Social Groups in Times of Change: The Impact of a Threatened Identity

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A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
at the Australian National University,
Canberra, Australia

August, 2006

Declaration

I, Simon Finley, hereby declare that, except where acknowledged, that this work is my own and has not been submitted for a higher degree at any other university or institution.

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

The three studies presented in this thesis investigated the effects that a change to a valued group identity through a merger would have on different theoretical constructions of identity threat, and how pre-merger group identities and the procedures used to implement the change interact to motivate people to define the merged category in terms of their pre-merger identity.

With respect to the effects of change on identity threat, Chapter 2 examined if social identity threat could be split on the theoretically proposed constructs of distinctiveness, value and categorisation threat in a changing intergroup environment. Additionally, it was proposed that a merger between experimentally created equal groups should elicit distinctiveness and categorisation threat for those participants whose pre-merger identity had been internalised as a part of self. Furthermore feelings of threat based on participants' pre-merger group should motivate participants to represent the new category in terms of their pre-merger identity (ingroup projection). In this context two types of identity threat were found, a factor representing categorisation threat and a factor representing both value and distinctiveness threat that was labeled positive distinctiveness threat. Preliminary support was found for the proposition that one way group members can respond to a positive distinctiveness threat is to project their pre-merger identity onto the post-merger category.

Extending these findings, Chapter 3 investigated two different theoretical approaches to the proposed effects of distinctiveness and value threat. By manipulating the distinctiveness and value of group structure and status, the theoretical separation of distinctiveness and value threat was tested against the proposal that the two may be interrelated and operate as a positive distinctiveness threat. Support was again found for the conceptualisation of value and distinctiveness threat as a combined form of identity threat, while the addition of pre-merger status to the experimental paradigm illustrated how pre-merger identity concerns are relevant in predicting whether a group will seek to claim ownership of a new group by interpreting it in terms of their pre-merger identity.

Finally, Chapter 4 demonstrated how implementing the merger using perceived participant involvement may be one mechanism through which pre-merger identity

concerns can be managed. It was found that the motivational aspects of identity threat that predicted ingroup projection were reduced when participants perceived the merger to be implemented through a legitimate process.

Overall the results illustrate how group members perceive and react to changes to their social identities. Through an empirical testing of three theoretically defined identity threat constructs, it was shown that when a merger is seen to sacrifice or diminish a group's positively distinct identity, group members will seek to preserve or enhance that sub-group identity through ingroup projection. Additionally, implications for the management of ingroup projection through perceived democratic processes provide an interesting avenue for understanding the regulation of change as it relates to social identities.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

There has been a long tradition of social psychological research that has investigated the negative effects that can be related to group membership. These negative effects include racism, discrimination, genocide and war. There has also been much research that has investigated the positive effects that can be related to group membership such as self-esteem, social cohesion and cooperation. This research, in a domain often referred to as intergroup relations, has shown that group membership provides an individual with an important sense of who they are in relation to others, as well as a meaningful way of relating to the world. A major theoretical contributor to the understanding of these psychological processes has been the Social Identity Approach, an approach that consists of two related theories: Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 1986) and Self-categorisation Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherall 1987). While Social Identity Theory has a strong focus on the processes involved in social change, until recently limited research had investigated the processes involved in changes to group membership that lead to the creation of a new group.

There are many ways that a change to a person's group membership can occur. A group can splinter or schism into different groups; a group can reinvent itself with new goals, norms and identity; or two or more groups can combine to form a new, more inclusive group membership. Recent research into this last form of change has generally focused on the combination of two separate groups into one group, a change typically referred to as a merger. Variables typically associated with how people will either embrace or reject the merger that have been investigated refer to a person's level of identification with the sub-group and the new group, the general value or relative status of the pre-merger groups, and the structure that the new group takes. What hasn't been investigated in depth, is how a person's perception of social identity threat (a threat related to their membership of a social group) affects their perceptions of the merger, and specifically, how different types and levels of this threat are related to not just how much people will come to identify with the new category, but how people will come to define the new category. That is, when will people be motivated to define the category in terms of their past group membership, and how will this affect relations between the groups in the new category.

This thesis aims to analyse three main concerns related to the creation of a new group from two sub-groups. The first relates to social identity threat. The concept of identity threat in social identity literature is often used as an explanatory tool, and measurements of it have been hard to come by. I will explore different types of identity threat that may be felt as the consequence of a merger by attempting to verify a recently created typology of social identity threat. Secondly, I aim to analyse the conditions under which people will be motivated to project their pre-merger group's identity and characteristics onto the new group, perhaps as the consequence of an identity threat. And thirdly, I aim to see if the perceived legitimacy associated with the change process can reduce levels of identity threat, and in turn reduce ingroup projection.

1.1 The Importance of Understanding Change

The social world is a complex set of individuals, groups and systems that operate in and as a function of each other. To complicate the analysis of human behaviour and attitudes within these groups and systems further, social groups that individuals belong to are not stable, and are often subject to changes in context, composition and content. For example, individuals can choose to leave groups, individuals can strive for social change to improve a group's value, and groups can also change their structure or values to attain goals or adapt to a new context. Examples of these changes can be seen within families that divorce or re-marry, minority ethnic or national groups that seek to improve their status, individuals that seek to flee a country for fear of persecution, and organisations that attempt to stay competitive and harness social capital for the purpose of attaining organisational goals. Two main groups or structures that seek to govern or regulate individual behaviour through change are organisations and governments, and an analysis that understands how individuals react to and are motivated by a change is important in understanding how harmony and cooperation can be achieved in times of instability.

Organisations

Organisational psychology has become a hot topic in recent years with numerous articles and books being published detailing how psychology can make a contribution to the understanding of organisational life and change (Haslam 2001; Haslam, van Knippenberg, Platow & Ellemers 2003; Hogg & Terry 2001; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Monden & de Lima 2002; Terry, 2003; van Leeuwen & van Knippenberg 2003; Turner & Haslam 2001; Tyler 1999). The importance of studying organisation as not only physical

and economic entities, but psychological ones as well saw great focus by Katz and Kahn (1966) in their seminal text. In this text, organisations are conceptualised as social-systems that coordinate people's behaviour by means of roles, norms and values. They suggest that it is partly because of the regulatory function that organisations fulfil, that the precise constellation of roles, norms and values within any particular organisation also serves to create shared meaning for its members. This provides each organisation with a distinct organisational culture, where the roles, norms and values exist to direct and structure employees' activities to reach the organisation's goals (Haslam 2001). While employees are differentiated as to their responsibilities for the task of reaching a common goal, it is important to note that internal differentiation exists not only because individuals in organisations have different roles, but also because they belong to different groups within the organisation. This view counters the traditional view of organisation behaviour, that has focused primarily on the individual at the expense of the membership that individual has to relevant groups in the organisation.

Turner and Haslam (2000) have illustrated the benefits of applying a group-based perspective to the analysis of leadership. As organisations change as a function of their continual effectiveness and survival, and organisations also operate as a function of the internal system of social relations between relevant organisational groups (Turner & Haslam 2000), it seems logical that a group based perspective would be able to offer much to the analysis or change. Haslam (2001) argues for a group-based approach to organisations, and more specifically, a social identity approach. Again, this is because:

"Social groups exist in, as, and across organisations and such groups fundamentally transform the psychology of an individual",….,"any approach that fails to acknowledge the distinct psychology of groups or which places these concerns off-limits confines itself to a very partial analysis of organisational behaviour" (Haslam 2001, p.299).

International Relations

While organisational psychology has become a popular topic in social psychology recently, the analysis of groups in times of instability can be extended to incorporate groups

that do not operate as a function of organisational outcomes. For example, the field of social psychology can be seen more generally as a looking glass for intergroup relations that realises the complex nature of a myriad of intergroup relations in contexts associated with political and historical change. That is, while psychological processes in organisations are said to be "general" of processes related to groups (see Haslam 2001), they are still specific to the norms, values and strategic outcomes of organisations (for example, greater efficiency, productivity and effectiveness, Dunphy & Stace 1999). Thus an extension of the analysis of psychological change and its adaptation to broader contexts would also bring extra validity to the types of psychological processes associated with and reflective of a person's identification with the organisation as a social category.

Examples of the analysis of the changing nature of a group's composition not restricted to the realm of organisational psychology can be seen in an analysis of political movements and change. Since the end of the Cold War countries throughout the world have experienced change directly related to their identities. From the dissolution of the U.S.S.R. into a number of smaller states, where disagreements about the identity some of the countries take has led to ongoing disagreement and bloodshed (e.g. The Beslan school siege in Chechnya September 2004 that led to the death of 338 people), to the Middle East, where America's wish to see democracy, freedom and peace take hold has witnessed the over throw of Suddam Hussein's Bathist regime in Iraq, and an attempt to re-create Iraq in terms of America's "universal values" of democracy, liberty and freedom (Prestowitz 2003). In these two examples we are witnessing identities being created and defined, whether it relates to the movement from within a new social category such as in the schisming of the U.S.S.R, or the projection of values and norms onto another social category, which can be seen with the coalition of the willing's involvement in Iraq.

One example of work that has investigated general psychological processes in contexts outside the organisation is the work conducted by Mummendey and colleagues, investigating perceptions of individuals based on their categorisation as East Germans after the re-unification of West and East Germany in 1989 and 1990. For example, Mummendey, Kessler, Klink and Mielke (1999a; Blanz, Mummendey, Mielke & Klink 1998; Mummendey, Mielke, Wenzel & Kanning 1996) analysed a number of different strategies East Germans could utilise to cope with the potential threat or negative sense of

social self associated with assimilation with and comparisons with the higher status West Germans.

More recently, an analysis of potential changes to the composition of the European Union has developed interest from a social psychological point of view (Herrmann, Risse & Brewer 2004). This is especially interesting as the European Union (EU) is a 25 country strong organisation, and while each country has the freedom and responsibility of managing its citizens, members of the Union are bound to organisational criteria and benchmarks related to human rights, economic performance and democratisation of politics and defence. In this sense, countries are organising and aligning themselves to particular organisational goals and outcomes, and one can see a potential melding of psychological interpretations of politics, history and organisational outcomes. While outside the scope of this thesis, its point is to draw the attention away from a potential microscopic view of social psychology being applied to one domain, and instead to stand back and realise the magnitude of opportunities social psychology has to contribute to the field of not only changing intergroup situations, but changing international relations.

The above examples illustrate not only the ubiquitous nature of change relating to organisations, countries, or more simply groups where people form a psychological attachment, but also that an understanding of the psychological and structural processes associated with such change is an important and necessary factor in managing intergroup relations to create conditions under which justice and respect can flourish. Therefore, while understanding and investigating the importance of the specific social dimensions under which such changes operate can not be understated, it is also important to explore the necessary conditions and underlying psychological processes involved, independent of the respective context in order to investigate and develop a general psychological theory of intergroup relations.

1.2   The Social Identity Approach

The Social Identity Approach formulates an understanding of intergroup relations that comprises two related theories, Social Identity Theory (SIT: Tajfel & Turner 1979:1986), and its extension Self-categorization Theory (SCT: Turner et al. 1987). While the theories place different emphases on motivational and cognitive aspects of self, they are consistent in their starting point that a person's sense of self, who they think they are, can be defined along a continuum reflecting on the one hand their sense of themselves as a

unique individual, and on the other, their sense of themselves as a group member. Whether a person's behaviour is determined by their personal or social identity depends on features of the social context. For example, people tend to define themselves as individuals under circumstances where they are comparing themselves with other members of the same group, in an intragroup context. But if a member of one group (the ingroup) is involved in a context where they are comparing themselves with a member from an outgroup, then they are much more likely to act according to that group membership. In these intergroup contexts, the individual will be motivated to accentuate the similarities between themselves and other ingroup members, while at the same time accentuating the difference between the ingroup and the outgroup.

Generally this social classification scheme provides individuals with a means of defining themselves in terms of "we" and "us", instead of "I" and "me". Accordingly there are differing levels of categorical abstraction at which an individual can identify himself or herself. For instance, depending on the context, people may categorise themselves at the superordinate human level, the intermediate social level, or the subordinate personal level (Turner et al. 1987; Haslam 2001). The self-categories are hierarchically related to each other, so those social categories are compared to each other on the basis of the next most inclusive category. Through its role as a reference point for comparisons between relevant subgroups, the superordinate category thus provides the norms and standards for the evaluation of subgroups.

The importance of this group membership is twofold. Firstly, group membership helps define the self through a process of self-stereotyping, thereby giving a distinct content and meaning to one's identity. This means that individuals belong to social groups and define themselves in terms of group membership because that group membership reflects something special about them. Importantly, much of the evaluation of one's group and the content and value ascribed to it is determined by comparisons with other groups on value relevant dimensions. Secondly, membership to social groups can help group members achieve a sense of a positive social identity. That is, group members are also motivated to achieve a positive collective self-esteem through membership in social groups through comparisons with relevant outgroups. Thus, because group membership reflects important information about an individual and helps to give people a positive and distinctive self-

definition, group members will be motivated to maintain that identity, and will tend to resist changes to those groups that could threaten that identity.

1.3   A Social Identity Approach to Change

While Social Identity Theory was originally proposed to be "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict" (Tajfel & Turner 1979), one of its main tenets is the outline of strategies it proposes that individuals can undertake to achieve or maintain a positively distinct social identity. Specifically, when a social comparison results in an unsatisfactory, negative or threatened social identity, low status group members have at their disposal three different strategies to attain a positively distinct social identity.

The first strategy involves a personal solution, where the individual attempts to leave or disassociate themselves with a low status group to achieve upward social progress in joining a relatively high status group, and is referred to as social mobility. The second approach possible can be conceived as a group-based strategy, but like social mobility it also does not promote social change. Instead the group applies creative ways of interpreting its low social position to reflect positively on itself and is referred to as social creativity. The third strategy available to low status group members is to promote some form of social change, whereby the low status group directly challenges the high status group on salient dimensions to possibly reverse the groups' relative status positions.

However, while Social Identity Theory offers explanations for the necessary social conditions and psychological motivations for social change to occur, its framework also encompasses an understanding of potential discriminatory measures high status groups can take to maintain or enhance their relative high status (Tajfel 1975). The functional aspects of this approach thus have particular relevance by seeking to explain when social change will occur and also to predict how members of groups will react to a change that affects their positive distinctiveness.

As a result, the theory has recently been applied to the organisational domain where technology and globalisation has seen a rapid increase in the rate that new organisational groups are created and restructured with the purpose of maintaining competitiveness and efficiency (Dunphy & Stance 1990). Haslam (2001) argues strongly for such a group based approach to organisations because of the psychological transformation and attachment employees can have with their organisations and organisational workgroups. It is further

argued that employees, or more broadly speaking group members, are simply not passengers in the process of change. They are proponents, opponents and active participants, who take with them a range of individual and social motives, goals and ambitions as both initiators and as reactors to change. To understand how an organisation or group is going to react or cope with some form of identity or identity related structural change, one must seek to understand the relationship between individuals and their ties with the groups involved in the process. Accordingly, Haslam, Powell and Turner (2000) argue that:

"Applied to the organisational domain its simple message is that as context changes, employees and the organisation as a whole redefine their place in the world, what they are "about" and where they are going" (p. 325).

Therefore, to understand how people will react to change, it is vital that we provide not just an understanding of people's reactions to change, but also a full theoretical account of the motivational processes that different individuals utilise when intergroup dynamics are seen to be unstable. An understanding of how these processes operate, change and adapt over time will thus provide a much more in-depth account of how people decide where "they are going".

1.4   The Merging of Groups

The merging of groups has received increased attention in organisational psychology over recent years. While significant time and consideration had been given to organisational mergers including the merging of hospitals (Terry & Callan 1998), the merging of scientific organisations (Terry & O'Brien 2001), and the merging of airlines (Terry, Callan & Sartori 1996; Terry, Carey & Callan 2001), there are many other spheres of life where two groups combine to become one. For example, schools can combine as a result of changes in educational systems, nations combine their armed forces to create international peace forces such as NATO, separated families remarry to create new family units and countries can merge in the political realm. One such example of the latter is the reunification of East and West Germany, where tensions between the two pre-merger countries in the reunified state have been traced back to value differences, threats to

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identity and perceptions of injustice (Montada 1997; Mummendey et al. 1999a). Other studies and reviews have associated mergers with a lack of identification with the new organisation (van Knippenberg et al. 2002) and ingroup bias between the pre-merger sub-groups in the merged group (van Leeuwen, van Knippenberg & Ellemers 2003).

Thus the potentially far reaching implications for post-merger conflict or cooperation between pre-merger identities constitute an interesting goal for social psychological theory and practice. To investigate the factors that contribute to post-merger identification and relations between pre-merger groups, it is important to have an understanding of the two pre-merger group's values and past and present intergroup relationship. Two other important factors that pre-merger members and their groups bring to the new category that may be particularly important in determining or predicting how they react to the change is the level of identification or commitment that they have with their pre-merger group, and whether their pre-merger group is of relatively low or high status. An analysis of when and how these subgroup identity concerns are likely to be relevant and managed in a post-merger category, thus creates an important step in seeking to understand the processes involved in positive and negative post-merger subgroup relations.

Identification

As Social Identity Theory and Self-categorization Theory argue, group identification is accompanied by internalisation of group norms and goals, and is thus likely to result in pro-group behavior (Hogg & Turner 1987). The structuring of psychology by group life, the cognitive redefining of self as "we" and "us" rather than as just "I" and "me", is a precondition of people's ability to engage in meaningful, productive and pro-group behaviour.

However, the level of identification with a group plays a crucial role in moderating whether an individual will internalise group norms and values as part of their self and as a consequence work on behalf of the group even when it faces a negative or threatened identity. Consistent with this view, a study investigating the impact of different levels of identification on a threatened group image found that low identifiers lacked commitment to defending their group image and instead were more concerned with protecting their personal image (Doosje, Ellemers & Spears 1995). This is attributed to the assumption that low identifiers do not have the same motivation to maintain a positively distinct identity for

their group as high identifiers do, and so in the face of threat they will be more likely to dissociate themselves from the group and to choose individualistic ways of dealing with the threat. Another example is that low identifiers whose group identity is threatened are likely to be dissatisfied with that group membership, and resist categorisation with that group. They may do this through the process of individual mobility if group boundaries are permeable, or if the group boundaries are impermeable, they may perceive the group as being heterogeneous to reduce low-esteem associated with the group (Ellemers, Spears & Doosje 2002).

On the other side of the coin, high identifiers are more likely to remain committed to the group, retain faith in it in the face of negative social comparisons and generally stick by the group even when there is potential for the loss of personal and group image. Abrams, Ando and Hinkle (1998) provide evidence that identification helps to shape behaviour, by demonstrating that individuals who strongly identify with a group are less likely to leave it. In fact, there is substantial evidence over a number of experimental and realistic group studies that individuals who highly identify with their group are more willing to confirm and protect their group identity (Ellemers, Spears & Doosje 1997; Doosje, Spears & Ellemers 2002; Ouwerkerk, de Gilder & de Vries 2000; Ellemers & Barreto 2000; Veenstra & Haslam 2001; Asforth & Mael, 1989).

In the case of a merger, which typically involves the assumption that pre-merger groups should abandon their respective old identities and replace them with a new identity, we would expect those individuals that identify highly with their pre-merger group to find ways to either resist the merger or find ways of stamping their pre-merger groups identity on the new category. The argument for this assumption follows from Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which suggests that those who identify strongly with a group gain a significant amount of collective self-esteem from that membership, and when that identity is threatened group members should be motivated to defend that identity and its associated positive distinctiveness.

Spears, Doosje and Ellemers (1997) presented support for the above arguments when they manipulated identification (low or high) and threatened various group's status (value) or the distinctiveness of the groups. The results showed that high identifiers were more likely to show group solidarity when the group was threatened in an attempt to

maintain their distinctiveness, while low-identifiers were more likely to separate themselves from the group.

While examinations of the potential loss or irreversible change of identity have traditionally been rare (Ethier & Deaux 1994), the recent investigation of mergers has managed to offer a fresh analysis of this phenomenon. One such longitudinal study examined the effects of identification in an organisational restructure, and illustrated the importance of sub-group identification in predicting organisational acceptance of the change (Jetten, O'Brien & Trindall 2002). Specifically it was found that high pre-restructure work team identification was related to negative feelings about the restructure, and individuals were less likely to identify with the restructured organisation the higher their initial work group identification. Other recent studies have supported the importance of understanding how pre-merger subgroup identification can affect post-merger acceptance of the new group. Van Leuuwen et al. (2003) found how identification with the post-merger group was strengthened when it was perceived as a continuation of the pre-merger subgroup, while a related study illustrated how pre-merger and post-merger identification were more positively related when a pre-merger group dominated the post-merger group (van Knippenberg et al. 2002). While investigating the effects of pre and post merger identification in different contexts, the above studies highlight the strong impact identification with a group about to undergo a change can have in shaping either resistance tendencies when a group's identity is threatened by a change, or acceptance of the merger through the preservation of subgroup identity through the change.

Status

However, van Knippenberg et al's. (2002) study investigating mergers where one subgroup comes to dominate another in the post-merger category also illustrates that it is unlikely that when a merger occurs that it will happen between two groups of equal status. One real life case in point can be seen in the German reunification, where the West German administrative, educational, legal systems and living conditions were set as the benchmark for East Germans to aspire and reach (Mummendey et al. 1999a). The same status inequality can be seen in organisational mergers where employees in both pre-merger organisations consensually rate one organisation as of a higher status than the other (Terry & O'Brien 2001; Terry et al. 2001). Thus the very nature of a merger is likely to accentuate the status differences between the pre-merger groups.

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979) assumes that as a consequence of the motivation to maintain a positive collective self-esteem, people aspire to belong to groups that compare favourably with other groups. This suggests that individuals should generally be motivated to belong to groups that have a higher relative position on some evaluative and relevant dimension of comparison. Accordingly, when an individual belongs to a high status group, they should be motivated to maintain their membership of that group, and the distinction and existence of that social category (Terry et al. 2001).

The value of one's social identity maybe undermined when a high performing (high status) group is combined with a low performing (low status) group. As it is rare for the departments or organisations that combine in a merger to be of exactly the same status (see Terry 2003), it is reasonable to assume that there will be some form of value threat in an organisational merger that may lead to resistance of change. If group boundaries were perceived to be impermeable between the high and low status groups in the merger, then as a result of the salience of their relative inferior status, employees in a low status pre-merger group should be particularly threatened by the merger situation and engage in high levels of ingroup bias on status irrelevant dimensions (a form of social creativity). Employees in the high-status pre-merger group should experience less threat, but because of the unstable nature of the merger, they should seek to preserve their distinctiveness by showing ingroup bias on status relevant dimensions. While illustrating ingroup bias is one strategy for groups to use to reduce threat (Ellemers & Baretto 2000; Turner 1999; Spears et al. 1997), it can be also seen as a way of resisting the merger. That is, while groups are displaying ingroup bias on category dimensions relevant before the merger, they are preserving their previous identities and resisting the new organisational identity.

