical focus is on trusting *behaviors*. Following your direction, we paid particular attention to that point in the theory development and discussion. As evidence of these clarifications, we changed the text from “trust” to “trusting behaviors” in 28 different instances throughout the manuscript. The term “trusting behaviors” now appears 59 times, which we hope is sufficient to ensure that our focus is clear to the reader.

With respect to our characterization of the P-E fit literature, Reviewer 2’s point is that the P-E literature as a whole has not predominantly focused on person–supervisor fit. We completely agree—the P–E fit literature as a whole has largely focused on person–organization and person–job fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; van Vianen, 2018). Our point in the intro is that the portion of the literature *specifically addressing* person–supervisor fit has focused on the congruence between supervisor and employee characteristics, rather than on supervisors fulfilling the needs of employees. To help clarify this point, we have emphasized that van Vianen (2018) was referring solely to the person–*supervisor* literature (rather than the *entire* P-E fit literature) when he said, “Person–supervisor fit refers to the match between employees’ characteristics and those of their supervisor.” We believe our revised wording (pp. 5, 37) is consistent with the literature and avoids the confusion that Reviewer 3 noted.

**2. Additional details on empirical aspects of your manuscript. Reviewer 2 is requesting some minor clarifications on Study 2. You might consider addressing them in your final version along with other minor changes suggested by Reviewer 3 (point 3a, point 5).**

As suggested by Reviewer 2 (point 2), we added SEs to the bar charts in Figure 3. Following Reviewer 3’s direction, we added labels to the axes for surface plots (point 5) and have reduced the repetition that was present in the results (point 3a).

**3. Length of the manuscript. With 45 pages of text, the manuscript is rather long, even for a two study paper. If there are ways in which you can condense the presentation, it would make for a tighter paper. For instance, there can be more succinct ways of presenting methodological and analytical information regarding Studies 1 & 2. Here, I do recognize that the length of these sections is caused by requests made by me and the review team regarding robustness and supplementary analyses. But, I would appreciate it, if you can still present all this information, but in a more condensed fashion. A reduction in length of the overall text by around 3-4 pages will make for a tighter manuscript.**

We cut 4 pages from the final manuscript; it now ends on page 41 (including the abstract). As you directed, our cuts largely came from shortening our description of the method and analyses

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3 in Studies 1 and 2. We were able to present the results more succinctly while retaining all of the  
4 information requested by the review team through the review process. Indeed, we were careful  
5 not to cut anything substantive from the manuscript. We agree these cuts make for a tighter  
6 manuscript.  
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8  
9 **4. Other Miscellaneous Issues. Finally, there are some other minor issues to address as you  
10 move toward the final version of this work. These include:**

11  
12 **(a) Please remove any citations or references to From the Editors--the editorials that begin  
13 each issue of AMJ--from your manuscript. From the Editors are typically 4-5 pages in  
14 length, are written by members of the editorial team, and do not have traditional bylines or  
15 abstracts. AMJ's website lists the members of the past two editorial teams  
16 (<http://aom.org/Publications/AMJ/Welcome-to-AMJ.aspx>) if you are not certain whether a  
17 given article is indeed a From the Editors. Authors are asked to remove citations to From  
18 the Editors to avoid the appearance that the Journal is trying to encourage unnecessary  
19 self-citations. Please find appropriate substitutes for those citations and references where  
20 needed.  
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24 We confirm that we have not included citations/references to any *AMJ* FTE articles.  
25

26  
27 **(b) When you submitted your manuscript, you were asked to indicate to the action editor  
28 whether you had previously published another manuscript that uses either some of the  
29 same variables from this data collection effort, or that uses some of the same  
30 cases/observations from this data collection effort. You were also asked to explain, in detail,  
31 the nature of that overlap. If you indicated that there is some overlap in variables or  
32 cases/observations, please now detail the precise nature of that overlap for the reader in  
33 your Method section, including all necessary citations and references. Those passages are  
34 important to give the reader a sense of where this paper fits into your larger stream of  
35 research, and are also critical to future meta-analysts who may need to gauge the  
36 nonindependence of findings across studies. Please reproduce the text inserted into your  
37 Method section in your responses document, so that the action editor can inspect it clearly  
38 and comprehensively.  
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40**

41  
42 We confirm that all of our data is unique to this paper. None of it has been submitted in part or  
43 whole to another journal nor to *AMJ* in a separate manuscript.  
44

45  
46 **As you likely know, ensuring the validity and replicability of published results is becoming  
47 a topic of increasing importance in our field. AMJ now requires all authors on  
48 conditionally accepted papers to verify the study results. Toward this end, I ask that each  
49 coauthor write to me directly ([stangirala@rhsmith.umd.edu](mailto:stangirala@rhsmith.umd.edu)) with a statement that they  
50 confirm the results. Ideally, you can share the data and code/syntax among the author team  
51 and allow each person to verify the results independently. Alternatively, all authors could  
52 participate in a video conference call, where those responsible for the data analysis walk  
53 through the steps that produce the results and demonstrate for all authors. Finally, please  
54 have more than one person ensure that the primary results are entered into the paper and  
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3 **tables correctly. In any event, please have each coauthor write to me after your process is**  
4 **complete.**  
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7 All of the authors have gone through the results, data, and syntax in detail. All authors have  
8 written to you directly to confirm the results.  
9

10 In closing, thank you for guiding us through the review process. From our perspective it was a  
11 true collaboration between our author team and the review team. We are grateful for the many  
12 improvements that resulted and are quite proud of the final paper.  
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