In a laboratory study of merging dyads, Haunschild, Moreland and Murrell (1994) found that intergroup biases were strongest among high status dyads that were forced to merge with low status dyads. Terry and colleagues have also investigated the negative effects of mergers in a number of field studies (Terry et al. 1996; Terry & Callan 1998; Terry et al. 2001; Terry & O'Brien 2001). Consistent with Haunschild et al's. (1994) results, Terry and Callan (1998) found that members of the high-status organisations in the merger typically showed ingroup bias on status relevant dimensions, while members of the low status organisations showed ingroup bias on status irrelevant dimensions. However, the members of the low status organisation also showed significantly more ingroup bias,

and the group's bias was also related to the perceived threat of the merger. So in accord with Social Identity Theory, the findings suggested that an inferior group membership (a comparison that is likely to be highly salient in a merger situation) engenders perceptions of threat that reflect negatively on a person's responses to the new superordinate identity.

1.5   Mergers as a Source of Social Identity Threat

As outlined above, the Social Identity Approach maintains that once an individual categorises and defines themselves in terms of a group membership, they will be motivated to achieve a positive collective self-esteem by defining themselves positively from a comparison outgroup on valued dimensions (Tajfel & Turner 1978; Reynolds, Turner & Haslam 2000). One route through which a positive social identity can be established is by distinguishing one's group from other groups, and by defining the difference in a way that reflects positively on the ingroup. As membership to groups fulfils an important set of functions for its members, people should generally be motivated to preserve their group's positive distinctiveness, and resist changes to them and the social identities derived from them.

It therefore seems logical that if there is a loss or imposed change to a valued identity, a person may experience some sort of threat related to that loss or change of identity. That is, they may experience a threatened social identity. In fact, Tajfel (1975) specifically argues that when external circumstances render the maintenance of subjectively valued group characteristics insecure, this is likely to result in feelings of threat, which in turn should elicit attempts to preserve the current systems of social relations.

The concept of identity threat as an explanatory factor for a broad range of psychological and behavioural consequences has a broad history in the social identity literature. Of central importance to the theory is the outline of social identity management strategies available to high and low status group members who face a negative or threatened identity. In order to maintain, preserve, or restore a positive social identity the theory also specifies the different social and psychological conditions within a status-stratified social system under which the different strategies might be pursued (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Turner & Haslam 2001).

However, while this assumption is a central tenet of Social Identity Theory and often used as an explanation for results, there is very little empirical data that has tested the

direct relationship between a threatened identity and various social identity management strategies. In fact, it seems more often than not that social identity threat is used as an assumed or inferred explanation of results, rather than an actual measured predictor of them (Hornsey & Hogg 2002). Social identity threat has consequently been an elusive concept to measure, with social identity threat usually being inferred from:

(a)   One of its hypothesised consequences (such as ingroup favouritism, or outgroup derogation

(b)   The experimental explanation (such as a post-hoc explanation for results)

(c)   Dependent variables possibly related to or indicative of social idenity threat but not a direct measurement of it (such as the perceived stress of an upcoming merger)

One of the reasons that accurate, direct measurement has been so elusive may be a tendency for participants to deny that they feel threatened (Blascovich, Spencer, Quinn & Steele 2001). It has been hypothesised that self-reports are open to reactivity and defensive reactions leading those who are most threatened to indicate this to the least extent, and leading people such as Scheepers and Ellemers (2005) to turn to physiological measurements such as blood pressure to gain an implicit measure of identity threat. Another reason that researchers may have experienced difficulty in gaining explicit measures of identity threat is because until recently there has been little work done establishing a theoretically based analysis that attempts to conceptualise a theory of identity threat.

However, one attempt at a theoretical conceptualisation of identity threat has been made by Breakwell, who in her 1986 book Coping with Threatened Identities refers to identity threat as a dynamic process that cannot be understood except in relation to its social context and historical perspective. While Breakwell provides an integrated framework for explaining causes and consequences for a threatened social identity, it concentrates primarilty on what what Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears and Doosje (1999) refer to as threats directed at a group's distinctiveness and threats related to the value of the group.

Working from a social identity background, Branscombe et al. (1999) have recently proposed a typology of social identity threat that conceptualises identity threat and its psychological consequences into four theoretically distinct types of threat:

(a)   Distinctiveness Threat – When the group distinctiveness is prevented or undermined

(b)   Value Threat – When the group's value is undermined

(c)   Categorisation Threat – Being categorised against one's will

(d)   Acceptance Threat – One's position within the group is undermined

The present thesis proposes that three of these, distinctiveness threat, value threat and categorisation threat will be particularly relevant to the analysis of identity change such as in a merger and I will concentrate on these for the remainder of the thesis. This is not to deny that a person may feel a lack of ingroup acceptance following a merger that would constitute an identity threat, but it is felt that the present analysis is best suited to threats promoted by intergroup relations rather than intragroup relations.

The understanding of the evolution and construction of threats related to an individual's social identity draws much of its knowledge from early formulations of Social Identity Theory (eg. Tajfel 1978). The concepts proposed in these writings not only aid in the interpretation of Branscombe et al's. (1999) typology of identity threat, but when applied to an analysis of unstable intergroup relations they provide valuable insight into the prediction of psychological responses to a threatened social identity.

Distinctiveness Threat

An important result from the minimal group paradigms used by Tajfel and colleagues in the early 1970's (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy & Flament 1971), was that participants when presented with different strategies of presenting penalties and rewards to other "anonymous" participants, would choose a strategy of maximum group difference based on the participant's random allocation to arbitrary groups at the beginning of the experiment. That is, instead of choosing a maximum group profit strategy, participants were more likely to choose a strategy that gave their group a sense of distinctiveness from a comparison outgroup, even when they had at their disposal an alternative strategy – acting in terms of the greatest common good.

While initial explanations described the results in terms of social norms, this normative approach was later discounted. The same explanation could have been used to explain the results if another one of the allocation strategies had proved significant. Further analysis and replication of the study in several countries led to realisation that the results were an illustration of how group members are motivated to positively differentiate their ingroup from similar outgroups on relevant dimensions of comparison, to maintain or enhance group distinctiveness and social identity (Tajfel et al. 1971; Tajfel & Turner 1979). In Tajfel's (1984) own words:

"It is the need for differentiation (or the establishment of psychological distinctiveness between the groups) which seems to me to provide, under some conditions, the major outcomes of the sequence social categorization-social identity-social comparison" (p. 337).

The prediction that similarity to a relevant outgroup will be perceived as a threat and will motivate intergroup differentiation has been supported by many studies (Jetten, Spears & Manstead 1996; 1997; 1998; 2001). Specifically, Jetten et al. (1997) found that when individuals perceived there to be a threat to their group's distinctiveness, the group members engaged in more ingroup bias to preserve the group's distinctiveness than when there wasn't a threat. But not all group members respond to an identity threat in the same way. As highlighted earlier, a social identity account of identification predicts that the extent to which someone identifies, or self categorises as a group member is a central moderating variable in explaining group phenomena (Tajfel & Turner 1986). Thus an individual's initial level of group identification will determine whether he or she will use collective based strategies to deal with the threat, or whether the individual will disassociate themselves from the group and respond to the threat in an individualistic fashion (Spears et al. 1997; Doosje & Ellemers 1997; Branscombe et al. 1999; Ellemers & Barreto 2000).

Value Threat

While the potential loss of distinctiveness for an ingroup from a comparison outgroup has important implications for group members' attitudes and behaviours regarding the preservation of differentials (see Jetten & Spears 2003), the relative position of the

group in a social hierarchy also delineates important aspects of identity and the potential negative effects that occupying a low status position in that hierarchy may bring.

As a positive identity can be established by distinguishing one's group from a comparison group favourably, any comparison process that results in unfavourable perceptions of the ingroup is likely to pose a threat to the image of the group, and thus the identity of the group (Doosje & Ellemers 1997; Jetten, Duck, Terry & O'Brien 2002). Ellemers and Van Rijswijk (1997) provided empirical support for this assumption when they found that a comparison between an ingroup and outperforming outgroup was only threatening to high identifiers when the comparison occurred on dimensions relevant to the ingroup's identity. Similar results have been found by Terry and colleagues who in the context of organisational mergers found that it was the employees of the pre-merger low status organisations who had the most negative reactions regarding merger (see Terry 2003).

While low-status groups can feel threatened by a comparison with a relatively high status group, there are also examples where the loss or potential loss of a superior status position can be identity threatening. Tajfel's (1975) thoughts on the relativities of status differentials are therefore important because they form the basis for the understanding of the motivational processes associated with social competition between groups to achieve a positively valued social identity. Therefore to the extent that a group offers its members a positive self image, any factor that suggests a relative decline of a positively valued group should see efforts by group members to maintain and preserve some kind of positively valued identity.

As a merger implies the potential loss of a pre-merger identity with the substitution of a new identity, it is expected that to the degree that a high status group's continual high status position is threatened, the high status group members should be motivated to find strategies to preserve their positively valued identity in the new category.

Categorisation Threat

While the potential loss of identity may motivate group members from positively valued groups to preserve their group's identity, the very act of imposing a new identity on a group could also be identity threatening in itself. A potential outcome of the creation of a new group through the merging of two groups into one is that the external categorisation of

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the new identity may not coincide with how people feel they should be categorised. That is, to the degree that the new categorisation is not internalised or defined as a part of the self, people may feel a categorisation threat (Branscombe et al. 1999; Barreto & Ellemers 2003). In their analysis of categorisation threat, Branscombe et al. (1999) state that:

"Such resistance to being categorized is likely to be particularly strong when the membership category seems irrelevant or illegitimate given the situation at hand, even if it is a social category the person would otherwise identify strongly with" (p.38).

That is, where the external categorisation of the new category is not in line with how people feel they should be categorised, it will create feelings of threat that may lead to resistance tendencies. This assumption draws its argument from the Social Identity Approach, which argues that social identification is a subjective process that involves the acceptance of ingroup characteristics that are adopted to help define the self. To the degree that a person believes a group's characteristics, values, norms or history does not represent them, they are likely to dis-identify or reject that particular external characterisation.

Evidence for the acceptance of external categorisations highlights two important processes through which a new identity can be accepted (Barreto & Ellemers 2003). The first relates to the internalisation of the categorisation so that it becomes self-defining and relevant to the individual. In this case, to the degree that an externally imposed categorisation seems relevant and reflects a certain level of positive distinctiveness for the group, individuals should be more likely to identify with the group and internalise the new categorisation. This follows from evidence previously examined on the effects of identification that showed how it was only those who actually identified as group members who were likely to describe themselves, and act in ways consistent with the terms and norms of that group membership (e.g. Ellemers et al. 1997; Spears et al. 1997).

However, when an internal motivation to work on the part of the group is lacking, the awareness that one may be able to benefit in some way from the new categorisation may lessen the threat implied with the imposition of the new group, and elicit group normative behaviour. One way the group may benefit an individual is if it is of relatively

high status and offers the individual the chance of positive outcomes based on that status. Support for this instrumental motivation was found by Doosje et al. (2002), who investigated how group members responded to temporal changes to a group status structure. By manipulating status by means of bogus feedback on relative task performance, participants were led to believe that their initial performance as a group had been worse than that of the other group, but as the experiment proceeded their task performance had improved to eventually surpass and outperform the other group. It was found that participants who had initially rejected identifying with the low status group were now eager to define themselves as group members now that the group had improved its standing in the intergroup context.

Another way that Barreto and Ellemers (2002) propose the potential resistance to an externally imposed categorisation can be managed is to respect an individual's chosen identity. Testing this assumption in a laboratory study, Barreto and Ellemers found that when the participants' choice of identity was respected they were more likely to have increased identification with the externally imposed group and adhere to group norms. On the other hand, participants whose choice of group was neglected and were placed in groups that did not reflect their chosen identity, displayed lower levels of identification and group loyalty with their problem solving group. Thus, while a merger may imply distinctiveness and value threat depending on the pre-merger ingroup's relationship with the pre-merger outgroup, a merger that does not respect the valued pre-merger identities that participants bring to the new group may also elicit categorisation threat.

While Branscombe and colleagues conceptualisation has created a useful taxonomy for developing the concept of identity threat, and utilising different aspects of it in studies, there is still very little, if any, work that has explicitly tested (a) whether these types of threats can be split on the proposed dimensions as outlined by the typology, and (b) if these measures are successful, whether certain types of threat are related to attempts to preserve a positively distinct identity or to resist the imposition of a new category that a merger would imply.

1.6   Recategorisation: Defining the New Category

As has been shown, recent research investigating changes to a group's identity have focused on the merging of two groups into one superordinate group. However, this process of recategorisation has also been suggested by some researchers to be one way in which the

ingroup bias associated with identity threat can be reduced. Specifically, the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman & Rust 1993; Gaertner, Dovidio & Bachman 1996; Dovidio, Gaertner & Validzic 1998) argues that intergroup bias and conflict can be reduced by factors such as contact that are able to transform cognitive representations of two groups (us vs them), into one common group identity (we). By breaking down subgroup boundaries, former outgroup members become ingroup members and have the same positive evaluation and benefits attributed to them as other ingroup members do, thus intergroup conflict will be reduced to the degree people identify with the new category.

This model is consistent with Self-categorization Theory's hypothesis that social cooperation is associated with the salience of a shared identity. However, further investigation revealed that while accentuating a common identity for groups to identify with could reduce intergroup bias (Gaertner, Dovidio, Nier, Banker, Ward, Houlette & Loux 2000), there was also evidence that the relationship between categorisation and prejudice reduction was more complex. Specifically, Hornsey and Hogg (2000a; 2000b; 2002) argue, along the motivational components of Social Identity Theory, that the need for subgroups to establish a positive identity distinct from relevant outgroups can make the emphasis of a superordinate identity at the expense of subgroup identities undesirable.

In a series of studies that saw humanities and maths/science students participate in interactive and non-interactive tasks, Hornsey and Hogg (2002) found that categorisation for students at the more inclusive superordinate level of university students was related to greater ingroup bias at the subgroup level. Arguing that this was because the positive distinctiveness of the subgroups had been threatened, it was also found that the least ingroup bias was found when both the subgroup (humanities or math/science) and superordinate identity (university students) were activated at the same time. The authors argue that this dual identification enables subgroup difference to be respected and thus not threatened, while still maintaining the benefits that shared categorisation can bring.

A similar conceptualisation of the recategorisation process has been proposed by Eggins, Reynolds and Haslam (2003; see also Eggins, Haslam & Reynolds 2002) in their Actualizing Social and Personal Identity Resources model (ASPIRe) of organisations. While still maintaining that a shared category can provide a valid frame of reference for different groups to develop a common outlook or identity, the ASPIRe model also seeks to

preserve subgroup identities through employee participation so relevant identities at the subgroup and superordinate level can be realised to achieve increased cooperation and attainment of organisational goals.

However, Mummendey and Wenzel (1999) conceptualise the effects of a dual identity in a different manner to that of Hornsey and Hogg (2000a; 2000b; 2002) and Eggins et al. (2003). While still basing their assumptions on Self-categorization Theory, they have developed the Ingroup Projection Model that theorises that a dual identity may increase outgroup bias, rather than reduce it. The concept of projection in the model relates to the process of believing that an ingroup's characteristics are also typical of the salient superordinate category, as if projecting the ingroup's characteristics onto the relevant inclusive category. Wenzel, Mummendey, Weber and Waldzus (2003) illustrated empirically that group members tend to perceive their ingroup as prototypical of the inclusive category (projection), that members who highly identified with the subgroup and the inclusive category project the most, and that relative prototypicality is related to negative attitudes of the outgroup. Waldzus, Mummendey, Wenzel and Weber (2003) replicated these findings, and also showed that certain qualities of the representation of the inclusive category (e.g. complexity) can inhibit the projection process.

Ingroup Projection Model

Mummendey and Wenzel (1999) first developed their theory on projection in order to conceptualise the processes through which both discrimination and tolerance occurred. They believed these to be separate processes, and that while much of the research on discrimination had been useful, they argued that tolerance could not be properly understood simply as a lack of social discrimination. In their own words "A common theoretical perspective is needed from which both tolerance and discrimination can be studied while considering their special characteristics" (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999, p.158). Thus, important to the concept of the Ingroup Projection Model and its explanation of tolerance and discrimination is the role of difference. According to Mummendy and Wenzel, discrimination can be reduced by reducing or ignoring the differences between groups, but tolerance requires the acceptance and appreciation of difference.

Underlying the concept of the Ingroup Projection Model are some important assumptions derived from Self-categorization Theory. Self-categorization Theory stipulates that there is a hierarchical relationship between social categories, and that self-

categories tend to be valued positively to achieve a positive social identity (Turner 1987; Mummendey & Wenzel 1999). As is stated in Self-categorization Theory, groups can attempt to achieve a positive identity through a comparison with a relevant outgroup, and they will use the superordinate inclusive category's dimensions to choose the relevant comparison material. An ingroup will have a more positive identity if it is more prototypical of the positive dimensions that the superordinate category has. Thus Mummendey and Wenzel (1999) argue that an ingroup will view themselves as more prototypical of the superordinate category than the outgroup, and this will help group members achieve a positive identity.

The superordinate category that is used as a reference point for comparisons between relevant subgroups provides norms and standards for the evaluation of subordinate categories. The evaluation of an ingroup and outgroup thus depends on their relative prototypicality in terms of the superordinate category. Following this reasoning, Mummendey and Wenzel (1999) hypothesised that if both an ingroup and an outgroup are perceived to belong to a superordinate category, and the ingroup's characteristics are perceived as more prototypical of this superordinate category, then the outgroup will be evaluated negatively. This follows the reasoning of Mummendey and Wenzel that if the ingroup believes the inclusive category to be prototypical of them, then an outgroup difference will be seen as a deviation from the norm. If a superordinate category is positively evaluated, then the deviation is judged negatively and may motivate and legitimise outgroup derogation (Weber, Mummendey & Waldzus 2002).

"When the outgroup's difference is evaluated negatively, perhaps as a challenge or threat to the ingroup's opinions and attributes and hence to the ingroup itself, the outgroup should experience devaluation and discrimination" (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999, p. 159).

Thus in explaining projection, the outgroup's difference could be perceived as a challenge to the norms and values of the inclusive category as seen from the ingroup's perspective. The outgroup's difference can thus be understood as the outgroup's projection of its own norms and values on the inclusive category, and thus as a threat to the ingroup's

identity. This threat may then motivate the ingroup to defend its positive identity and to maintain its group status by projecting its own attributes and values onto the inclusive category.

However, the only empirical evidence so far that ingroup projection is an action taken by group members to defend or enhance their social identity is rather indirect; namely, the finding that group members who identify strongly with their subgroup are more likely to project than participants who don't identify with their ingroup (Wenzel 2001; Wenzel et al. 2003). This indirectly suggests that the more commitment a person has to their ingroup the more motivated they will be to maintain a positive identity. Hence based on the assumptions mentioned above, threat from a relevant outgroup is a suggested motivational influence that will lead ingroup members to project their attributes and values onto the inclusive category.

In the case of a merger, while the merged category is likely to be the relevant inclusive category in the given context, it is also the case that it will be a new category. That is, through ingroup projection the ingroup may use their pre-merger identity to define the new category. While there have been some suggestions that the same processes as outlined in the Ingroup Projection Model may be applied to the creation of the new category, no evidence has directly examined it (van Knippenberg et al. 2002; van Leeuwen et al. 2003). However, the process of merging two previously independent groups into one inclusive group is likely to make the pre-merger groups identities salient (Terry & O'Brien, 2001), and it may be that if the new group has no clearly defined identity, values or norms, then it has the potential to act as a battleground for pre-merger groups to establish their identity as the prototypical model for the new group. In this sense an investigation of the factors that may motivate a pre-merger group to project their pre-merger identity onto the post-merger category has important consequence for post-merger relations and the development and extension of the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999).

It has already been suggested that the preservation and continuation of one's pre-merger group will be an important determinant in the adoption and strength of the post-merger-common-identity (van Leeuwen et al. 2003). It is further suggested that an analysis of factors that may threaten the preservation of a positively valued pre-merger identity will be influential in predicting ingroup projection in a merger context. In this sense ingroup

projection can be viewed as an identity protection or enhancement strategy, where pre-merger groups seek to continue their pre-merger group's identity, values and norms into the newly merged group. Consistent with previous research the setting of the pre-merger ingroup as the prototypical version of the new category should then legitimise ingroup bias to subgroups that do not comply with or fit into the new standard.

In this case, an analysis of the development of a new group and the identity that defines it requires an understanding of the two pre-merger groups' identity relevant concerns, and how these concerns are related to pre-merger group members' motivation to project their groups' attributes and norms onto the new post-merger group. This perspective is consistent with Reicher's (2004) analysis of domination, resistance and change, in which he argues that the flexible nature of categorisation is open to argument that are used strategically to define the intergroup comparison in part to reflect relevant identity concerns. From this the notion of identity can be conceptualised as a process of becoming as well as of being, a concept that can be similarly applied to ingroup projection in a changing intergroup context.

1.7   Legitimacy of the Change

Legitimacy of Status Relationship

As already stated, a central assumption of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979) is that individual's have a general motivation to achieve a positively distinct social identity. While a group's relative status position in the social hierarchy plays an important part in how individuals respond to social stratification to achieve or maintain a positively distinct social identity, there are other important socio-structural variables that moderate whether ingroup favouritism will be the preferred psychological response. In fact, the perception of status differences and their reality to individuals requires a full understanding of the existence of the socio-structural framework through which groups exist (Turner 1999). Specifically, an individual's beliefs about the stability and legitimacy of the social structure should affect an individual's beliefs about whether they can challenge or accentuate the current status differences, or find another psychologically creative way of reinterpreting their position as positive.

While the issue of legitimacy has been described as a rather neglected aspect of social identity research, this could be attributed to the empirical focus of the research rather

than its theoretical importance (Ellemers 1993; Spears, Jetten & Doosje 2001). Tajfel (1974; 1975) originally posited that the legitimacy of the status structure that defines intergroup relations is an extremely important factor in determining the psychological aspects of social stability and social change. Accordingly, the more legitimate status relations are seen to be, the more willing members of high and low status will be willing to accept the social reality of their respective positions. However, perceptions of illegitimacy suggest that psychological alternatives to the current system of social relations will become apparent to members of high and low status groups, which may lead to intergroup conflict.

How legitimate the status relationship is perceived to be is also affected by perceptions of stability, where stability refers to the degree to which an alternative to the status relationship (social change) is likely. While theoretically separate constructs, Bettencourt, Dorr, Charlton and Hume (2001) remind us that how legitimacy and stability can be intertwined in their effects on intergroup relations. For example, they quote Tajfel (1981) who argues that:

"There is little doubt that an unstable system of social divisions between groups is more likely to be perceived as illegitimate than a stable one; and that conversely a system perceived as illegitimate will contain the seeds of instability" (p. 250).

While there is recent evidence to suggest that the perceptions of legitimacy and stability co-vary in their relationship with each other (Bettencourt et al. 2001), there is also evidence to suggest that the acceptance of a stable social system depends on how legitimate low status group members perceive their group's inferior position to be. Concentrating on how members of different status groups interpret their relative status position, Turner and Brown (1978) found that when low status groups perceived their status to be illegitimate, they were more likely to show outgroup discrimination in reward allocations. A more recent study by Ellemers, Wilke and van Knippenberg (1993) also illustrated that members of low status groups were more likely to accept their low status position if they considered it as legitimate.

However, in a merger where the intergroup relationship is made unstable, it is the high-status groups relative status position that is arguably most threatened by the change.

While legitimacy research has traditionally examined when a low status group will accept its relative position or challenge the status hierarchy, it is also important to examine when a high status group will be willing to sacrifice its position. It is therefore argued that whether the threat posed to the high status group is seen as a legitimate one or not may moderate the intergroup relationship. That is, it is not the acceptance of the legitimacy of the status relationship in itself, but also whether a possible change in the relationship between two different status groups can be viewed as legitimate that may moderate the reactions to a potential loss of identity.

Evidence from studies suggests that legitimacy can be created through just procedures. For example, Ellemers et al. (1993) manipulated legitimacy of status relations between groups by assigning groups in an experiment to a high or status position based on the group's performance on a task. In the legitimate condition, participants were assigned to a low-status group when they were informed that their group has performed relatively poorly on a task compared to another group, while participants in the illegitimate condition were informed their group had performed relatively better than another group, however their group would still be assigned the low-status position. It was found that low status was considered more acceptable when based on procedures that appeared more legitimate. The findings are also consistent with procedural justice research that maintains that feelings of justice and fairness are primarily related to procedural characteristics than the outcomes of those procedures (Tyler 1989).

Procedural Justice

The concept of procedural justice and research associated with it was originally articulated by Thibaut and Walker (1975), who hypothesised that people would be more willing to accept outcomes if there was the perception that those outcomes were based on fair procedures. This original interpretation of procedural justice relied on a control explanation, where procedural justice was said to work because people generally like to have control over their outcomes. In contrast, the development of the Group Value Model (Lind & Tyler 1988), refers to procedural justice as a process that works because how a person is treated by others and authorities reflects something valuable about who they are as a person. Consistent with the Social Identity Approach, this view argues that people's perception of themselves can be largely derived from their experiences in the groups to which they belong. Accordingly, as an individual's identification with groups is said to be

a relevant, meaningful process that reflects something valuable about that individual, the Group Value Model proposes that individuals are concerned with procedures because they convey information about their status in that group.

One important function in developing procedural justice is said to come from the perception of process control. Process control refers to the perceived involvement people have in procedures, and in terms of explaining perceptions of procedural justice process control receives support from Lind and Tyler (1988, p. 69) who have illustrated how the effect of procedural justice is diminished when there is no direct involvement or participation in the procedure. In fact, Tyler (1989) found that control was a significantly more important determinant of procedural justice judgements in dispute settings even when outcomes were unfavourable.

However, it is suggested by the Group Value Model that the perceived control over procedures operates not out of the desire to have control over outcome as Thibaut and Walker (1975) suggest, but that perceived process control works as a function of value-expressive influence that helps authorities to communicate the status of people in the group (Greenberg 1990; Tyler & Blader 2000). In short, process control works because it transfers identity expressive information about groups and the people in them. This value-expressive model of control has found support in findings that people value process control even when it is not linked to decision control (Tyler 1989), and that status evaluations are linked to people's view about justice in groups and organisations and not resources (Tyler & Blader 2000; Tyler, Degoey & Smith 1996; Tyler & Smith 1999; Blader & Tyler 2003).

Consistent with this view, Lind and Tyler (1988) maintain that decisions are more likely to be accepted when the procedure used to generate the decision allows participation by those affected, because participation reflects relational judgements about a person's social connection to a group. This important aspect of choice in promoting acceptance of decisions as well as positive within group reactions was highlighted in a study by Turner, Hogg, Turner and Smith (1984). In this study, groups were split into high and low choice conditions regarding the continuation of their groups in performing a task. Those placed in the high choice condition rated the group fairer than the low choice condition, after the perceived failure of their task performance.

Procedural Justice and Legitimacy

Of particular relevance to the perceptions of fairness and its relationship with acceptance of decisions is the procedural source. That is, the role of group authorities is said to be particularly important in evaluating fairness perceptions, as it is often these external group authorities that implement procedures and create rules in part to reflect and enhance their legitimacy (Blader & Tyler 2003). Thus to the degree that fair procedures enhance the legitimacy of authorities to regulate group behaviour, people should be more compliant with those authorities. While not directly examining legitimacy, an initial study by Tyler et al. (1996) tested the assumption that treatment by authorities affects group orientated behaviour such as compliance with authorities, because it shapes judgements about social identity. In three out of four studies, quality of treatment by authorities influenced compliance, thus lending support to the assumption that identity concerns play an important role in shaping the legitimacy of authorities, as seen by people's willingness to accept decisions and obey rules as a function of the quality of the treatment they experienced.

The function that procedural justice measures may have in creating a perception of legitimacy for authorities has received recent support in an analysis of the public judgements of the legitimacy of the police by Tyler (2004). This analysis argues that people will assess and evaluate authorities based primarily on the assessment of the fairness of the authorities' procedures. Highlighting the processes that create perceptions of procedural justice, participation in the process, such as the opportunity for voice, was seen as a central component in explaining people's satisfaction with procedures.

Extending the assumptions of the Group Value Model and its analysis of the relationship between procedural justice, legitimacy and compliance, Tyler and De Cremer (2005) have also shown that these identity relevant principles are central to understanding the acceptance of change. In the context of an organisational merger, it was found that perceptions of procedural justice shaped employees' reactions to the acceptance of the change. For example, despite the potential loss of identity associated with the merger, the more leaders connected with the implementation of the organisational change were seen to act in procedurally fair ways, the greater the legitimacy associated with them and the more accepting employees were of the merger. It should be noted however that while this example examines legitimacy related to an individual leader and not at the group-level, it is

assumed that the processes involved reflect the same identity relevant information, albeit at a different categorical level of abstraction.

Extending this analysis and its principles to our understanding of mergers, it is hypothesised that while a merger may be identity threatening to people who face a change or loss to a valued identity, one mechanism through which this may be reduced is if they see the merger as a legitimate process. Following the argument that authorities who are viewed as legitimate facilitate social regulation, it is argued that the legitimacy that is attributed to the change process should also promote and facilitate the regulation and compliance of people with the change. Consistent with the Group Value Model, it is also propose that perceived participation as it relates to procedural justice principles will be especially relevant in predicting whether a merger is considered legitimate. Also, because projection is a psychological process associated with identity relevant concerns, it is further proposed that any factor that seeks to respect those identity relevant concerns in an unstable intergroup relationship such as a merger, should see a decrease in the level of ingroup projection onto the post-merger category.

1.8   The Present Research: Choice of Method

Several methods qualify for the examination of psychological reactions to a change to a valued identity that a merger implies. Previous research has seen a wealth of information developed from an analysis of real corporate mergers in naturalistic settings (eg. Terry 2003, van Knippenberg et al. 2002), where such mergers are usually characterised by an overarching framework of organisational policy and goals such as increased worker efficiency or down sizing. Combined with this, research has also examined people's reactions and social identity management strategies when two countries combine, as was the case with the political reunification of East and West Germany (Mummendey et al. 1996, Mummendey et al. 1999a).

While these studies have made important insights to the psychological processes and reactions associated with a change to a group member's social identity, caution should be taken when interpreting and applying the findings to different contexts. Thus an important aim for research is to examine the social structures, psychological processes and conditions that may contribute to cooperative post-merger relations, independent of uncontrolled social and historical contingencies. An experimental investigation provides such a mechanism to systematically analyse group-based reactions to mergers and also to

develop theory driven hypotheses by manipulating key variables in a controlled environment.

While limited research has investigated reactions to mergers in an experimental context, Haunschild et al. (1994) and van Leeuwen et al. (2003) have made important findings utilising an experimental approach to the analysis of mergers, and it is in this tradition that the following analyses will utilise an adapted version of the minimal group paradigm (Tajfel et al. 1971). This will provide an environment where the controlled manipulation of factors associated with a merger such as pre-merger group status will make the generalisation of results across contexts possible. The manipulation of such variables will also help to control for extraneous factors associated with, but not unique to, different types of social identity threat and thus allow an assessment of Branscombe et al's. (1999) typology of social identity threat free of possible confounds that could arise from a field investigation.

The methodology for the empirical part of this thesis was based on creating a minimal group situation, where participants were confined to separate cubicles in an experimental laboratory and had to complete the whole experiment on computers. Participants had no contact with each other, and were led to believe through a computer program that there were eleven other participants in the laboratory, and that they would complete tasks in two groups on the computer system in order to analyse how people with different thinking styles approached problems. Participants were assigned to one of two groups by means of a bogus-pipeline procedure that alleged to be able to classify people into two different types of thinking styles based on a test result. The reality of these groups was established by allowing participants to e-mail each other within their groups, although all responses were actually pre-programmed by the experimenter. The meaningfulness of these pre-merger groups was further enhanced by a brainstorming task that required participants to generate possible ways in which they could utilise a set list of resources to help a farmer whose property was experiencing difficult times. These virtual groups were represented on participant's computer screens by distinct names and colours, and their solutions to the farmer's problem were represented as group solutions rather than individual solutions by visually merging the solutions into one file. In the second stage of the experiment, both groups were combined into one, which was visualised by the merging of the two virtual group's colours and the imposition of a new name to represent the post-

merger group. Another brainstorming assignment using a similar farmer's problem was introduced that required all participants to complete the task as one combined group, after which a questionnaire was administered that checked the manipulations and measured the dependent variables.

1.9 Overview of the Studies

The studies presented in this thesis are aimed at investigating the effects a change to a valued group identity, such as a merger, has on different theoretical constructs of identity threat, and how pre-merger group identities and the procedures used to implement the change interact to motivate people to define the merged category in terms of their pre-merger identity. Three studies are described in three empirical chapters, Chapters, 2, 3 and 4. Chapter 5 provides a summary of results and general discussion of the implications and considerations of this research program, as well as suggestions for further research and theoretical development.

In Chapter 2, *Development of Identity Threat from a Forced Change to a Distinctive Identity*, the investigation of the effects a change to a group has on identity threat is analysed by comparing a non-merger condition with a merger condition. A Social Identity Approach to the investigation of group-based reactions to a forced change of identity is outlined, in which the change is analysed in terms of a merger and pre-merger group identity. There are two main foci of this investigation. The first is to investigate the relationship between a merger and pre-merger identification on different types of social identity threat. As the level of pre-merger identification should moderate how participants react to a change to a valued identity, it is proposed that a merger between experimentally created equal groups should elicit distinctiveness and categorisation threat for those participants whose pre-merger identity had been internalised as a part of self. Secondly, feelings of threat based on participants' pre-merger identification should then motivate participants to represent the new category in terms of their pre-merger identity. That is, as a way of maintaining and enhancing their pre-merger identity, participants should project their pre-merger identity onto the new category.

In Chapter 3, *The Effects of Distinctiveness and Value Threat in Predicting Projection Following a Merger*, two different theoretical approaches to the proposed effects of distinctiveness and value threat are tested. By manipulating the distinctiveness and value of group structure and status, the theoretical separation of distinctiveness and value threat is

tested against the proposal that the two may be interrelated and operate as a positive distinctiveness threat. Further, the study extends the motivating role of threat in predicting ingroup projection, suggesting that the pre-merger status of a group is essential in understanding whether a group will seek to claim ownership of a new group by interpreting it in terms of their pre-merger identity.

In Chapter 4, *The Legitimacy of Change: Perception of Voice and its Impact on Ingroup Projection,* the combined effects of pre-merger status and the perception of voice in the change process are examined. It is argued that the perception of legitimacy that perceived voice will give the change process, will moderate the pre-merger high status group's motivation to claim ownership of the new category through projection. This should be mediated by a reduction in identity threat that the change in identity would usually imply.

In Chapter 5, *Implications for Conceptual Development,* the main findings of the present research program are discussed in relation to the theoretical program that guided the analyses. Implications of the results for the present thesis are analysed, also to help guide further research and theoretical development of social identity threat and ingroup projection. Finally, the chapter concludes with an outline for a future research program that offers a temporal view of social identity processes and the consequence of a group's negative past in explaining current intergroup threats and conflicts.

Chapter 2: Development of Identity Threat from a Forced Change to a Distinctive Identity

Corporate mergers and their effects on the personnel involved have been described in extensive detail in psychological and organisational literature (Terry 2003; Hogan & Overmyer-Day 1994; Shrivastava 1986; Schweiger & DeNisi 1991; Froud, Haslam, Johal & Williams 2000; French, Bell & Zawacki 2000). In fact, through the 1980's and 1990's corporate mergers progressed at such a frenetic pace that they were referred to in "waves", to distinguish their place in the evolution of organisational development (Gaughan 2002). However, the impact of bringing two or more groups together to form one inclusive category is not limited to an analysis of the corporate world. Other groups such as families, armed forces, sporting teams and countries often undergo the same transformation, although different circumstances, motivations and justifications may govern these changes.

Because merging groups often hold special importance to its members, and act to form a basis for self-definition (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Hogg & Abrams 1988), it has been proposed that the change to a group's boundaries that a merger implies should be considered identity threatening (Callan, Terry & Schweitzer 1995; van Leeuwen et al. 2003). Such a threat to the integrity of the pre-merger identity should be particularly salient for those who have a strong psychological commitment to their pre-merger group, and should evoke responses that are aimed at restoring or imposing the pre-merger group identity on the new one (Branscombe et al. 1999; Mummendey & Wenzel 1999).

While the changing of identities has been a focus in understanding psychological reactions to mergers (Terry & Callan 1998; Haunschild et al. 1994), no empirical study to date has shown how reactions to a merger are based on specific types of social identity threat. Moreover, the effects that identity threat may have in motivating the projection of a pre-merger identity onto the new group has largely been ignored in the merger literature, the consequences of which have practical implications for post-merger sub-group relations. In the following I outline an analysis of identity change through the manipulation of a merger. One study is reported where the outcome of social identity threat is investigated as a response to a merger and concerns for the pre-merger group identity. It is then

investigated how these pre-merger concerns may motivate the projection of one's pre-merger identity onto the newly formed merged group.

2.1 Social Identity Theory – The Importance of Groups

The structuring of psychology by group life, the cognitive redefinition of self as "we" and "us' rather than just as "I" and "me", is regarded as a precondition of peoples' ability to engage in meaningful, productive and pro-group behaviour (Haslam 2001). There is substantial evidence that illustrates the important role group memberships play in people's lives. Examples include sports teams whose fans experience more elation when their teams win, but grieve more when they lose (Branscombe & Wann 1991; Taylor & Doria 1981), research participants who stick with unsuccessful groups even when they have the opportunity to leave (Ellemers 1997), activists who are willing to go to jail and jeopardise their individual selves for a perceived greater cause (Drury, Reicher & Stott 2003; Drury & Reicher 2000).

Thus, it can be argued that as group memberships fulfil an important set of functions for its members, people should be generally motivated to preserve their groups, and resist changes to them and the social identities derived from them. While resistance to change could be one strategy of preserving or enhancing a positively distinct social identity, Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979) proposes three broad strategies through which individuals can protect a negative or threatened identity: social mobility, social creativity and social competition. While individual mobility refers to the belief that one can leave a group and join another more positively valued group, the later two strategies can be conceptualised as aspects of a social change belief system (Haslam 2001). Depending on the perceived basis of an individual's group's status, an individual can reinterpret their group's poor position in a positive light (social creativity), or attempt to change or preserve the status-quo, depending on the motivation to achieve social change (enhance an identity) or resist social change (preserve an identity).

2.2 Identification

Because of the self-defining quality that membership to a social group brings to an individual, identification with a group has been proposed to lead to behaviours that are congruent with that group, provided that membership with that group is salient (Hogg & Turner 1987). While groups play an important role in defining people in terms of their

social selves and their attitudes and behaviours related to those relevant identities, it is apparent that not all groups serve the same function for all individuals. Some social groups and categories will be more central to a person's self-definition than others, and depending on what degree an individual internalises a group as a part of their self, they should be more motivated to pursue either individualistic behaviour or behaviour congruent with group norms. This relative level or strength of identification has been labelled as commitment by some theorists (see Ellemers et al. 2002), and this concept has been reaffirmed by Van Vugt and Hart (2004) who refer to identification as being the "social glue" in group loyalty.

The distinction between high identifiers and low identifiers has seen a wealth of experimental hypothesising and testing. Ellemers and colleagues in a series of studies (Doosje et al. 1995; Ellemers et al. 1997; Spears et al. 1997; Ellemers et al. 1999; Doosje et al. 2002) illustrated the important moderating role identification played in predicting when group members would be motivated to defend their group and promote it, or when group members would choose to leave the group and dis-identify with it. Generally the studies found that low identifiers were more likely to have less group loyalty and express a desire to leave the group when the group's value or distinctiveness was called into question, while high identifiers were more likely to band together and commit to the group.

The level of identification with an ingroup is thus an important factor in explaining when and how people will be motivated to react to the social context and positively differentiate the ingroup from similar outgroups on relevant dimensions of comparison, to maintain or enhance group distinctiveness and social identity (Tajfel et al. 1971; Tajfel & Turner 1986). While identity can be seen as an outcome of the comparative context, it also serves an important function in predicting when group members will be motivated to take collective action to improve their group's position (Veenstra & Haslam 2000; Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith & Huo 1997).

Doosje et al. (2002) illustrated the importance of the dynamic nature of an intergroup context and its effects on identification when they investigated how ingroup identification developed over time during group interaction. Expanding on research that had focused on identity processes as a single effect (Ellemers et al. 1997), Doosje et al. (2002) investigated how low status group member's level of identity changed over time as a result of anticipated and actual changes in the status hierarchy. While results illustrated that low identifiers were only willing to affirm their identity when the potential for status

improvement was likely, high identifiers remained committed to their low status group regardless of the opportunity of change. This illustrates the development of identity through changes in context, and how high identifiers are more likely to stick by their group and defend it, even when the going seems tough. It also shows how identification is not just about being, but also that it is an adaptable process that is also concerned with "becoming" (Reicher 1996).

Jetten et al. (2002) have also illustrated the importance of identification in predicting psychological adjustment to organisational change in a longitudinal field study. Investigating the restructuring of workgroups in an Australian Government organisation, identification with the pre-restructure workgroup was seen to be a significant predictor of negative feelings towards the restructured organisation. Specifically, results produced a picture analogous to the laboratory studies of Doosje et al. (2002), where it was the high identifiers in the pre-restructure workgroup who were least willing to embrace the new organisational identity. On the other hand, low identifiers were more willing than high identifiers to support the new organisation, illustrating the adaptability of identity approaches, and the different strategies available to group members to achieve or maintain a positively distinct social identity.

Taken together, the above studies illustrate how perceived and actual changes in the intergroup context are thus likely to change the impact and relevance of identification, and its application to social identity management strategies. If identification is a process of not just "being" but also a process of "becoming", then we would expect if a group was about to undergo a change, then it would be the high identifiers who would be most likely to defend their group and find ways to protect or enhance their identity, while low identifiers would be more likely to promote their group, only if they believed doing so would benefit them in some way.

2.3   Identity Change Through Merging Groups

One way in which the intergroup context can change is if two groups become re-categorised into a more inclusive group, a process known as merging. While mergers between organisations have become a feature of economic life, merger goals of cost reduction and synergy effects are not always realised (Froud et al. 2000; Haslam 2001). One recent example of an organisational merger not realising its economic goals was the

merger between the global companies Time Warner with AOL. The financial aims of increased profitability and efficiency were not realised, and two and half years after the announcement of the merger, the share priced had dropped 70% to $15US a share. The failure of this merger to reach its financial goals is not an isolated incident, as literature estimates that 60-90% of mergers represent an outright failure in financial term (Hogan & Overmyer-Day 1994).

Thus, predictions regarding the potential success or failure of organisational mergers have been expanded to include factors outside an economic rationalist approach to organisational change (Vaara, Tienari & Santti 2003). Following from Katz and Kahn (1966), Haslam (2001) argues for an approach to organisation psychology that takes identities and group processes into account. Instead of viewing organisations as a collection of individuals concerned primarily with individual cost and benefits, this approach conceptualises the organisation as a social system that coordinates people's behaviour by means of roles, norms and values. This Social Identity Approach to organisations has seen much work and progress made on the understanding of psychologically relevant organisational issues such as leadership (Hogg, Hains & Mason 1998; Turner & Haslam 2001; Platow & van Knippenberg 2001), communication (Postmes, Tanis & de Wit 2001), cooperation and justice (Tyler & Blader 2000) and of most relevance to the current research, the analysis of mergers (Terry et al. 1996; Terry & Callan 1997; Terry & Callan 1998; Terry et al. 2001; Terry & O'Brien 2001; Terry 2003; van Knippenberg et al. 2002; van Leeuwen et al. 2003; Giessner, Viki, Otten, Terry & Tauber 2006).

Terry and colleagues' extensive research of organisational mergers has produced results consistent with identity management or enhancement strategies proposed by the Social Identity Approach. Of particular relevance, the dynamic aspect of identity change and the adaptability of identity concerns were investigated in Terry et al's. (2001) study investigating the merger between two Australian airlines: a domestic carrier and an international carrier. It was found that identity and commitment with the new organisation was based on characteristics of the pre-merger relationship between the airlines. That is, members of the pre-merger high status international airline were more likely to identify with the new organisation, and perceived the status relevant attributes to be more typical of them than the low-status domestic airline. The opposite effect was found for members of

the low status domestic airline. Not only did they identify less with the new airline, but instead of competing with the international airline on the status relevant dimensions, they accepted that they were the lower status airline and lay claim to being typical of attributes based on non-status dimensions.

Similar results were replicated by Terry and O'Brien (2001) in the study of a merger between two scientific organisations. Again, characteristics and identity concerns relevant to the pre-merger groups such as the pre-merger group's status dimensions were highly predictive in how individuals interpreted their place in the newly merged organisation.

However, in viewing the issue of change from a social psychological perspective, mergers should not be regarded as a phenomenon only relevant to the economic realm. The fusion or attempted fusion of different people and groups together can be seen in many different facets of life, and the implications for identity processes related to the change has particular relevance for understanding post-merger conflict or cooperation. One can observe the process of merging in a variety of different situations, from divorced parents who re-marry to create new families, to regional sporting teams who unite to play for their country, to the political arena where the creation of the European Union or the merging of East and West Germany has seen far reaching consequences for the potential conflict of identity relevant values and difference (Mummendey et al. 1999a; Mummendey, Klink, Mielke, Wenzel & Blanz 1999b).

As groups serve an important function in defining the self, it therefore seems logical that if there is a loss or imposed change to the value or distinctiveness of an identity such as through a merger, that a person will react to that threat as if it threatened themselves, that is, their social self (Ethier & Deaux 1994; Jetten et al. 2002). This reasoning is supported by Tajfel (1975), who specifically argued that when external circumstances render the maintenance of subjectively valued group characteristics insecure, such as when two groups are forced to re-categorise as one, this is likely to result in feelings of threat, which in turn should elicit attempts to preserve the current systems of social relations.

Initial empirical support for this argument has been found by Terry and Callan (1998), who found that when employees from two hospitals were asked about their anticipations for a future merger, there were significant effects of perceived threat associated with the merger. However measures of this threat were based on the perceived

stress and uncertainty of the event, and so was not directly identity relevant. The above study was also confined to analysis of threat before the merger formally took place. Effects of identity threat, in particular social identity threat, may be more salient once the merger has taken place, and thus a post-merger analysis of identity threat holds particular significance for understanding cooperation or competition in a post-merger category.

Further studies investigating the effects of a merger on feelings of threat have also shown a relationship between threats to individual self-esteem and well being (Callan et al. 1995), but they haven't specifically tested the causal role a change to identity plays in identity threat. Because of the relevance of identity threat to predicting negative intergroup relations (Tajfel & Turner 1979), an important goal for theory and practice must be to determine the impact a forced change such as a merger has on group member's perceptions of identity threat, and the strategies individuals will take as a response to alleviate the feeling of threat.

2.4 Social Identity Threat

Central to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979; 1986) and its identity management strategies is the concept of a social identity threat. It is explicitly stated that the identity management strategies of social mobility, social creativity and social competition, are a motivational response to a "negative or threatened social identity" (1986:19). As threat is a central assumed motivational factor in achieving a positively distinct identity, it therefore seems surprising that only recently have researchers started to empirically test the direct relationship between a threatened identity and various social identity management strategies.

Two broad explanations exist for the lack of direct empirical evidence to support this theoretical relationship. The first relates to what Scheepers and Ellemers (2005) refer to as the "measurement issue". This explanation postulates that one reason why identity threat has not been properly assessed is self-reports are more open to reactivity and defensive reactions, possibly leading to those who feel the most threat to indicate lesser amounts of threat (Branscombe, Schmitt & Harvey 1999). This has led some researchers to develop measures that rely on measuring the biological consequences of the psychological response. For example, Blascovich et al. (2001) illustrated how African Americans who experience stereotype threat are more likely to have higher blood pressure when that threat

is salient. This methodology has also been utilised recently by social identity researchers to illustrate how a physiologically based measurement of identity threat can be related to the context of the intergroup comparison (Scheepers & Ellemers 2005).

However, while these physiological measures offer valuable insight into the implicit consequences of a threatened identity, there is still little work that investigates the direct relationship between identity threat and social identity management strategies using explicit measures. While this may be because social identity threat has ended up being an elusive concept to measure often being inferred from one of its hypothesised consequences, this difficulty in gaining an explicit measure of identity threat may also be an outcome of little work since the development of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979) being conducted in establishing a theoretical based understanding and conceptualisation of identity threat.

However, recently Branscombe et al. (1999) have expanded on Social Identity Theory's conceptualisation of threat, and by incorporating identity relevant concerns outlined by Breakwell's model of identity threat (1986), present an integrated framework for understanding attitudinal and behavioural outcomes for four different types of social identity threat. Following the intergroup nature of a merger, it is proposed that three of these types of threat, value threat, categorisation threat and distinctiveness threat are relevant to this analysis, while the fourth type of threat labelled acceptance threat outlined by Branscombe et al. (1999) is left out of the present analysis because it focuses on threat derived from an intragroup context.

Value Threat

Value threat in the context of mergers occurs when the evaluative component of a group is compromised by a comparison with a relatively higher status outgroup, or when an ingroup's relative superiority is threatened by a relatively lower status group. Both theoretical (Branscombe et al. 1999; Ellemers et al. 2002) and empirical work (Terry & O'Brien 2001; Ellemers et al. 1993) on value threat have construed a group's value, and therefore its meaning, in relation to whether the intergroup comparison results in a negative outcome for the ingroup based on its relative status position. Value threat can also be attributed to the potential loss of status (Scheepers & Ellemers 2005), and in the case of a merger where a group's relative status can become unstable due to the changing intergroup

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context, value threat has the potential to become particularly salient for the two groups involved in the merger due to the potential for a negative comparison with a higher status group, and the potential for a loss of relative group superiority. Thus, traditionally, value threat as it is related to mergers has reflected *status relevant* identity concerns.

Categorisation Threat

Categorisation threat occurs when an individual's preferred social categorisation does not correspond to, or is not respected by, other people's perceptions of them. Thereby, to the extent that high identifiers are treated unjustly through a forced change to their group membership such as a merger, they may be more likely to feel threatened because the group will seem inappropriate for the context. In fact, there is empirical evidence to suggest that people are less willing to be considered in terms of categorisations that are ascribed to them or imposed upon them by others, and that a lack of respect for preferred categorisations is related to lower levels of identification and loyalty to the group (Ellemers, Kortekaas & Ouwerkerk 1999; Baretto & Ellemers 2002)

Distinctiveness Threat

The third type of threat related to the present analysis is distinctiveness threat. According to Social Identity Theory, people are motivated to positively differentiate the ingroup from similar outgroups on relevant dimensions of comparison to maintain or enhance group distinctiveness and social identity (Tajfel et al. 1971; Tajfel & Turner 1986). In a merger, where two groups typically combine to form a single superordinate identity, it is likely that the pre-merger groups will feel that their distinctiveness, what identifies and defines them as a group, is being threatened (Jetten et al. 1998). The prediction that similarity to a relevant outgroup will be perceived as a distinctiveness threat and will motivate intergroup differentiation has been supported by many studies (Jetten et al. 1996; 1997; 1998; 2001; Hornsey & Hogg 2000a; 2000b; 2002). For example, Jetten et al. (1997) conducted a study where it was found that when individuals perceived there to be a threat to their group's distinctiveness, group members engaged in greater levels of ingroup favouritism to preserve the group's distinctiveness than when no threat was present.

More recently, Jetten and colleagues have proposed the existence of a curvilinear relationship in explaining the effect on relative group distinctiveness on differentiation. Combining aspects of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979) and Self-

categorization Theory (Turner et al. 1987) two hypotheses are proposed to understand when and why people will show a tendency to distinguish one's group from a relevant comparison outgroup, the reflective and reactive hypothesis. The reflective hypothesis follows Self-categorization Theory and argues that increased distinctiveness will form the basis of subgroup differentiation because of increased group salience and the heightened prominence of group boundaries (Jetten et al. 2004; Oakes 1987). More relevant to the current analysis investigating the merging of two groups, the reactive distinctiveness hypothesis follows the argument from Social Identity Theory that lowering intergroup distinctiveness will pose a threat to an ingroup's identity, and thus argues when a relevant comparison group is considered too similar, it will motivate people to differentiate their group from the comparison outgroup. This assumption found preliminary support in a meta-analysis of the relevant literature on differentiation and distinctiveness (Jetten et al. 2004), where it was found that threats to a group's distinctiveness were more likely to instigate attempts by group members to reaffirm that sense of distinctiveness.

However, while these types of threats have helped to create a useful taxonomy for both conceptualising and utilising different aspects of identity threat in studies, there is still very little, if any, work that has tested (a) whether these types of threats can be split on the proposed dimensions and (b) if they can be split up on the proposed dimensions, under what circumstances will they occur as the outcome of a merger.

2.5   Ingroup Projection Model

While identity threat has been used as an explanation for the adoption of social identity management strategies in the Social Identity Tradition, Mummendey and Wenzel (1999) also conceptualise threat as a possible central explanatory variable in their Ingroup Projection Model.

The Ingroup Projection Model continues the tradition of Social Identity Theory in its understanding of intergroup relations. Central to its conceptualisation of tolerance and discrimination between groups is the evaluation of intergroup difference. While dissimilarity between groups can be seen to have a Janus-faced character where it can elicit either attraction or aversions (Mummundey & Wenzel 1999; see also Jetten & Spears 2003), Mummendey and Wenzel believe that it is when the outgroup's difference is seen as a challenge or a threat to the ingroup that discrimination will occur.

Ingroup projection refers to the process of perceiving the attributes that define one's group to be prototypical of a more inclusive group that contains both the ingroup and a comparison outgroup. Following from Self-categorization Theory (Turner et al., 1987), Mummendey and Wenzel maintain that the evaluation of similarities and difference between groups is conducted in the frame of an overarching more inclusive social category (see also Waldzus & Mummendey 2004). This superordinate category provides the dimensions, norms and standards for the evaluative comparison between groups nested within that overarching category. Because self-categories tend to be valued positively, it is assumed that an ingroup will have a more positive identity if it is considered more prototypical of the positive dimensions of the superordinate category.

The declaration for relative prototypicality by the ingroup of the superodinate category can thus be seen as a strategy to claim a positively distinct identity, and the outcome of this process results in the increased salience of the outgroup's difference from the superordinate category. To the degree that the outgroup's difference is now seen as deviant from the values and norms of the newly defined superordinate category, the deviation will legitimise negative outgroup attitudes. Research has already established the link between relative prototypicality and less positive outgroup attitudes across several intergroup contexts (Waldzus et al. 2003; Waldzus, Mummendey & Wenzel 2005).

It has been proposed that like Clement and Krueger's (2002) model of social projection, ingroup projection is the result of several motivational and cognitive processes. However, while research has investigated different aspects of the socio-structural and psychological conditions under which ingroup projection will occur, what hasn't been investigated is an analysis of the underlying cognitive processes or motivations that explain why projection will occur. Related to the motivational aspects of Social Identity Theory, Waldzus et al. (2003) have suggested that one way of reducing projection may be for groups to maintain their positive ingroup distinctiveness against the background of the normative framework of the superordinate category. Based on the literature one would expect that this would alleviate the potential threat that an outgroup may pose.

Because social context and frame of reference determine the salience of groups and the meaning people attach to them, in explaining projection in a merger the outgroup's similarity to the ingroup could be seen as a threat to the ingroup's positive distinctiveness. Jetten and Spears (2003) have already established that high identifiers are more likely to

differentiate their group from relevant outgroups when they perceive their group's distinctiveness to be compromised. This threat in turn may then motivate the ingroup to defend and restore their positively distinct identity by claiming relative prototypicality for the new category; that is, by projecting an ingroup's distinctive attributes and values onto the inclusive category. This perception of relative prototypicality should in turn predict ingroup favouring strategies analogous to negative outgroup attitudes.

However, the only empirical evidence so far that ingroup projection is an action taken by group members to defend or enhance their social identity is rather indirect; namely, the finding that group members who identify strongly with their subgroup are more likely to project than participants who don't identify with their ingroup (Wenzel 2001; Wenzel et al. 2003). Also, the Ingroup Projection Model to date has largely been conceptualised in relation to ingroup members' tendency to project their psychological ingroup attributes onto a more inclusive psychological category. Investigating realistic intergroup contexts, the claim for relative prototypicality of a more inclusive category has been seen across a wide range of real life groups including university students (Weber et al. 2002), motorcyclists (Waldzus, Mummendey, Wenzel & Boettcher 2004: Study 1), teachers (Study 2) and Germans (Study 3). What has not been investigated is when a new group is formed physically and psychologically through a process such as a merger, will group members take their pre-merger group norms and attributes, and define the new category in terms of their previous group's identity?

I believe that the theoretical analysis of the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) can be extended and applied to this dynamic process of intergroup change. For example, while not directly examining ingroup projection in a merger, van Leeuwen, van Knippenberg and Ellemers (2003) examined similar outcomes in terms of the continuation of a pre-merger group's identity in a newly merged group. By experimentally manipulating whether a pre-merger group's identity was continued or changed in the new group, it was found over two studies that the perceived continuation of the pre-merger identity (a similar outcome to ingroup projection) strengthened the relationship between pre-merger and post-merger identity, and also increased ingroup bias at the subgroup level.

2.6   Study 1

Hypotheses

The main objective of the first study was to investigate the extent to which reactions to a merger can be attributed to different constructs of social identity threat.   No experimental research to date has empirically tested the division of identity threat into theoretically separate constructs.   Therefore, for the present study a series of measures needed to be developed that would illustrate whether identity threat as it relates to a merger could be classified along the proposed dimensions of value, categorisation and distinctiveness threat (Hypothesis 1).   While a comparison with a merger partner based on real life status differences can be identity threatening (Terry & Callan 1998), the present study is particularly interested in how a merger constructed as a 'merger of equals' could illicit a threat to a group's distinctiveness.   It was therefore predicted that to the degree that participants identified with an ingroup, they would be more likely to feel a distinctiveness threat when their ingroup was made to merge with a comparison outgroup rather than a value threat, as value threat has generally been conceived of as an outcome of status relations (Hypothesis 2).   It is also proposed that to the degree that people identify with their pre-merger group, they will feel the imposed merger is not reflective of them and experience a categorisation threat (Hypothesis 3).

While the manipulation of the merger was represented by having both pre-merger groups equally represented in the post-merger group with no group dominating the other, the distinctiveness threat that people experience as a consequence of the merger may motivate them to adopt an identity protection or enhancement strategy.   It is proposed that as a response to a threatened identity, participants may seek to restore their distinctive identity by projecting their pre-merger ingroup attributes onto the newly merged group (Hypothesis 4).

It is further proposed that like studies illustrating the relationship between perceived ingroup relative prototypicality of a more inclusive category and negative outgroup attitudes, perceived prototypicality should be related to greater perceptions of ingroup favouritism (Hypothesis 5).

Method

Participants and Design

The sample comprised 32 males and 46 females with an age range from 18 to 58 years (*M* = 27.41 years, *SD* = 9.96 years). Participants were recruited via snowball sampling from the Australian National University student community and all participants took part voluntarily.

The experiment consisted of a 2 (change: merger vs. non-merger) x 2 (identification: high identification vs. low identification) factorial design with random allocation of participants to conditions. Both variables were manipulated between subjects.

Procedure

The experiment was conducted using a modified version of the minimal group paradigm (Tajfel 1970). On arrival at the laboratory participants were seated in isolated cubicles in front of personal computers. The experimenter explained that the study would be conducted "on-line" and that participants would have the opportunity in the experiment to communicate with other participants via an e-mail program on the network. Participants were informed that there was another laboratory in the building that was connected to the same network that the participants would be working on. The experimenter explained that another experimenter would be running that laboratory, but that all the participants in both laboratories would be working on the same tasks and that they would have the opportunity to communicate with the participants in both laboratories via an e-mail program on the network. In reality, there was only one laboratory but it was necessary to artificially inflate the number of participants involved to create two groups. Participants were then informed that further instructions would be displayed on the computer screen, and that they could answer any questions that appeared with the keyboard or mouse.

Categorisation

Instructions on the computer screen informed participants that the experiment planned to investigate how different groups approach certain types of tasks. The first task to be completed required participants to be split into two groups based on their style of thinking. Participants were informed that previous research had shown that different people approached problems or tasks in different ways and this could be related to them being

either an inductive or a deductive thinker. Past research has shown no evaluative differences or expectations concerning the two groups names (Doosje et al. 1995).

The cover story stated that an association test had been designed and pre-tested to see whether participants were either an inductive or a deductive thinker. The association test consisted of two sub-tests, a word association test and a picture association test. The word association test consisted of 12 items, and asked participants to match a key word (eg. house) with one of four options that they felt the keyword could be associated with most strongly (eg. number, street, home, room). Participants were also informed that there were no right or wrong answers and to go with their initial instinct.

The second subtest consisted of ten items. Five of these items asked participants to match a key abstract picture with one of four nouns. For example, a picture of rectangle with a red cross in it was presented, and participants were asked to indicate which word they associated with a key picture the most strongly (eg. flag, window, cross, table tennis table). The other five items asked participants to match a key picture that consisted of different colours and geometrical shapes, with one of four pictures that all had differing colours and patterns. The experimenter created all pictures and the association tests can be viewed in *Appendix A*, while examples of the computer presentation of the picture tests can be seen in *Appendix B*. Again, participants were informed that there were no right or wrong answers to this association test.

Once both sub-tests had been completed, it was stated that the main computer would now calculate the scores to determine the participant's group membership. In reality, all participants were assigned to the inductive thinkers group. When participants had been informed of their group membership, they were told that they would be required to write a short paragraph detailing how they were similar in the way they approached tasks and problems to some people, and how this was distinct from how other people such as deductive thinkers generally approached problems and tasks. In line with the cover story, participants were informed that this would be sent to a main computer and the content would be analysed at a later date.

This short paragraph had two purposes. The first was so that participants could give the category of inductive thinkers its own meaning. This was intended to avoid having participants resist the categorisation because they saw it as irrelevant or an inaccurate

reflection of themselves. The second purpose was to give the inductive thinkers a level of meaningful distinctiveness from a relevant comparison group, namely the deductive thinkers. This was intended to not only create some difference between the two groups, but to also create some meaning as to what it meant to be an inductive or deductive thinker so that the categories had some relevance to the experimental context.

To further increase the salience and reality of their group membership as inductive thinkers, participants were then informed that they had the opportunity to write a short greeting to the other inductive thinkers via an e-mail program on the computer network. After sending the greeting, all participants then received five messages back from the other inductive thinkers in their group, and an example of the e-mail simulation can be seen in *Appendix C*. In reality all these messages were pre-programmed by the experimenter. While participants were not told how many deductive thinkers there were, they were informed that there generally tends to be an equal number of inductive and deductive thinkers.

Inductive thinkers were represented by a blue symbol on their computer screen and participants were also informed that the deductive thinkers would have a red symbol on their screens that represented their group.

Group Tasks

All participants were required to complete two group tasks relating to a farmer's dilemma. In the first task, participants were told that a farmer in the area had been badly affected by a drought. Materials that the farmer had ordered to build sheds for animals that he wished to buy were about to arrive, but because of the drought the farmer no longer had the money to buy the animals. Participants were asked to develop five possible ways that the farmer could use these building materials to make the best out of a bad situation. Participants were informed that the solutions from their group would be sent to an inductive thinker's folder on the main computer, and they would have an opportunity to discuss their ideas with other inductive thinkers at a later stage of the experiment. Each time a participant typed a solution to the farmer's dilemma, it was simulated by the addition of a blue square on the participant's computer screen, the colour representative of the inductive thinkers. When each participant had developed five solutions, the computer simulated the

participant's solutions being sent to a laboratory server where they were stored in an inductive thinkers' folder.

The second task was similar to the first except that this time the farmer had experienced severe flooding. Using the same material outlined in the first task, participants were asked to develop five ways in which the farmer could make the best out of a bad situation. The only other difference was that participants who had merged into the new category, the global thinkers, now had each solution they developed represented by a purple circle that would be stored in a global thinkers' folder on the laboratory server when they had finished.

Independent Variables

Identification. Identification was manipulated by means of a "bogus pipeline" procedure (see Doosje et al. 1995). After the first group task had been completed participants were told that the research was interested in their perceptions of what it means to be an inductive thinker. They were then presented with 14 statements and asked to indicate the extent to which they strongly agreed (1) or strongly disagreed (7) with the statements. The statements consisted of a collection of statements relating to contact with other people (eg. Relationships are important to me) and conformability in different situations (eg. I am always ready to take on new challenges). A complete list of items used can be seen in *Appendix D*. After participants had rated the statements they were informed that they had just completed an established test that implicitly measures a person's cognitive strength of identification with their group. It was stated that when the individual scores from the tests were computed and standardised against other participants' scores, a participant's relative strength of identification could be inferred. Participants in the <u>low identification</u> condition were informed that they achieved a relatively low score (27) when compared to the average (40), while participants in the <u>high identification</u> condition were informed that they had a relatively high score (53) when compared to the average (40). Participants were not directly informed how many people in their group were low identifiers or high identifiers, but they were told that past research indicates that there is a relatively even split between low and high identifiers in these types of tasks. See *Appendix D* for an illustration of the identification manipulation.

In line with the cover story, participants were then told that the experiment was interested in the underlying processes that contribute to a person's strength of identification. To analyse this, participants who were informed that they were high identifiers were asked to write a short paragraph detailing why they thought they were a high identifier, and to think of a way in which they were similar to other inductive thinkers. Conversely, participants who were informed that they were low identifiers were asked to write a short paragraph detailing why they thought they were a low identifier, and how they were different to other inductive thinkers. This was designed to increase the salience of the manipulated identification for participants through the self-justification of their apparent identification level.

Change. Change was manipulated by either changing the composition of the groups for the second task, or by maintaining the same groups from the original categorisation. In the <u>non-merger condition</u> the inductive and deductive thinker group categorisations remained unchanged for the second task. After participants in the non-merger condition had finished the second farmer's task, they were informed that there was a more inclusive category of thinkers called global thinkers that both inductive and deductive thinkers belonged to, and that some questions may be asked as to participants' perceptions about this more inclusive category.

In the <u>merger condition</u> participants were informed after the identification manipulation that there was one more task to be completed before they met the other inductive thinkers to discuss the inductive thinkers' suggestions from the first task. It was then stated that based on some preliminary results, the experimenters were going to force a change to their group's composition. The instructions read:

> *For the second task you will no longer be working as inductive and deductive thinkers. For this task we have decided that we are going to make the inductive and deductive thinkers develop solutions in one single merged group. Instead of developing solutions with other inductive or deductive thinkers, you will be made to develop solutions for a single combined group that we are going to call the global thinkers.*

The merger was simulated on the participants' computer screens by merging the inductive and deductive thinkers' blue and red symbols into one purple symbol that was referred to as the "global thinkers". An example of this manipulation can be seen in *Appendix E*.

Dependent Variables

Manipulation Checks. After the second farmer's task the effectiveness of the manipulations were checked. The first manipulation check consisted of four items that were designed to assess if participants had felt they were either high or low identifiers with the category inductive thinkers. Participants had to indicate on a 7 point scale the extent to which they strongly agreed (1) or strongly disagreed (7) with the following statements: "I see myself as a typical inductive thinker", "I feel committed to the inductive thinkers", "I like being known as an inductive thinker" and "I think I am a valuable member of the inductive thinkers". The measure of identification was sufficiently reliable ($\alpha = .79$), so scores were averaged across items to create a single score for a manipulation check.

The effectiveness of the change manipulation was checked with one item, asking participants to indicate on a seven-point scale the extent to which they perceived the aggregate of participants after the second task as one group (1) or two groups (7).

Social Identity Threat. Using Branscombe et al's. (1999) classification scheme of social identity threat, a series of questions were developed that were intended to measure three separate constructs of social identity threat: distinctiveness threat; value threat; and categorisation threat. All items were on 7-point scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

Categorisation threat was measured by four items assessing whether participants felt they had been categorised in the wrong group for the second task ("For the last task I felt I was in the wrong group", "I was happy being classified in the group I completed the last task in" (reverse coded), "I would have liked to have completed the last task in another group" and "I enjoyed completing the last task in my group" (reverse coded)).

Value threat was measured by four items assessing whether participants felt the value or status of inductive thinkers had been undermined by completing the second task ("The way the last task was set up, inductive thinkers could not shine as much as in the earlier task", "I fear the inductive thinkers' contribution may have been undermined by the

completion of the last task", "I felt the last task allowed the inductive thinkers to illustrate their true worth to problem solving" (reverse coded) and "I felt the inductive thinkers should have had more of an opportunity to show how valuable their approach to problem solving is").

Distinctiveness threat was measured by four items assessing whether participants felt that the distinctiveness of inductive thinkers as a group had been compromised by the completion of the second task ("For the last task I am afraid inductive thinkers were made indistinguishable from deductive thinkers", "I feel that compared to the second task, the first task enabled the inductive thinkers to stand out more", "As an inductive thinker, I felt the last task allowed us to show our distinctive qualities" (reverse coded) and "I fear that the second task did not allow inductive thinkers to display their distinct qualities").

Perceived Prototypicality. How typical participants' saw inductive thinkers of either the new or superordinate category of global thinkers was measured using four items rated from 1 = Strongly disagree to 7 = Strongly agree: "Inductive thinkers are typical global thinkers", "Global thinkers are best represented by inductive thinkers", "The typical deductive thinker is the best example of what it means to be a global thinker" (reverse coded) and "Compared to deductive thinkers, inductive thinkers best represent what it means to be a global thinker". The reverse coded item did not correlate well with other items. It was therefore dropped from the scale and the remaining scores were averaged to build a reliable measure for perceived prototypicality ($\alpha = .89$).

Ingroup Favouritism. Ingroup favouritism was assessed by measuring attitudes towards members of the inductive and deductive thinkers after the second task had been completed with four items (1 = Not at all, 7 = very much): "How feasible do you think the ideas generated by the inductive/deductive thinkers for the last task would have been?", "How bad do you think member of the inductive/deductive thinkers are at creating ideas for problems or tasks?" (reverse coded), "How good at brainstorming do you think the inductive/deductive thinkers are?" and "How efficient do you think members of the inductive/deductive thinkers are at creating ideas for problems and tasks?". An overall measure of ingroup favouritism was computed by subtracting for each item the outgroup attitudes from the ingroup attitudes, and averaging the resulting four favouring measures into one scale ($\alpha = .83$). The result is a measure on which higher (more positive) scores indicate more ingroup favouritism.

Results

Assumptions

Prior to analysis all data were checked for missing values, accuracy of data entry and the assumptions of multivariate analysis. No data were missing and all assumptions were met.

Manipulation Checks

Identity. The extent to which participants felt they were either high or low identifiers with the category of inductive thinkers was submitted to a 2 (change: merger vs. no merger) x 2 (identity: high vs. low) between groups analysis of variance. The expected main effect for identification was significant F (1,64) = 9.52 < .003, indicating that participants in the high identifier condition were more likely to see themselves as identifying strongly with inductive thinkers (M = 4.36, SD = 1.08), while participants in the low identifier conditions were more likely to see themselves as identifying less strongly with inductive thinkers (M = 3.66, SD = 0.87). There was no significant interaction with the change factor indicating that the identification manipulation successfully altered people's perceptions of how much they identified with the inductive thinkers.

Change. The extent to which participants perceived the aggregate of participants after the second task as one group or two was submitted to an analysis of variance as the two levels of a within-subjects factor, with merger as the between subjects factor. Overall, participants viewed the aggregate somewhat more as two groups (M = 4.54, SD = 1.42) than one group (M = 3.36, SD = 1.54). However, this effect was not qualified by the merger manipulation suggesting that participants' perception of the composition of participants in the experiment was not altered by the merger. Implications for this are investigated in the discussion.

Social Identity Threat

Once the reverse coded questions had been re-coded, a principal components analysis with varimax rotation was performed on the scores on all the threat measures to see if there were three distinct types of identity threat as hypothesised. Data from all 78 participants were used. The assumptions for a principal components analysis were met, with Kaiser's test of sampling adequacy (KMO = .730) greater than the required .6, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (p < .05). Because it was hypothesised that there

would be three separate threat components, the extraction of three components was specified in the analysis. As hypothesised, Kaiser's criterion (eigenvalues > 1) suggested the extraction of three principal components, however these components were not entirely consistent with the hypothesis of the components being split on the concepts of categorisation, value and distinctiveness threat (component loadings can be seen in Table 3). The three components accounted for 62.9% of the variance.

Table 1: Component Loadings for Identity Threat

Item	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Distinctiveness Threat 1	.51		
Distinctiveness Threat 2	.45		-.64
Distinctiveness Threat 3 ®			.80
Distinctiveness Threat 4	.79		
Value Threat 1	.73		
Value Threat 2	.81		
Value Threat 3 ®			.71
Value Threat 4	.72		
Categorisation Threat 1		.70	
Categorisation Threat 2 ®		.87	
Categorisation Threat 3		.80	
Categorisation Threat 4 ®		.69	-.45

Note: Component scores under .4 not displayed

The data did not support the hypothesis of three distinctive categories of social identity threat, but it did show two types of identity threat consistent with Social Identity Theory. The first component loaded on items intended to measure both distinctiveness and value threat with the exceptions of the recoded items, and explained 31.4% of the variance. As participants were required to create their own distinctiveness for their groups, it may be the case that this process created a situation where participants used evaluative differences to differentiate their ingroup from the relevant outgroup. As Tajfel & Turner (1986) suggest, individuals not only strive to achieve a positive social identity, but it must also be *positively differentiated* or distinct from the relevant outgroup. Thus this first component was interpreted as positive distinctiveness threat (PD Threat). A scale was created using

the value and distinctiveness threat items (with the exception of the reverse coded measures) by averaging responses across the remaining items. This created a scale with a sufficient reliability ($\alpha=0.78$).

The second component loaded highly on the four measures related to categorisation threat. This second component was interpreted as categorisation threat and explained 21.5% of the variance. A scale was constructed by averaging responses aross the four items ($\alpha=.80$).

The third component had significant loadings for three negatively worded items representing each type of threat, and a positively worded distinctiveness item. While it explained 9.9% of the variance and appeared to represent some form of identity threat denial, it was left out of further analysis because it did not follow the theoretical understanding of identity threat that the present thesis was investigating.

Effects of Change and Pre-Merger Identification on Categorisation Threat

To test Hypothesis 3, namely that a merger and pre-merger identification would interact in their effect on categorisation threat, a hierarchical regression model was applied with categorisation threat as the dependent variable. The predictor variables change and identification were included in the first step of the regression, while the product term of change and identification was included in the second step. Following Aiken and West (1991), the component variables of the interaction were first centred before multiplying them to create the interaction term. The results illustrated no significant predictors of categorisation threat in either step, and the full model did not significantly predict categorisation threat (F (3, 74) = 1.49, $p > .05$). Categorisation threat was thus left out of further analyses.

Effects of Change and Pre-Merger Identification on Positive Distinctiveness Threat

To test whether a merger and pre-merger identification would interact in their effect on positive distinctiveness threat (Hypothesis 2), a hierarchical regression was run using the same method as our analysis of categorisation threat. The only difference was that the dependent variable of categorisation threat was replaced with the dependent variable of positive distinctiveness threat. *Table 2* displays the unstandardised regression coefficients (*B),* the standard error of the unstandardised regression coefficients (*SBE*), the standardised regression coefficients (β) and adjusted R^2 after entry of the regression model which

included the independent variables change, identification in the first step, and the second step included the addition of the interaction term of change by identification in the prediction of positive distinctiveness threat. *Table 5* displays the correlations for all variables used in the following regression analysis.

Table 2: Hierarchical Regression for Positive Distinctiveness Threat

	Step One			Step Two		
Predictor	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Change	.23	.11	.23*	.23	.11	.23*
Identification	-.07	.11	-.08	-.07	.11	-.07
Change X Identification				.04	.11	.04
(Constant)	3.50	.11		3.49	.11	
adjR^2	.03			.06		
adjΔR^2	.06			.00		
ΔF	2.32			.10		
df	2,75			1,74		

$^t = p < .1$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

As can be seen from *Table 2*, the interaction term did not explain a significant amount of variance in positive distinctiveness threat with adj $\Delta R^2 = .00$, $\Delta F (1,74) = .10$, p > .05, and so the analysis will concentrate on the first step of the model and the interaction term between change and pre-merger identification will be omitted from further analysis. The results from the first step of the analysis showed there was a significant effect for change (β = .23, t = 2.06, p = .045), indicating that those participants who experienced a merger and thus a change to their group membership were significantly more likely to feel that their sense of positive distinctiveness had been threatened.

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Mediational Analysis of Positive Distinctiveness Threat

To investigate Hypothesis 4, namely that projecting a pre-merger group identity onto the newly merged group would be motivated by a threatened identity, a series of hierarchical regression analyses were performed (as suggested by Baron & Kenny, 1986) with perceived prototypicality as the dependent variable. All assumptions for a hierarchical regression were met and all cases were used in the analysis ($N = 78$). Concerning perceived prototypicality, the first link in the model that needed to be established was whether a change such as a merger predicted higher levels of positive distinctiveness threat. This analysis had already been conducted and results can be seen in *Table 2*.

The second link that needed to be verified was whether there was a total effect between change and perceived prototypicality. The third link that needed to be verified was whether positive distinctiveness threat (the proposed mediator) was significantly related to perceived prototypicality. To investigate these, a hierarchical regression was run with change and identification in the first step, and the second step included the addition of positive distinctiveness threat to the prediction of prototypicality.

Table 3 displays the unstandardised regression coefficients (*B*), the standard error of the unstandardised regression coefficients (*SBE*), the standardised regression coefficients (β) and adjusted R^2 after entry of the first regression model.

Table 3: Summary of Hierarchical Regression for Variables Predicting Prototypicality

Predictor	Step One				Step Two		
	B	*SE B*	β		*B*	*SE B*	β
Change	-.16	.14	-.12		-.25	.14	-.20
Identification	.27	.14	.22^t		.30	.14	.24*
PD Threat					.40	.15	.35**
(Constant)	3.97	1.4			2.57	.52	
adjR^2	.04^t				.15*		
adjΔR^2	.06^t				.09*		
Δ*F*	2.40^t				7.85*		
df	2,75				1,74		

^{t} = $p < .1$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

As can be seen from *Table 3*, the first model explains 6 percent of the variance in prototypicality with $F (2, 75) = 2.40$, $p > .05$, and this model did not significantly predict perceived prototypicality. Unexpectedly, change did not significantly affect perceived prototypicality thus the second link of the mediational analysis was not supported. Entering positive distinctiveness threat into step two is seen to explain an increased amount of variance in perceived prototypicality (9%). This represents a statistically significant increase with adj $\Delta R^2 = .09$, $\Delta F (1,74) = 7.85$, p < .01, and therefore I will concentrate on this model. There was a significant effect of identification on perceived prototypicality (β = .24, $t = 2.22$, $p < .03$), and also as predicted, positive distinctiveness threat was positively related to perceived prototypicality (β = .35, $t = 2.80$, $p < .006$). The effect of identification indicates that when participants were more committed to the sub-group inductive thinkers, they also perceived their ingroup, compared to the outgroup, to be more prototypical for the more inclusive category. The effect of positive distinctiveness threat suggests that

participants who felt a positive distinctiveness threat were more likely to consider their ingroup as prototypical for the more inclusive category. While no total effect was found between change and perceived prototypicality that would indicate mediation, the effect of change on positive distinctiveness threat established earlier in the analysis suggested that there may be an indirect effect of change on perceived prototypicality through positive distinctiveness threat. However, using the Sobel test (see Baron & Kenny, 1986) to examine the possibility of an indirect effect, it was found that there was no significant effect from change to perceived prototypicality via positive distinctiveness threat ($z = 1.56$ p, < 1.96). A path model of the proposed mediational analysis with identification controlled for can be seen in *Figure 1*.
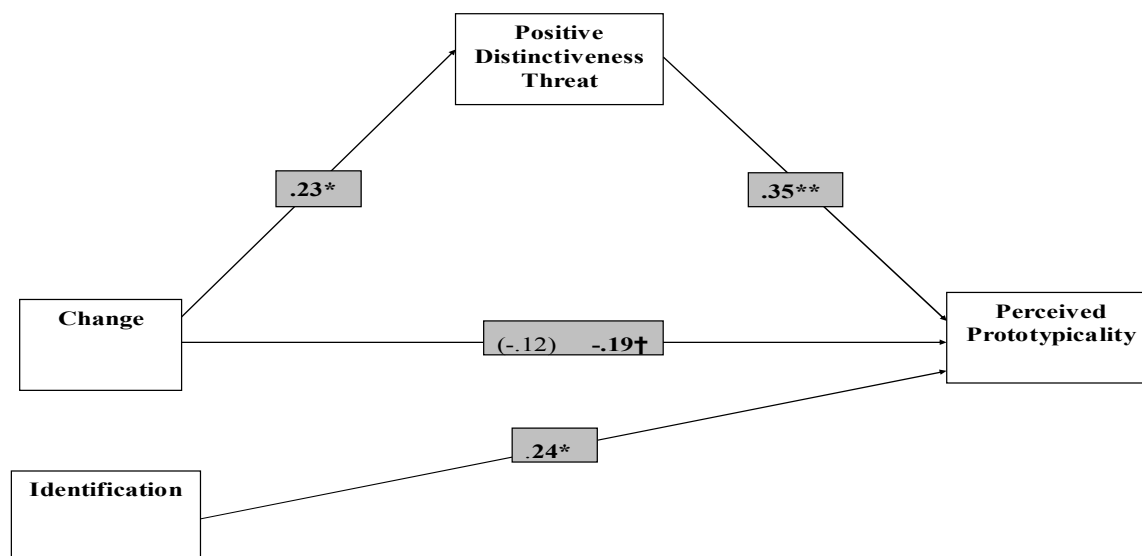
Figure 1: Path Analysis of the Mediation Effect of Positive Distinctiveness Threat Between Change and Perceived Prototypicality.

^{t} $= p < .1, * = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001$

Ingroup Favouritism

Finally, the proposal that perceived prototypicality of the ingroup for the newly merged group would predict ingroup favouritism (Hypothesis 5) was tested via a series of hierarchical regression analyses aimed to test for mediation. To test for the mediating role of prototypicality between positive distinctiveness threat and ingroup favouritism, the first

link in the model that needed to be established was whether a positive distinctiveness threat predicted higher levels of prototypicality. This analysis has already been run and results for it can be seen in *Table 3*. The results show that as predicted, positive distinctiveness threat positively predicted prototypicality ($\beta = .35$, $t = 3.09$, $p < .003$).

The second link that needed to be verified was whether there was a total effect between positive distinctiveness threat and ingroup favouritism. The third link that needed to be verified was whether prototypicality (the proposed mediator) was significantly related to ingroup favouritism and, once included as a predictor, the positive effect of positive distinctiveness threat would become non-significant (Baron & Kenny, 1986). To investigate these, a hierarchical regression was run with change, identification and positive distinctiveness threat in the first step, and the second step included the addition of prototypicality to the prediction of ingroup favouritism. *Table 4* displays the results from the regression.

From examining *Table 4* it can be seen that the first model explains 13 percent of the variance in ingroup favouritism with $F(3, 74) = 3.72$, $p > .015$. Identification was the only significant predictor of ingroup favouritism ($\beta = .33$, $t = 3.13$, $p < .003$), where participants indicated greater ingroup favouritism the more they identified with the inductive thinkers. Unexpectedly, positive distinctiveness threat was not significantly related to ingroup favouritism ($\beta = -.09$, $t = -0.81$, $p > .05$). This non-significant effect suggests that the second link of the mediational analysis was not supported.

Table 4: Hierarchical Regression for Variables Predicting Ingroup Favouritism

Predictor	Step One			Step Two		
	B	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Change	.09	.16	.06	.28	.13	.19*
Identification	.50	.16	.34**	.26	.12	.18*
PD Threat	-.14	.17	-.10	-.45	.13	-.31***
Perceived Prototypicality				.78	.10	.68***
(Constant)	.80	.60		-1.20	.52	
adjR^2	.10**			.49***		
adjΔR^2	.13**			.39***		
ΔF	3.72**			59.12***		
df	3,74			1,73		

† = $p < .1$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

The second model is seen to explain an increased amount of variance in ingroup favouritism (36%), and this represents a statistically significant increase (ΔF (1,73) = 54.59, p < .001). Consistent with the proposed mediational model, there was a significant effect from prototypicality to ingroup favouritism (β = .68, t = 7.69, p < .001), where participants indicated greater ingroup favouritism the more they considered the inductive thinkers as prototypical of the global thinkers. There were also significant effects for change (β = .19, t = 2.26, p < .027), identification (β = .18, t = 2.12, p < .037), and unexpectedly, a significant negative effect for positive distinctiveness threat (β = -.31, t = -3.48, p < .001), indicating the more positive distinctiveness threat participants felt, the less ingroup favouritism they displayed. This unexpected effect suggests a suppressor effect (Kenny, Kasher & Bolger 1998), that is, there may be another factor not included in the

path model that may have affected positive distinctiveness threat and counteracted the predicted positive effect. Further investigation of this is detailed in the discussion.
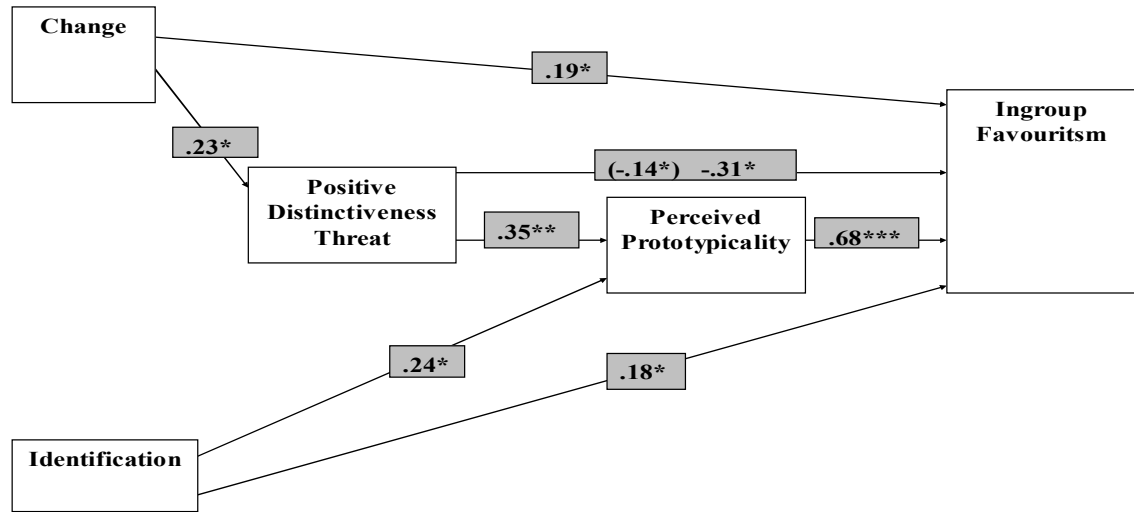
Figure 2: Path Analysis of Variables Predicting Ingroup Favouritism

$^t = p < .1, * = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001$

Table 5: Correlations of Variables used in Study 1

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Change	—					
2. Identification	.03	—				
3. Change X Identificaiton	.03	-.03	—			
4. Positive Distinctiveness Threat	.23*	-.07	.04	—		
5. Categorisation Threat	-.17	.08	-.15	-.29**	—	
6. Perceived Prototypicality	-.12	.21†	-.16	.25*	.10	—
7. Ingroup Favouritism	.05	.35**	-.21	-.11	.27*	.62***

$^t = p < .1, * = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001$

Note. While there are some high correlations, analysis of tolerance in our regression analysis indicated no score < .20, suggesting no problem with multi-collinearity.

2.7 Discussion

The main focus of the present study revolved around two central issues. The first issue involved investigating different aspects of social identity threat and the causal role a change to a distinctive identity played in activating certain types of threat. Secondly, the analysis aimed to investigate the reactions of individuals in groups who faced a threatened identity, and the possibility of utilising ingroup projection (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) as an identity protection and enhancement strategy for dealing with such a threat. The following discussion outlines the present findings relating to these two broad theoretical issues, and the theoretical and empirical development of them into a fully integrated analysis is also investigated.

Social Identity Threat

Previous investigations using Social Identity Threat as an explanatory variable have often relied on measures that do not measure specific types of social identity threat (Scheepers & Ellemers 2005; Terry & Callan 1998). Combined with this, no study that I know of to date has attempted to empirically test if the typology of social identity threat as four distinct constructs suggested by Branscombe et al. (1999) could be split on the proposed dimensions. By directly investigating the relationship between a lack of distinctiveness caused by the merging of two groups and identity threat, a prime concern of the present study was to develop a series of measures for three of the four proposed types of threat to investigate this assumed causal relationship.

Contrary to the first hypothesis, namely that social identity threat could be split into a typology of categorisation, value and distinctiveness threat, Study 1 demonstrated that the typology of identity threat constructed by Branscombe and colleagues (1999) may not be as clear cut as hypothesised. It was found that while there was a clear component of categorisation threat, the measures that were created for the separate theoretical constructs of value and distinctiveness threat showed no clear separate components and were therefore combined into one component labelled positive distinctiveness threat .

However, while the results revealed two types of identity threat, the merger only had psychological consequences for participants' reactions to a positive distinctiveness threat, thus potentially highlighting the multi-faceted nature of identity threat and its associated causes and outcomes outlined by Branscombe et al. (1999; see also Ellemers, et

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al. 2002). It can be seen from the results that different intergroup situations and the interpretations of them can result in experiencing different types of threat. Concentrating on categorisation threat to begin with, while our analysis revealed a clear component reflecting the measures designed to capture the concept of categorisation threat, further analysis revealed no significant effect of change or identification on categorisation threat. This indicated that our manipulations did not affect participants' feelings of being categorised against their will.

One reason for this may have been that we did not specify what attributes, norms or in short, identity, would define the new group (global thinkers). As there was no set standard of the new group for participants to match their previous identity to, the chances for a discrepancy between pre-merger and post-merger identity would have been lessened. This is consistent with Barretto and Ellemers's (2003) analysis of internal and external identities: the acceptance of the imposed identity in the form of the merger may have been facilitated because the experiment allowed participants the psychological opportunity of maintaining their pre-merger identity as a representation of the new identity.

The more interesting result for the present analysis was that by using a merger style scenario in minimal-groups designed to elicit only a distinctiveness threat, it was found that both value and distinctiveness threat were intertwined in one factor. As value threat has previously been conceived of as an outcome of a group's relative status, this result was unexpected as the experimental paradigm attempted to eliminate status as a factor by introducing the change as a "merger of equals". The combined factor represents that in this first study, to the degree that participants felt their group's distinctiveness had been compromised by the merger, they also felt that the value of their group had been threatened, thus reflecting a threat to both the context and the content of the pre-merger identity. While Mlicki and Ellemers (1996) illustrated in a realistic group setting that the desire for ingroup distinctiveness could override the concern for a positive group image, our results suggest that being distinctive may matter because it reflects some form of value connotation. This may be especially true in an experimental paradigm where participants are required to complete tasks in groups such as the current one. Even if there is no personal contact between group members it may be possible that the very act of being in a group and working towards a group goal provides or heightens some sense of belongingness or value connotation to that social identity.

While the manipulation check for change was not significantly affected by the merger manipulation, this may be because the question referred to the psychological representation of the participants involved in the study instead of the physical representation that the merger was represented by. That is, the manipulation check may have been measuring some other psychological reaction to the merger such as participants' defence of their pre-merger subgroup after the merger, rather than measuring whether a merger had occurred or not. However, it is believed the introduction of the merger was made clear to participants as witnessed by the effect of the merger on positive distinctiveness threat, so it is not felt that this causes large problems for the validity of the results regarding the change.

Regarding the mediation analysis, by utilising the measure of threat that was labelled positive distinctiveness threat support was found for the revised hypothesis that a forced change to a group membership would cause a positive distinctiveness threat. Specifically, participants who experienced a change to their group through a merger experienced significantly higher amounts of positive distinctiveness threat than participants who did not experience a change to their group. This offers empirical support to previous claims from a theoretical standing (eg Tajfel 1975; Tajfel & Turner 1979) and field work as seen in the merger literature (Callan et al. 1995; Terry & Callan 1998; Jetten et al. 2002), that a change to a positively distinct identity does cause people to feel an identity threat. This type of threat was also specific to the merger process as seen by the lack of an effect for categorisation threat, and reflects that participants who experienced a merger feared that what made their pre-merger group distinct and special, would be compromised or lost once they were forced to merge with another group. It is also consistent with other research that stresses that continuity in the midst of change is important (van Leuuwen et al. 2003; van Knippenberg et al. 2002; Ethier & Deaux, 1994; Rousseau 1998), as seen by the lower levels of positive distinctiveness threat in participants who continued the experiment in the same group and thus experienced no change to their group membership.

The results also illustrated how projection of a pre-merger identity onto a newly formed group could occur as the result of a positive distinctiveness threat. While previous research has illustrated how the projection of ingroup attributes onto a more psychologically inclusive group can be related to subgroup identity concerns (Wenzel

2001), this is the first study to my knowledge that illustrates how ingroup projection may be a motivated response to a threatened identity. Specifically, when participants feared that they were to lose what was distinctive and valuable about their group, they were more likely to project. However, there should be a note of caution when making this claim, as while the study illustrated how positive distinctiveness threat positively predicted perceived prototypicality, there was no significant indirect effect from change to perceived prototypically through positive distinctiveness threat, and as can be seen from the mediational model (*Figure 1*) there was also no direct effect from change on perceived prototypicality. Further attention is given to these issues later in the discussion.

Focusing on the strengths of the study once more, while other studies have focused on the projection of ingroup attributes onto a more inclusive psychological category (Waldzus et al. 2003; Waldzus et al. 2005) the present analysis extends this research by focusing on ingroup projection in a merger context. In the context of the merger manipulation, ingroup projection can be seen as the process of claiming ownership or dominance of a newly formed category, and thus echoes results that have investigated the manipulations of subgroup dominance in a new group (van Knippenberg et al. 2002). However, while van Knippenberg and colleagues investigated how people responded to a dominant or dominated position in a new group, the present study illustrated how the motivation to impose a pre-merger identity onto a newly created merged group can be traced back to identity concerns stemming from a positive distinctiveness threat.

Ingroup Favouritism

The second part of the total path model, namely that the relationship between threat and ingroup favouritism would be mediated by perceived prototypicality, revealed only partial support (see *Figure 2*). As discussed above, positive distinctiveness did predict perceived pre-merger identity prototypicality for the new group. Secondly, consistent with previous studies that have illustrated a relationship between perceived prototypicality and negative outgroup attitudes (Waldzus et al. 2003; Waldzus et al. 2005), perceived prototypicality was positively related to ingroup favouritism. This indicated that participants who projected their pre-merger identity onto the new category were more likely to think their pre-merger ingroup was better at the task in the experiment compared to the pre-merger outgroup. This was despite the groups receiving no feedback on how they performed in the tasks in the experiment. Thus the favouring of the pre-merger ingroup in

the new category can be seen to reflect an identity enhancement strategy when the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup is threatened.

This assumption also gained further support where it was seen that those who identified more strongly with the group, and were thus theoretically more committed to it, displayed more ingroup favouritism. However, positive distinctiveness threat was curiously negatively related to ingroup favouritism, and following the negative relationship between change and perceived prototypicality a possible suppressor effect is suspected. Other factors that could have affected ingroup favouritism not considered in the path model may have counteracted the predicted effects. One explanation is that to the degree that participants accepted the threat as a consequence of the experiment they may have been less willing to promote their group through ingroup favouritism. However, while this issue deserves special attention, the primary focus for the rest of the discussion will be on the understanding and development of the first part of the analysis. That is, to investigate the findings of a positive distinctiveness threat as opposed to separate value and distinctiveness threat constructs, and the first part of the path analysis relating to positive distinctiveness threat and ingroup projection as seen in *Figure 1*.

Issues Raised by Results

Overall the present study shows support for the effect that a change such as a merger can have in causing a positive distinctiveness threat for pre-merger ingroup members, and the results also illustrate the relevance that positive distinctiveness threat has in motivating ingroup projection. However, there are some anomalies in the data presented that require further investigation. Firstly, while Hypothesis 1 suggested that the conceptualisation of identity threat could be split into three distinct types of threat, I only found two. Post-hoc reasoning for the causes and consequences for distinctiveness and value threat being related reveal three main possible reasons why there is no clear distinction between the two in the present study.

The first explanation that may help to explain the results is related to the items used to measure the constructs. As previously stated, no study to date has developed a series of measures that accurately measure the different types of threat outlined by Branscombe et al. (1999). Measures used in previous studies only related to a lack of distinctiveness as opposed to a distinctiveness threat, or the perceived stress of an ensuing merger, so that the

measures developed for the present study were new and untested. It could be that some of the questions developed were not accurate measures of value or distinctiveness threat, and some questions may deserve re-working for the second study to ensure greater reliability for the proposed threat measures.

The second reason that no clear distinction between value and distinctiveness threat was seen can be related back to an understanding and explanation of the original minimal group studies (Tajfel et al. 1971; Tajfel 1975). This argument postulates that the reason for the behavioural and evaluative intergroup differentiation observed in that series of experiments was to be found in the need of the subjects to provide order, meaning and social identity to the experimental situation. A development of this argument suggests that this need is fulfilled through the creation of intergroup differences when such differences do not in fact exist, or the attribution of value to and the enhancement of, whatever differences do exist.

As participants in the present study were required to create their *own* explanations as to why they thought they were inductive thinkers, as well as their own explanation as to why they thought they might be different to deductive thinkers, it could be that in order to create meaning for the experimental situation that they attributed value to the perceived differences between the experimental groups. In this sense, instead of simply creating distinctiveness for their groups, they may have actually been creating a positive distinctiveness for their style of thinking as a response to the design of the experiment. It may also be the case that the distinctiveness motive is only, or more strongly, visible when a group has a consensually low status position (Mlicki & Ellemers 1996). So, if value threat and distinctiveness threat can be measured separately, a factor or variable that seeks to control the value or status of a group may present the right conditions to distinguish the two proposed types of identity threat.

The third explanation for the construct of positive distinctiveness threat is that the context and content of a group's identity derive much of their meaning from each other. For example, to the extent that an ingroup is distinct from an outgroup, its members will derive some form of value or content from the relative differentials of that comparison. This argument is consistent with Social Identity Theory's (Tajfel & Turner 1979) main assumption that people have a general motivation to achieve a positively distinct identity, not just a positive or distinct identity. Taken from early formulations of Social Identity

Theory and its understanding of intergroup processes, this assumption follows Tajfel's (1975) assertion that the characteristics of one's group as a whole (such as its status, its richness or poverty, its skin colour or its ability to reach its aims) achieve most of their significance in relation to perceived differences from other groups and the value connotation of those differences.

The content of identity is therefore highly dependent on the focus of comparison, the relevance of comparison and the general system of social relations in which that intergroup comparison operates. If the content or meaning of identity lies in this comparative process, then it seems logical that something that may threaten that identity in terms of a group's place in a system of social relations would also threaten the essence or value of that group. Positive distinctiveness threat may then be viewed as a contextually based process reflective of and related to content where the differentiation in terms of values can act as a guide for social action in terms of achieving or maintaining a positively distinct identity.

However as mentioned previously, if the two can be separated, then it should be plausible (and probable) to find this distinctiveness motive (Mlicki & Ellemers 1996; Ellemers et al. 2002) in situations where group members were motivated to achieve a distinctive identity even when this represented something *negative* about their group. For example, in the context of a merger participants should feel threatened when they experience a merger, and come from a negative valued category. That is, they will seek to preserve the "distinctive" aspect of their identity, even at the expense of their group value.

Thus while Study 1 has shown that the motivation to project a pre-merger ingroup identity onto a newly merged category can be traced back to concerns for a positively distinct identity, there are still some issues that need to be resolved that are related to the value aspect of identity. One way that value has been examined in the context of the merger literature is through the relative status of the pre-merger groups who come together to re-categorise as a single entity (Terry 2003).

Concerning perceived prototypicality, as seen by the present study's results, not all participants were motivated to project their pre-merger identity onto the newly merged groups. It was found that identification was a positive predictor of projection, indicating that it was only those participants who identified highly with their group, and were thus

arguably more committed to their pre-merger identity, were more likely to act in terms of their pre-merger group's identity and project that identity onto the new category.

However, the assumption that participants would be motivated to restore their positive distinctiveness by projecting their pre-merger group identity onto the newly merged group received only partial support. That is, while change positively predicted positive distinctiveness threat, and positive distinctiveness threat positively predicted ingroup projection (perceived prototypicality) as hypothesised, there was no significant direct effect found from change to ingroup projection. Combined with this, it can be seen from the mediational model (*Figure 1*) that change was negatively related with prototypicality, albeit not significantly, but following Kenny et al. (1998) there is the possibility of a suppressor effect. Other factors that could have affected perceived prototypicality of the new category not considered in the path model could have counteracted the predicted effects. For example, the act of merging could also produce resistance strategies amongst participants where they disidentified with the new category and as a consequence illustrate depressed levels of ingroup projection. The role of superordinate identification is thus investigated in further studies.

The Following Study: The Addition of Value

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Turner 1999) emphasises that an understanding of intergroup relations and social conflicts relies on understanding a person's conceptualisation of self and their motivation for a positively distinct identity, in interaction with their understanding of their place in the social structure and their understanding of the reality of the social structure. In this case, a person's belief about their group's relative status and their beliefs about the social system their group operates in should moderate how they respond to any change to their group.

While continuity of identity, as manipulated by the absence of change in the present study, may be one way of reducing levels of positive distinctiveness threat, my analysis aims to see when an individual may be motivated to continue their identity into a new group through ingroup projection. Theoretically, while identification with a new group implies the embracement of its constituent sub-groups (Turner et al. 1987), Mummendey & Wenzel (1999) offer a perspective that suggests not all groups will be considered or treated equally when two groups combine in a merger. This perspective maintains that group

members can identify with a new category that is essentially a projection of their pre-merger group, and thus other groups included in the new group may be derogated because they don't fit the standard of the new group. Therefore, the motivation to continue an identity as seen through ingroup projection can result in identification with the new group, but also be the basis for intergroup disharmony.

Again while consistent with studies that have shown identification is related to ingroup projection (Wenzel 2001), it also highlights the multi-dimensional interactions between socio-structural variables and internal cognitive structures and motivations that guide human behaviour. While I focused on the motivational aspect of identification in Study 1, the second study shall introduce status as a variable. Previous theoretical (Tafel 1975) and empirical work (Ellemers et al. 1992; Ellemers et al. 1993) has shown that because of the assumption that groups operate in a stratified social system, the perceived lower or higher status of a group will shape its members' reactions to other groups. The addition of status should also control for value in the experiment, and from this it should be possible to test whether the items designed to measure distinctiveness and value threat still load on one factor (positive distinctiveness threat), or whether by manipulating status and distinctiveness we are able to derive separate constructs of value and distinctiveness threat.

The next chapter focuses on the effects of pre-merger group status on the perceptions of social identity threat and the motivation to protect and enhance the pre-merger identity in the newly merged group.

Chapter 3: The Effects of Distinctiveness and Value Threat in Predicting Projection Following a Merger

Ethnic minorities in which national movements develop usually have at their disposal the possibility of supporting their claims by returning to the past. These movements can rely on a combination of myths, symbols and historical conceptualisations of not just what was, but what ought to be.

A case in point can be seen with the creation of the State of Israel, and the evolution of a modern Jewish identity. This recreation of Jewish identity was characterised by a separation of the more recent past and the perceived passiveness of the dependent Jewish minority living in the diaspora who had "gone like lambs to the slaughter house", to one of Jewish activism more representative of biblical days and the warriors led by Ben Cochba at the fortress of Masada (Herman 1977; Pappe 2004). This look to the past can help to create the perception that group members have the right to promote not only a group's existence, but also a positive sense of distinctiveness related to that existence.

In a merger, where the two pre-merger subgroups can be conceptualised as representing a "recent past", it seems logical that each sub-group may look to that past to help create and define meaning and distinctiveness for the new category. However, as mergers are not always seen as mergers between equals (Terry & O'Brien 2001), a point reflected by other terms used to describe the process between organisations such as take-overs and acquisitions, the pre-merger intergroup relationship must be taken into account when predicting how the new category will come to be defined.

A modern example of this was in 1990 when East and West Germany were reunified after forty-five years of separation that had created two different administrative, educational and legal systems, or put more generally, two different cultures. From this background it was the wealthier higher status West Germany that set the standards and identity for the new country. Aside from the social realities that would help explain this, there is also the potential for psychological factors to explain why a high status group would be unwilling to relinquish its positively distinct identity in a new category.

Following from this, an important motivational factor in promoting a past identity in a new or developing context may be the threat one feels associated with the old identity.

While the promotion of a distinctive identity may be a prime concern, the value of that identity may also be a centrally important explanatory factor. That is, to the degree that the pre-merger identity is positively valued, members of that category may be motivated to retain the value and meaning that the group gave them, and to take it into the new category.

However, while recent theorising proposes that threat related to distinctiveness and value can be split into two separate constructs (Branscombe et al. 1999), results from the first study illustrated that reducing the distinctiveness between groups did not simply produce a distinctiveness threat. Instead it produced perceptions of threat that were related to the group's distinctiveness and value. In other words, my results suggest that group differences carry value dimensions that can be threatened when the distinctiveness of a group is undermined.

This is consistent with Tajfel and Turner's (1979) original postulation of identity processes, where it is assumed that the characteristics of one's group as a whole (such as its status, its richness or poverty, its skin colour or its ability to reach its aims) achieve most of their significance in relation to perceived differences from other groups and the value connotation of these differences. This traditional view of a positively distinct identity reflects the possible interdependence of the context and content of identity.

Thus the first aim of the present study was to test a re-evaulation of Branscombe et al's. (1999) distinction of distinctiveness and value threat as separate constructs, against the findings from the first study that suggested the two concepts are closely related and may actually exist as one type of threat, a positive distinctiveness threat. Given the threatening nature of a merger, the present study also aims to extend research on the ingroup projection model by examining projection as a consequence of a threatened identity, and as a response by group members to continue their pre-merger identity into a new category.

3.1   Intergroup Differentiation and Distinctiveness: The Distinctiveness Motive

A central idea related to Social Identity Theory is that a reduction in the distinctiveness between groups will result in a social identity threat. As people are said to strive for a positively distinct self-concept, a reduction in distinctiveness should motivate group members to positively differentiate their group from the comparison outgroup (Tajfel & Turner 1979). As has been discussed in the previous chapter, there has been a wealth of recent evidence suggesting that perceived similarity to a relevant outgroup will motivate

intergroup differentiation (Jetten et al. 1996; 1997; 1998; 2001; Jetten & Spears 2003; Hornsey & Hogg 2000a; 2000b; 2002).

A recent meta-analysis on group distinctiveness and differentiation by Jetten et al. (2004) found support for their distinction between reactive and reflective distinctiveness. Relevant to the present analysis, the reactive distinctiveness hypothesis proposes that the motivation for group members to differentiate one's group from a relevant comparison group is the consequence of threatened group distinctiveness. Based on social identity principles, this hypothesis maintains that group members who identify strongly with a group should be motivated to defend their group and restore its distinctiveness through positive differentiation on identity relevant criteria (see also Ellemers et al. 2002).

However, the motivation to differentiate an ingroup from a comparison outgroup has also been proposed to occur at the expense of a positive identity. That is, when social reality restricts group members from claiming a positive identity on relevant dimensions of comparison, they may be motivated to pursue a purely distinctive identity (Branscombe et al. 1999; Spears 2002). Initial support for this "distinctiveness motive" was presented by Mlicki and Ellemers (1996), who in a study involving Dutch and Polish students illustrated that ratings of group distinctiveness for Polish students could come at the expense of a positive group image when making a comparison with Dutch students in the overarching context of belonging to Europe.

This result offers an alternative view to that outlined by Tajfel (1981), who specifically argues that a social group can fulfil its function of protecting the social identity of its members only to the degree that it manages to maintain its *positively* valued distinctiveness from a relevant outgroup (see also Turner & Giles 1981). Following this theorising, the comparability of groups on relevant dimensions, and therefore their similarity and difference from each other, can not be simply conceived of as "facts" that exist in a stable environment. The evaluation of similarities and differences between groups is dependent upon a shifting pattern of social conditions, contexts and ideologies that take place in the overarching context of a socially stratified society (Tajfel 1984). In this case, attempting to understand a psychological account of identity threat and its consequences for intergroup relations, the components of value and distinctiveness may operate as a result of one another, rather than as mutually exclusive constructs.

For example, Tajfel highlights how the meaning or value of a group can come to represent perceived differences, as he reflects in <u>Social Identity and Intergroup Behaviour</u> (1984), how "race" has become a value laden term, a shorthand expression which helps to "*create, reflect, enhance and perpetuate the perceived differences in 'worth' between human groups or individuals*" (p. 266). Therefore it is argued that the outcome of the comparison process is highly dependent on the meaning one places on the perceived differences or similarities between two groups. Accordingly, as groups function in terms of their relative position in a stratified social hierarchy, a large percentage of a group's evaluative and descriptive content can be related to whether the comparative process results in a group occupying either a low or high status position.

In a merger, which typically implies the imposition of a one-group structure on two previously separate groups, the pre-merger social identities are likely to be particularly salient. As the self is more likely to be defined in terms of group membership when the intergroup context is salient, it would also be expected that the pre-merger intergroup status relationship would have particular significance in identifying how an identity threat may be felt, and in predicting how the new category will be developed and defined.

3.2   Group Status: The Importance of the Pre-Merger Group's Value

As a consequence of the motivation to achieve a positively distinct identity, people are motivated to belong to groups that can afford this. Because membership to high-status groups offers a greater opportunity to compare favourably to other groups, one way to achieve a positive sense of self should be to gain or maintain membership with relatively higher status groups (Tajfel 1974; 1975). On the flip side of the coin, membership to low-status groups should be particularly identity threatening, as a direct comparison with a high-status group is likely to result in a negative comparison, and therefore membership to high status groups is considered more attractive than membership to low-status groups (Ellemers, Doosje, van Knippenberg & Wilke 1992). The relative negative association that comes from belonging to low status groups has been labelled value threat (Branscombe et al. 1999), and psychological reactions of people who come from or are placed in low status groups are well documented.

For example, Ellemers et al. (1993) specifically examined how members of low status groups will react to their social disadvantage. Consistent with Social Identity

Theory, they found that participants who were experimentally assigned to a low status group used different strategies depending on the context to achieve a favourable identity. In other words, when faced with a negative or threatened identity, participants sought psychological alternatives to avoid the unfavourable comparison, or initiated a change in the status relationship.

More recent work on the merging of organisations unequal in status by Terry and colleagues has yielded similar results. In one field study on the merger of a low status local hospital with a high status metropolitan hospital, the threat associated with the increased salience of the local hospital's relatively lower status was related to ingroup favouritism on status irrelevant dimensions for the employees of the low status hospital (Terry & Callan 1998). This attempt to bring a positive sense of identity to a negative comparison with a high status group has been replicated in the analysis of a merger between a low status and a high status scientific organisation (Terry & O'Brien 2001).

However, while there has been much focus theoretically and empirically on the reactions of low status groups to a negative or threatened identity (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Ellemers et al. 1993; Ellemers & Barreto 2000; Bettencourt et al. 2001), another important way in which a group's value can be threatened is if a group faces a potential loss of identity.

Status differences have previously been found to cause increased bias for high status groups when relations are unstable between groups as high status group are motivated to protect their status when changes in status relations are likely (Ellemers 1993). This has also received some support in an experimental study on mergers by Haunschild et al. (1994) who found that high status members were less enthusiastic about merging with low status groups, presumably because they didn't want to relinquish the positive distinctiveness of their pre-merger identity. In their explanation for this Haunschild et al. (1994) state:

> *"A successful business merger requires workers to abandon their old social identities and accept new ones. However, this identity shift can threaten the self-esteem of workers who believe that the new group will be inferior to the old one"* (p. 1167).

In a merger where the two groups are rarely equal in status, we would expect that each group would bring their own motivations into the new group, and the potential for a high status group to lose its positive distinctiveness would result in higher levels of positive distinctiveness threat related to the merger. This willingness for high-status group members to stick by their groups and defend it receives empirical support illustrating how members of high status groups are more likely to identify more strongly with their group and seek status protection strategies when their group's status position is threatened (Ellemers et al. 1993; Ellemers, van Knippenberg & Wilke 1990; Ellemers et al. 1992). Therefore, in a merger we would expect the high status group to fulfil its functions of protecting the social identity of its members to the degree that it manages to maintain its positively valued distinctiveness.

3.3   Continuation: Identifying with the New Category

To overcome issues of identity threat associated with the loss of identity that a merger implies, van Leeuwen et al. (2003) made the prediction that some mergers may benefit from the continuation of pre-merger identities in the new organisation. In two studies they found that continuation of identity strengthened the positive relationship between pre-merger identification and identification with the newly merged group.

The sense that a continuation of identity may be able to reduce the negative effects related to a potential loss of identity through a merger was also examined in two organisational mergers where one organisation was clearly the dominant group in the new organisation (van Knippenberg et al. 2002). Results illustrated that pre-merger and post-merger identification were more positively related for members of the dominant as opposed to the dominated organisations, suggesting that the organisation that comes to define the new group, perhaps as an extension of their past identity, is more likely to identify with the new category.

A similar finding was obtained by Terry et al. (2001) who found that when a low status domestic airline was acquired by a high status international airline it was the employees of the high status airline who perceived the most positive outcomes and greater identification with the merged airline. These results highlight how the proposed

continuation of identity into a new category may be an important factor in reducing the threat that a potential loss of identity may have for group members.

However while theoretically identifying with a superordinate category suggests the embracement of its constituents and positive intergroup relations (Turner et al. 1987; Gaertner et al. 2000), there are numerous examples where this is not the case. For example, Turkey's bid to join the European Union has drawn comment from the Catholic Church in Rome, who maintain that Europe should be considered a cultural and not a geographical location thus justifying the exclusion of Turkey from Europe. One plausible explanation for the Churches' response may be that the Church may maintain a perceived "ownership" over Europe's cultural and religious heritage, thus Turkey's difference on these dimensions may threaten the continual leadership position of the Catholic Church in defining "New Europe's" cultural agenda. Therefore, while the Catholic Church in Rome may identify highly with what it means to be European, it may also discriminate against other groups in that category that it feels threatens its positively distinct role in defining Europe.

However, the evidence for this motivation to interpret a new group in terms of a past group as an identity enhancement or protection strategy is rather indirect. Namely the results from the above three studies that found that the high status and dominant groups who entered the mergers not only had higher identification with the new category, but they also displayed greater levels of ingroup bias at the subordinate level. Therefore, while the perceived continuation of identity may reduce identity threat related to the change, it may also cause subgroup discrimination if a pre-merger subgroup is motivated or able too claim the new category as "theirs".

It is thus suggested that the motivation to preserve and continue one's positively distinct pre-merger group will be an important determinant in the adoption and strength of the post-merger-common-identity. Therefore group members that come from a high status group will be more likely to identify with the new category as way of continuing their identity.

3.4 Defining the New Category: The Case for Projection

The consequences for claiming ownership of a category has strong connections with the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummundey & Wenzel 1999), which proposes that intergroup discrimination can be based on the projection of ingroup attributes onto a more

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inclusive group encompassing both ingroup and a relevant outgroup(s). The projected attributes on the more inclusive category thus acts as a standard to judge the outgroup, and if the outgroup deviates from this standard then it legitimises discrimination of the outgroup. Evidence for this receives support from studies in realistic intergroup contexts, where proponents of the Ingroup Projection Model have shown that when a subgroup views itself as more prototypical of a more inclusive category in relation to a comparison outgroup, their claim for relative prototypicality is positively related with negative outgroup attitudes (Waldzus et al. 2003; Waldzus et al. 2005).

However, while the projection literature has examined projection from an ingroup onto a relatively stable more inclusive psychological category, the present research study is the only one to my knowledge that has explicitly investigated the concept of projection in the unstable nature of the creation of a new category through a merger.

Extending this analysis, it is proposed that the potential loss of a positively distinct subgroup identity implied by a merger will motivate group members to impose their pre-merger identity on the new group as an identity protection or enhancement strategy. Evidence that projection can be an action taken by group members to defend or enhance their social identity can be seen in the results found in studies that group members who identify strongly with their subgroups are more likely to project than participants who don't identify with their ingroup (Wenzel 2001). The previous study added empirical support to this assumption by replicating this result, and also found more direct evidence through the finding that participants who feared that they would lose what made their pre-merger group distinctive and valuable, were more likely to project their pre-merger identity onto the newly created merged group.

Importantly though, the present study predicts that this motivation will be based on further pre-merger identity concerns such as a pre-merger group's relative status. As members of high status groups have been shown to have greater identification with their groups (Ellemers 1993), and identification is associated with behaviour congruent with group preservation, members of high status groups should be threatened most by a merger and respond to it through group-based protection strategies. This should be particularly relevant when the status dimensions are built around task competence as is typical for minimal-style groups (Doosje et al. 1995; Haunschild et al. 1994), as it is logical to expect

that a group would be less willing to relinquish an identity built on performance based criteria if it believed itself to be "better" than the merging partner.

Therefore the identity-defining qualities of status may play themselves out in the re-categorisation where members of the pre-merger high status group may feel they have a greater ideological claim over how the new category is represented. This sense of "ownership" of the new category may then be displayed in the form of ingroup favouring strategies or subgroup discrimination as members of the pre-merger high-status group attempt to assert their relative power and influence in the definition of the new category. Evidence for the subgroup bias when a superordinate category is made salient has received empirical support in the ingroup projection literature (Waldzus et al. 2005), and by Hornsey and Hogg (2000a), who found that when students from perceived low and high status subgroup faculties at a university were categorised at the superordinate level (University of Queensland), it was members of the high status group who showed the most subgroup bias.

3.5   Study 2

Hypotheses

The first objective of Study 2 was to investigate the extent to which value and distinctiveness threat could be considered as two separate variables (the distinctiveness hypothesis: Branscombe et al. 1999) or one variable (positive distinctiveness: Tajfel & Turner 1979). Following the results from the first study that suggested that the content and context of a social identity threat may derive much of their meaning from their relationship with each other, it was predicted that value and distinctiveness threat would combine to form one factor of threat labelled positive distinctiveness threat (Hypothesis 1).

Further, research suggests that the loss, or potential loss, of identity should be particularly identity threatening for members of highly valued groups (Tajfel 1975; Ellemers et al. 1993). Through the addition of value as a status manipulation, where the ingroups would be informed that compared to the outgroup that they performed either relatively well (high status) or relatively poorly (low status), it was predicted that participants who come from a pre-merger high status group and experienced a merger with a low-status group to exhibit the highest amounts of positive distinctiveness threat (Hypothesis 2).

Concerning the motivational reactions to a positive distinctiveness threat, it is further suggested that the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) may operate as a social identity management strategy for members of high status groups who face a social identity threat identity. Thus viewing ingroup projection as a dynamic process that reflects identity concerns, a further aim of the present study was to see if a threat related to the possible loss of a positively distinct identity would motivate participants to maintain and enhance their subgroup identity by imposing it on the new group in the form of ingroup projection. Following from Hypothesis 2, it was thus predicted that the relationship between participants who came from a high status pre-merger group and ingroup projection would be mediated by positive distinctiveness threat (Hypothesis 3).

Additionally, research has previously shown the negative consequences of ingroup projection for intergroup relations, namely the positive relationship between perceiving a more inclusive category as relative prototypical of an ingroup's distinctive attributes and negative outgroup attitudes (Waldzus et al. 2003; Waldzus et al. 2005). It is thus predicted that ingroup projection will be positively related to ingroup favouritism (Hypothesis 4).

Method

Participants and Design

The sample comprised 22 males and 50 females with an age range from 18 to 52 years ($M = 23.6$ years, $SD = 7.39$ years). Participants either worked in the Research School of Social Sciences (RSSS) or were enrolled in first year psychology at the Australian National University. The RSSS employees took part voluntarily, while the first year students took part in return for partial course credit.

The experiment consisted of a 2 (change: merger vs. non-merger) x 2 (status: high status x low status) factorial design with random allocation of participants to conditions. Both variables were manipulated between subjects.

Procedure

The same basic paradigm as in Study 1 was used. On arrival at the laboratory, participants were seated into isolated cubicles in front of personal computers. The experimenter explained that the study would be conducted "on-line" and that participants would have the opportunity in the experiment to communicate with other participants via an e-mail program on the network. Participants were again informed that there was another

experimenter in charge of another laboratory, and that all participants in both laboratories would be connected to the same network and would be working on the same tasks. Participants were informed that further instructions would be displayed on the computer screen, and that they could answer any questions that appeared with the keyboard or mouse.

Categorisation

The cover story was the same as in Study 1. Participants were informed that the study aimed to investigate how different groups approach certain types of tasks. The first part of the study asked participants to complete two bogus association style tests which were identical to the ones used in the first study. For the first association test participants were asked to select from four words the one that they felt best matched a key word that was presented, while the second association test required participants to indicate which word or picture best matched a picture that was presented. Participants were then informed that they belonged to one of two groups based on there results from the association tests, the inductive thinkers or the deductive thinkers. In reality, all participants were assigned to the inductive thinkers.

However, in this second study participants were no longer asked to write a short paragraph justifying why they thought they were inductive thinkers. Because of the introduction of the manipulation of value in this study, it was decided to drop the categorisation justifications. This is because it was unsure from Study 1 whether or not participants had added value through the categorisation justifications in order to provide some form of meaning to the categories inductive and deductive thinkers. As this explanation cannot be discounted and an aim of the present study was to control the perceived status and value of the categories, it was decided that the bogus association tests would be sufficient to lead participants to think that they were a member of one of two groups.

As in Study 1, participants had the opportunity to send an e-mail greeting to the other inductive thinkers in their group to increase the salience and reality of the inductive thinkers group. After sending a greeting all participants received the same five messages back from other inductive thinkers, which were in fact messages that the experimenter had pre-programmed. While participants were not told how many inductive thinkers there were, they were informed the there generally tends to be an equal number of inductive and

deductive thinkers and that there is usually an equal split of males and females in each group.

Participants were then informed that each group would be represented by a coloured symbol that would be displayed on the top right corner of their computer screens. The inductive thinkers would be represented by a blue symbol while the deductive thinkers would be represented by a red symbol.

Group Tasks

The first brainstorming exercise was then introduced to participants. Both brainstorming exercises used in the second study were the same as the exercises used in the Study 1. The first brainstorming exercises asked participants to develop five possible solutions that could help a farmer whose farm had been affected by a drought using a series of materials (eg. wood, electrical equipment, piping) supplied by the experiment. Participants were informed that all suggestions their group made would be stored in an inductive thinkers' file, and that they would be provided with some feedback as to how the inductive thinkers' performed on the brainstorming task in relation to deductive thinkers at a later stage of the experiment.

The second brainstorming exercise was similar to the first except instead of facing drought, the farm had suffered severe flooding, and using the same materials from the first task participants were asked to develop solutions that would contribute to their group's folder on how the farmer could best deal with the flooding.

Independent Variables

Value. Value was manipulated by means of false feedback from the experimenter. After participants had completed the first farmer's task, participants were told that the experimenters would send them some preliminary results on their group's performance as soon as they could. Once participants had answered these questions, they were told an experimenter would send them an e-mail with their group's results as soon as the results had been calculated. No explanation was given as to how the results would be calculated. All participants then received one pre-programmed response from the experimenter. The false feedback in the <u>low status</u> condition stated the following:

Hello participant A132. Our data tells us that you are an inductive thinker. Unfortunately when ranked, the inductive thinker's solutions to the first farming task did not score as highly as the deductive thinkers. This is consistent with previous research that tells us that deductive thinkers nearly always out perform inductive thinkers on these type of problem solving tasks. We assume this is because people who belong to the two groups have different ways of approaching these types of problems, and deductive thinkers are just cognitively better suited to providing solutions to these problems or tasks. Good luck on the next task.

While the false feedback for the <u>high status</u> condition said:

Hello participant A132. Our data tells us that you are an inductive thinker. Fortunately when ranked, the inductive thinker's solutions to the first farming task scored more highly than the deductive thinkers. This is consistent with previous research that tells us that inductive thinkers nearly always out perform deductive thinkers on these type of problem solving tasks. We assume this is because people who belong to the two groups have different ways of approaching these types of problems, and inductive thinkers are just cognitively better suited to providing solutions to these problems or tasks. Good luck on the next task.

Change. The procedure for manipulating change for the second study was comparable to the first. In both conditions, participants were informed after the false value feedback that there was one more task to be completed before they met the other inductive thinkers to discuss the inductive thinker's suggestions to the farmer's tasks. As in the first study there was a <u>non-merger condition</u>, where after the false value feedback had been provided participants were asked to complete the second farmer's task in the same group that they completed the first farmer's task in (the inductive thinkers). In the <u>merger condition</u>, the participants were informed after the false value feedback that while there was one more task to be completed, based on some preliminary results the experimenters were going to force a change to their groups composition. The specific instructions were the same as in Study 1 and participants were informed that the new category would be referred

to as the global thinkers and it would consist of an equal representation of inductive and deductive thinkers. The merger was simulated on the participants' computer screens by merging the inductive and deductive thinker's blue and red symbols into one purple symbol.

Dependent Variables

Manipulation Checks. The first manipulation check was designed to assess whether or not participants had felt that the inductive thinkers were either a positively valued group, or a negatively valued group when compared to deductive thinkers. A single item measure was used that asked participants the extent to which they strongly agreed (1) or strongly disagreed (7) with the following statement: "Inductive thinkers are better suited to the types of tasks used in the experiment than the deductive thinkers are".

The second manipulation check was designed to assess whether or not participants had felt that the inductive thinkers had experienced a change to their group membership before the second farmer's task was introduced. The same single item measure from the first study was used asking participant's to indicate on a seven-point scale the extent to which they saw the groups in the experiment after the second task as one group (1) of two groups (7).

Social Identity Threat. Using Branscombe et al. (1999) classification scheme of social identity threat and the results of the original items from study one, I redeveloped the series of questions intended to measure the three proposed distinct types of threat: distinctiveness threat; value threat; and categorisation threat. All ratings were made on seven-point scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). One difference for all questions used to measure identity threat in the second study from the first, is that in the second study all questions referred to the completion of the second farmer's task instead of the second task. This was designed to make it clearer to participants exactly what task the questions were referring to.

Categorisation threat was measured by the same four items from Study 1 that assessed whether or not participants felt they had been categorised in the wrong group for the second task.

Value threat was measured by four items assessing whether participants felt the inductive thinkers value had been undermined by completing the second task. Three of the

items were comparable with those used in the first study, ("The way the second farmer's task was set up, inductive thinkers could not shine as much as in the earlier task", "I fear the way the second farmer's task was set up, the inductive thinkers' contribution may have been undermined task" and "I felt the inductive thinkers should have had more of an opportunity to show how valuable their approach to problem solving is in the second farmer's task"). The reverse coded measure from the first task ("I felt the last task allowed the inductive thinkers to illustrate their true worth to problem solving") was replaced with a new un-reversed item designed to improve the overall reliability of the scale ("I fear the way the second farmer's task was set up, the inductive thinkers contribution may have been undermined").

Distinctiveness threat was measured by four items assessing whether participants felt that the inductive thinker's distinctiveness as a group had been compromised by the completion of the second task. Two items were replicated from the first study ("For the second farmer's task I am afraid inductive thinkers were made indistinguishable from deductive thinkers", "and "I fear that the second farmer's task did not allow inductive thinkers to display their distinct qualities"), while the other two items (the first and third items) were created and added to this second study to produce a more reliable measure of distinctiveness threat ("I feel that compared to the second farmer's task, the first farmer's task enabled the inductive thinkers to stand out more" and "I'm afraid there may be some confusion when distinguishing inductive and deductive thinkers solutions to the second farmer's task").

Perceived Prototypicality. How typical participants saw inductive thinkers of either the merged or superordinate category of global thinkers was measured using four items (1 = Strongly disagree, 7 = Strongly agree). Three items were taken from the first study "Inductive thinkers are typical global thinkers", "Global thinkers are best represented by inductive thinkers", and "Compared to deductive thinkers, inductive thinkers best represent what it means to be a global thinker". A new measure was created to replace the reverse coded item from the first study, "The global thinkers are basically a reflection of who the inductive thinkers are". The reliability was sufficient ($\alpha = .79$), and scores were averaged across all items to build a measure for prototypicality.

Ingroup Favouritism. Ingroup favouritism was assessed by measuring attitudes towards members of the inductive and deductive thinkers after the second task had been

completed with the same four items from Study 1. An overall measure of ingroup favouritism was computed by subtracting for each item the outgroup attitudes from the ingroup attitudes, and averaging the resulting four favouring measures into one scale (α = .84). The result is a measure on which higher (more positive scores) indicates greater ingroup favouritism.

Results

Prior to analysis all data was checked for missing values, accuracy of data entry and the assumptions of multivariate analysis. No data was missing and all assumptions were met.

Manipulation Checks

Value. After the assumptions of an analysis of variance were checked, a 2 (change: merger vs. no-merger) x 2 (value: high status vs. low status) between groups ANOVA was performed with the manipulation check as the dependent variable. The results revealed that there was no significant effect of value on the manipulation check $F (1,68) = 0.71 > .05$. Implications of this result are investigated in the discussion.

Change. After the assumptions of an analysis of variance were checked, a 2 (change: merger vs. no-merger) x 2 (value: high status vs. low status) between groups ANOVA was performed with the manipulation check as the dependent variable. The results revealed that there was no significant effect of change on the manipulation check $F (1,68) = 1.92 > .05$. Implications of this result are investigated in the discussion.

Social Identity Threat

Once the reverse-coded categorisation threat measures had been re-coded a principal components analysis with varimax rotation was performed on all threat items to see if there were three distinct types of identity threat, or whether value and distinctiveness threat would again load on the same component. Data from all 72 participants was used. The assumptions for a principal component's analysis were met, with Kaiser's test of sampling adequacy (*KMO* = .668) greater than the required .6, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < .05$). Kaiser's criterion (eigenvalues > 1) suggested the extraction of three principal components (component loadings can be seen in *Table 3*). The three components accounted for 65.7% of the variance.

Table 1: Component Loadings for Identity Threat

Item	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Distinctiveness Threat 1			.68
Distinctiveness Threat 2	.62		
Distinctiveness Threat 3			.59
Distinctiveness Threat 4	.66		
Value Threat 1	.75		
Value Threat 2	.84		
Value Threat 3	.84		
Value Threat 4	.81		
Categorisation Threat 1	.53	.56	
Categorisation Threat 2 ®		.64	
Categorisation Threat 3		.80	
Categorisation Threat 4 ®		.78	-.48

Note: Component scores under .4 not displayed

As can be seen from *Table 1*, the data did not support the claim for the three proposed constructs of identity threat outlined by Branscombe et al. (1999). The first component loaded on items intended to measure both distinctiveness and value threat with the exceptions of the new distinctiveness threat items, and explained 37.5% of the variance. As in the first study, this is consistent with Tajfel & Turner's (1986) suggestion that individuals not only strive to achieve a positive social identity, but it must also be *positively differentiated* or distinct from the relevant outgroup. As in the first study, this first component was interpreted as positive distinctiveness threat. A measure for positive distinctiveness threat was then created with the items that loaded on the first component, with the exception of the categorisation threat item. This created a sufficient reliability (α=0.86) and a measure for positive distinctiveness threat was obtained by averaging across items.

The second component loaded highly on the four measures related to categorisation threat. This second component was interpreted as categorisation threat and explained 15.4% of the variance. The reliability was sufficient (α=.72) so a measure was built by averaging across items.

The third component loaded positively on the two distinctiveness threat items that did not load on the positive distinctiveness threat component, and negatively on the fourth categorisation threat item. It explained 12.8% of the variance but was left out of further analysis due to insufficient reliability.

Effect of Change and Pre-Merger Status on Categorisation Threat

To account for any effects that categorisation threat may have on the present analysis a hierarchical regression model was applied with categorisation threat as the dependent variable. The predictor variables change and value were included in the first step of the regression, while the product term of change and value was included in the second step. Following Aiken and West (1991), the component variables of the interaction were first centred before multiplying them to create the interaction term. The results illustrated no significant predictors of categorisation threat in either step, and the full model did not significantly predict categorisation threat (F (3, 68) = 0.68, p > .05). Categorisation threat was thus left out of further analysis.

Effect of Change and Pre-Merger Status on Positive Distinctiveness Threat

To test Hypothesis 2, namely that change and value would interact in their effect on positive distinctiveness threat, a hierarchical regression model was run with positive distinctiveness threat as the dependent variable. The predictor variables change and value were included in the first step of the regression, while the product term of change and identification was included in the second step. Both variables in the interaction term (change and value) were first centred before building the product term to avoid problems of multi-collinearity. *Table 2* displays the unstandardised regression coefficients (*B),* the standard error of the unstandardised regression coefficients (*SBE*), the standardised regression coefficients (β) and adjusted R^2 after entry of the regression model which included the independent variables change and value in the first step, and the second step included the addition of the centred interaction term of change and value to the prediction of positive distinctiveness threat. *Table 3* displays the correlations for all variables used in the following regression analysis, and this can be seen at the end of the results section..

Table 2: Hierarchical Regression for Positive Distinctiveness Threat

| | Step One | | | Step Two | | |
Predictor	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Change	.41	.11	.38***	.40	.11	.37***
Value	.35	.11	.32**	.34	.11	.32*
Change X Value				.22	.11	.21*
(Constant)	3.86	.11		3.86	.11	
adjR^2	.22***			.26**		
adjΔR^2	.25***			.04**		
ΔF	11.22***			4.00**		
df	2,69			3,68		

^{t} = $p < .1$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

As can be seen from *Table 2*, the interaction term explained an increased amount of variance in explaining positive distinctiveness threat with adj ΔR^2 = .04, ΔF (1,68) = 4.00, p < .05 and will thus concentrate on this model. The results from the second step of the analysis showed there were significant effects for change (β = .37, t = 3.62, p = .001) and value (β = .32, t = 3.09, p = .003). The effect of change indicated that participants who experienced a merger were more likely to feel a positive distinctiveness threat, while the effect of value indicated that participants who came from a high status group were also more likely to feel a positive distinctiveness threat. Importantly this was qualified by a significant interaction between value and change (β = .21, t = 2.00, p = .049) which can be seen in *Figure 1*.
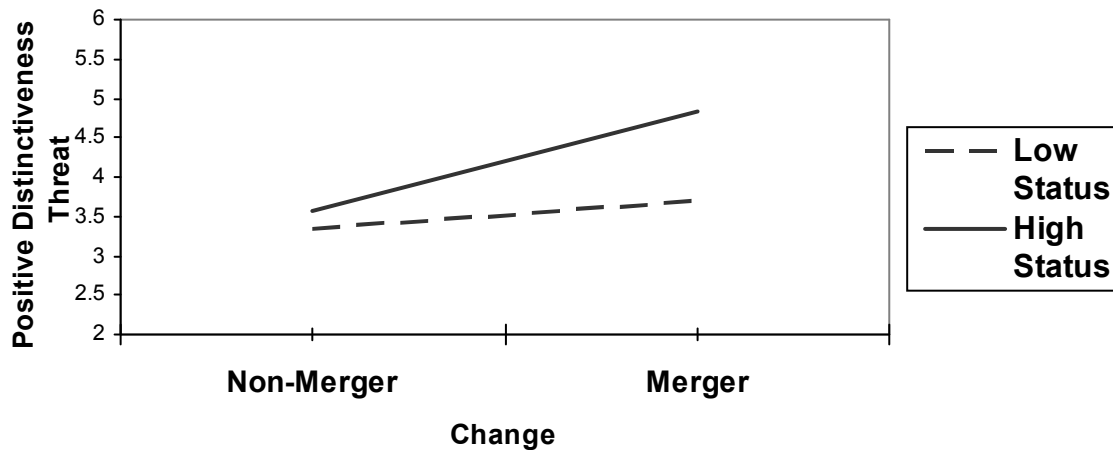
Figure 1: Interaction for Change and Value on Positive Distinctiveness Threat

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations for Change and Value Contrast on Positive Distinctiveness Threat

	Value			
Change	Negative		Positive	
	M	SD	M	SD
Non-merger	3.33	1.20	3.57	.95
Merger	3.69	.78	4.83	.79

Planned comparisons were conducted to analyse the meaning of the interaction. To investigate the interaction and test Hypothesis 2, namely that for participants who experience a change to their group membership it is those that come from a positively valued group that will feel greater positive distinctiveness threat in comparison to those participants who come from a negatively valued group, a planned simple effects analysis was run. Separate ANOVAs were run for both merger and non-merger conditions, while the mean differences between low and high value in these separate conditions were examined. The results revealed that participants who experienced a change to there group membership and came from a positively valued group were significantly more likely *(F* (1, 34) = 25.03, *p* < .001) to feel a positive distinctiveness threat (*M* = 4.83, *SD* = 0.79) than participants who came from a negatively valued group (*M* = 3.69, *SD* = 0.78). There were no significant differences of perceptions of positive distinctiveness threat in the non-merger

condition between participant's who belonged to a negative or positive valued group $(F (1, 34) = .56, p > .05)$.

Ingroup Projection as a Response for High Status Group Members in a Merger

In order to assess whether the addition of value to the model would have an effect on the mediation paths predicting perceived prototypicality and ingroup favouritism from Study 1, similar regression analysis to those used in Study 1 were replicated with the addition of the categorical variable value. In order to see if positive distinctiveness threat mediated the relationship between the interaction term of change and value, and perceived prototypicality, the first step needed was to show that participants in the change by value condition would feel a positive distinctiveness threat. This analysis has already been run, and the results can be seen in *Table 3*.

The second link that needed to be verified was whether there was a total effect between the interaction term of change and value with perceived prototypicality. The third link that needed to be verified was whether positive distinctiveness threat (the proposed mediator) was significantly related to perceived prototypicality. To investigate these, a hierarchical regression was run with change, value and the centred interaction term of change and value in the first step, and the second step included the addition of positive distinctiveness to the prediction of perceived prototypicality. *Table 5* displays the results from the regression.

As can be seen from *Table 5* the first model explains 2% of the variance in perceived prototypicality, with the change/value interaction having no significant total effect on perceived prototypicality and thus not supporting predictions. Entering positive distinctiveness into step two is seen to explain an increased amount of variance in perceived prototypicality (5%) which represents a marginally significant increase with adj $\Delta R^2 = .06$, $\Delta F (4,67) = 3.56$, p < .1. As there was a marginally significant effect of positive distinctiveness threat on perceived prototypicality ($\beta=.26$, $t = 1.9$, $p < .064$), the Sobel test was used to see if there was an indirect effect from the change/value interaction on perceived prototypicailty through positive distinctiveness threat. No significant effect was found ($z = 1.45$ p, < 1.96).

Table 5: *Hierarchical Regression for Variables Predicting Perceived Prototypicality*

Predictor	Step One			Step Two		
	B	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Change	.08	.10	.09	-.00	.10	-.00
Value	.02	.10	.22 [t]	.11	.10	-.14
Change X Value	.04	.10	.08	.02	.10	.02
PD Threat				.20	.10	.26 [t]
(Constant)	4.80	.10		3.28	.11	
adjR^2	.02			.06 [t]		
adjΔR^2	.06			.05 [t]		
ΔF	2.52			3.56 [t]		
df	3,68			4,67		

[t] $= p < .1$, * $= p < .05$, ** $= p < .01$, *** $= p < .001$

However, there is evidence to suggest that value as a main effect showed a non-significant trend in predicting perceived prototypicality (β=.22, $t = 1.8$, $p < .1$). It was thus decided that as there was also a positive relationship between value and positive distinctiveness threat (β = .32, $t = 3.09$, $p = .003$, *Table 2*), that it would be worth while to continue the analysis by examining the proposed mediation with the substitution of the change/value interaction with the value main effect.

The final step of the revised mediation model that needed to be to be verified was whether positive distinctiveness threat (the proposed mediator) was significantly related to perceived prototypicality. This link has already been established, and as can be seen from the second model in *Table 5*, when positive distinctiveness threat is added to the prediction

of perceived prototypicality a non-significant trend was found for positive distinctiveness threat in predicting perceived prototypicality (β=.26, *t* = 1.9, *p* < .064), while value no longer shows a non-significant trend in predicting perceived prototypicality (β= -.14, *t* = 1.1, *p* > .1). This shows partial support for the revised mediational analysis and the prediction that ingroup projection is one strategy available to people who experience a form of social identity threat. A path analysis of these above effects can be seen in *Figure 2*.
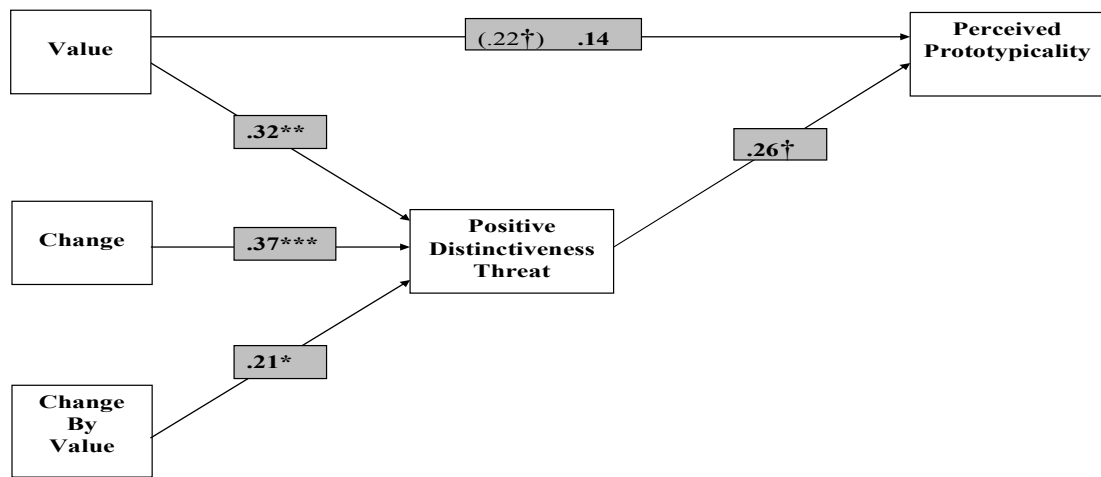

Figure 2: Path analysis of the mediation effect of positive distinctiveness threat between Value and Perceived Prototypicality

t = *p* < .1, * = *p* < .05, ** = *p* < .01, *** = *p* < .001

Although the second and third steps in the present mediational analysis did not reach conventional levels of significance (*p* <.05), as I am testing the development of a model investigating the relationship between the formation of a new category, identity threat and relative prototypically, it was thought that it is justifiable and appropriate to show the non-significant trends in the above mediational analysis that are consistent with the model outlined in Study 1. A post-hoc analysis of these findings and implications for the validity of this model is raised in the discussion.

Ingroup Favouritism

The last part of the model was to see if relative prototypicality added to the prediction of ingroup favouritism. To investigate these, a hierarchical regression was run

with change, value, the interaction term of change and value, and positive distinctiveness in the first step, and the second step included the addition of relative prototypicality to the prediction of ingroup favouritism. *Table 6* displays the results from the regression.

Table 6: Hierarchical Regression for Variables Predicting Ingroup Favouritism

Predictor	Step One			Step Two		
	B	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Change	.16	.17	.12	.17	.16	.12
Value	.45	.17	.33*	.38	.10	.28*
Change X Value	.13	.16	.10	.12	.15	.09
PD Threat	-.17	.17	-.13	-.29	.16	-.23 [t]
Perceived Prototypicality				.62	.19	.38**
(Constant)	.67	.68		-1.38	.89	
adjR^2	.05			.17**		
adjΔR^2	.11			.13**		
ΔF	1.99			10.88**		
df	4,67			5,66		

[t]$= p < .1$, * $= p < .05$, ** $= p < .01$, *** $= p < .001$

As can be see from *Table 6*, the first model explains 5.0% of the variance in ingroup favouritism, while model two is seen to explain a significant increase in the amount of variance predicting ingroup favouritism (adj $\Delta R^2 = .13$, ΔF (5,66) $= 10.88$, p $< .003$). Value was a significant predictor of ingroup favouritism in both model one (β=.33, $t = 2.66$, $p < .01$), and model two (β=.28, $t = 2.39$, $p < .02$), where participants indicated more ingroup favouritism if they came from a high status pre-merger group as opposed to a low

status pre-merger group.   Supporting Hypothesis 4, in the second model perceived prototypicality was seen to be a significant predictor of ingroup favouritism (β=.38, *t* = 3.30, *p* < .002), while positive distinctiveness threat showed a non-significant negative trend (β= -.23, *t* = -1.75, *p* < .084) similar to the significant negative effects witnessed in Study 1 from positive distinctiveness threat to ingroup favouritism.   One explanation for this is that there is still a suppressor effect that the inclusion of value as a moderator failed to take account of.   Implications of this will be investigated in the discussion.   The full model conducted through the regression analyses outlined above can be seen in *Figure 3*.
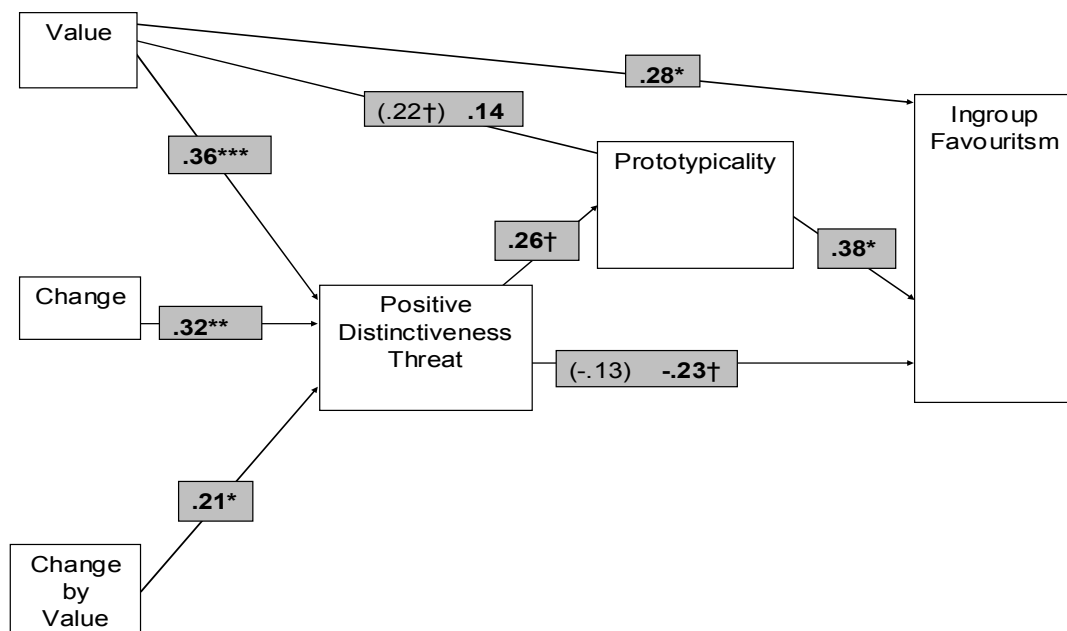

Figure 3: Full Path Model for Variables Predicting Ingroup Favouritism

t = *p* < .1, * = *p* < .05, ** = *p* < .01, *** = *p* < .001

Table 3: Correlation for all Variables used in Study 2

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Change	—					
2. Value	-.00	—				
3. Change X Value	.03	.03	—			
4. Positive Distinctiveness Threat	.38**	.32**	.22 t	—		
5. Categorisation Threat	.12	-.05	.11	.37**	—	
6. Perceived Prototypicality	.10	-.22†	.09	.31**	.01	—
7. Ingroup Favouritism	.07	.29*	.08	.04	-.01	.39***

t = $p < .1$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

3.6 Discussion

Manipulation Checks

The manipulation checks for change and value were not affected by the manipulations. However, as in Study 1 the merger appeared to have psychological significance for participants as it revealed a strong relationship with positive distinctiveness threat and so it was concluded that the manipulation did create a sense of change for participants. Additionally, the manipulation of value appeared to hold psychological significance for participants, as it predicted identity threat for participants, a result that is consistent with previous theoretical work (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It was thus decided that the manipulations had the desired experimental effect in Study 2. However, as a similar experimental paradigm was planned for Study 3 the manipulation checks would need to be reconsidered for this analysis to more accurately monitor the proposed effects of the manipulations.

Positive Distinctiveness Threat

On the basis Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979) and Branscombe et al's. (1999) conceptualisation of social identity threat, it is possible to come up with two competing hypotheses regarding the conceptualisation of distinctiveness and value threat. While Branscombe et al. (1999) propose that the value and distinctiveness of a group's identity can be split up and dealt with as separate theoretical construct's, Social Identity

Theory argues that people are motivated to preserve a distinctive identity as long as it is positively valued (Tajfel 1975).

The results from the present study supports the conceptualisation of value and distinctiveness threat as identity relevant processes that derive much of their significance from their relationship with each other. As in Study 1, the items designed to measure distinctiveness and value threat as two separate constructs loaded on the same component which was again referred to as a positive distinctiveness threat. The results suggest that the typology separating value and distinctiveness threat into two separate constructs may need to reconsider the relationship that these two assumed variables have with each other. For example, it may be the case that in situations where a group feels that its distinctiveness as a group is under threat such as in a merger, group members may also feel a value threat as far as the group's distinctiveness represented something valued and positive about their group.

In some ways this argument draws parallels with social identity based research conducted on the formation and explanation of stereotypes. The Social Identity Approach to stereotype formation argues that one important way in which stereotypes can be constructed is as a result of social comparison (Spears 2002; Doosje, Haslam, Oakes, Spears & Koomen 1999; Haslam, Turner, Oakes, Mcgarty & Hayes 1992). Arguing that stereotyping often involves evaluative differentiation, Spears (2002) provides evidence illustrating how people will differentiate their ingroup on characteristics representative of stereotypes that positively differentiate their group from the comparison outgroup. If stereotypes thus represent valued and meaningful processes related to a person's social identity, and stereotypes are formed through perceived differences with a comparison outgroup, then it seems logical that people would also form perceptions of threat related to the meaningful content of their identity through their group's perceived distinctiveness from a comparison outgroup.

However, while the results showed no evidence for the distinctiveness motive, this is not to say that there are some circumstances where it exists. For example, as Ellemers et al. (2002) conceptualise the distinctiveness hypothesis in terms of sacrificing ingroup superiority (or acknowledging outgroup superiority) for a distinctive identity per se, it may be that this hypothesis holds for strongly committed members of real life groups. As minimal groups typically show less commitment than real life groups, and the

distinctiveness motive maintains that it is for those strongly committed members that it may hold, this motive requires further testing with highly salient real world groups. This may explain Mlicki and Ellemers (1996) results where Polish students highlighted distinctive national attributes at the expense of positive attributes when making comparisons with relative high status Dutch students. However, it could also be that the Polish students achieved meaning and value through other processes than relative ingroup superiority, such as social creativity strategies outlined by Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979). Thus, while the present analysis has provided evidence in minimal style groups for the combination of value and distinctiveness threat into one variable, further testing of the conditions and motivations through which the distinctiveness hypothesis is said to operate is required.

The Addition of Value

Concentrating on the causes of a positive distinctiveness threat for participants in the present experiment, as predicted the threat stemming from a potential loss of identity represented by the merger achieved much of its significance for those participants who came from a positively valued subgroup. Participants were thus relatively unthreatened by the loss of identity implied by the merger when they came from a subgroup that held little value for them. This result is consistent with Haunschild et al's. (1994) analysis of mergers, where it was found in experimental dyads that members of high status dyads illustrated the most negative reactions when high status and low status dyads merged to form single groups.

Balancing this with findings from realistic studies investigating the effects of pre-merger subgroup status in predicting ingroup bias following an organisational merger, it appears that the two methodologies may produce contradictory results. For example, Terry and Callan's (1998) study investigating the merger between a low-status teaching hospital and a high status local hospital found the highest levels of threat related to ingroup bias among employees of the low status hospital.

However, while on the face of it this result may contradict my findings, it is believed that it actually provides consistent support that it is those groups who face a potential loss of a valued identity who experience the most threat. For example, in the merger of the hospitals it was the low status hospital that was going to have to relinquish

how it ran personnel and patient-related activities (both identity relevant features) to the high status hospital, and more generally it would have to change to meet the needs of the high status hospital. Thus while the high status hospital had the opportunity to continue its identity in the new category, employee's of the low status hospital faced the threat that identity relevant features of their workplace would not be continued in the merged hospital.

The ability or conditions that contribute to a subgroup maintaining or continuing its identity in a new or more inclusive category has also been seen to be positively related to acceptance of the new group. Hornsey and Hogg (2002) illustrate the benefits of subgroup distinctiveness in a more inclusive category that captures both groups, and thus adds to research that had previously focused on ignoring subgroup boundaries in a more inclusive category to reduce intergroup discrimination (Gaertner et al. 2000). Further research investigating the continuation of identity in a newly merged category has illustrated similar outcomes, where it has been found that the continuation of pre-merger identity is related to identification with the newly merged group (van Leeuwen et al. 2003), and that identification with the new category is related to a pre-merger subgroup dominating and thus defining the newly merged group (van Knippenberg et al. 2002).

Therefore, it is not suggested that low-status groups can not be threatened by a merger. Indeed, there is evidence that low status groups can feel threatened by a negative intergroup comparison (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Ellemers et al. 1993), and by the prospect of merging with a higher status group (Terry & Callan 1998). An example of a low status group facing the potential loss for the continuation of their positively distinct identity may be where a dominant or high status group acquires or absorbs a lower status or minority group, similar to the studies outlined by van Knippenberg and colleagues (2002). In this case, the relative power and influence of the high status group is likely to be realised in terms of the continuation of its values, norms and identity, while the low status group may face the loss of its positively distinct identity related features. Where such a case for a continuation of identity was clearly defined before the merger took place, we would accept greater levels of positive distinctiveness threat with low status group members. However, because the present analysis is focusing on the threat related to a potential loss of identity, and because of the positive sense of self that belonging to a high status groups bring, it is expected that members of high status groups will exhibit greater levels of positive

distinctiveness threat compared to the potential loss of identity for low status groups when no clear post-merger group structure is specified.

Ingroup Projection as an Identity Management Strategy

While previous studies have shown empirical support illustrating how members of high status groups are likely to identify more strongly with their group and seek status protection strategies when their groups status position is threatened (Ellemers et al. 1993; Ellemers et al. 1992), my conceptualisation of ingroup projection (the generalisation of distinctive ingroup identity relevant attributes onto a superordinate category) as an identity management or enhancement strategy received partial support in the present experiment. To begin with, the original hypothesis that change and value would interact in their effects on perceived prototypicality was not supported. It could also be that the salience and competition that the experiment provided for the groups created a situation where participants were motivated to project, regardless of whether they experienced a change or not. However, in support of the prediction that pre-merger group identity concerns would be important in predicting ingroup projection, the addition of value to pre-merger subgroups was a marginally significant predictor of perceived prototypicality for the new group, illustrating that members of the high-status group were more likely to show ingroup projection. An analysis investigating the possible mediation between value and perceived prototypicality by positive distinctiveness threat showed that value ceased to be a marginally significant predictor of ingroup projection when positive distinctiveness threat was included as a mediator. However, a notable strength of the results was that they illustrated a similar pattern to the results from Study 1, replicating the positive relationship between positive distinctiveness threat and ingroup projection.

Consistent with other studies, a positive relationship between ingroup projection and ingroup favouritism was found, a finding that is entirely consistent with and substantiates a core assumption of the ingroup projection model, namely that relative prototypicality is associated with less positive attitudes towards the outgroup (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999). It also illustrates that pre-merger subgroup concerns were still relevant in the new group as the high-status group attempted to promote its pre-merger identity as the prototype for the new category, symbolising that where the groups had come from was important in justifying their new position. This point is further supported by the finding that participants from pre-merger high status groups were also more likely to have higher

ratings of ingroup favouritism. However, as in Study 1 while positive distinctiveness threat had a positive relationship with perceived prototypicality it also has a direct negative effect with ingroup favouritism suggesting possible suppression. While it was argued in Study 1 that the suppression could be due to participants seeing through the cover story and accepting the threat as part of the experiment, the tightening of the experimental explanation in Study 2 does not seem to have had an impact on the negative relationship from positive distinctiveness threat to ingroup favouritism. It was decided for Study 3 to tighten the manipulations and cover story for the experiment once more in order to fully absolve this reasoning as an explanation for the unexpected result.

Thus while the results suggest that one mechanism through which ingroup projection can occur is as a motivated response resulting from a threat to a group's positive distinctiveness, stronger results are required to be able to substantiate this claim. Still, while positive distinctiveness threat was not a highly significant predictor of prototypicality, the results did illustrate a trend that is reflective of results from Study 1 and thus together the two studies offer initial support for this hypothesis.

Following these predictions, the concept of ingroup projection being a process related to strategic identity concerns has also received preliminary support outside the present analysis in a study that manipulated the intergroup context for the ingroup (Waldzus et al. 2005). In this study, the manipulation of different outgroup's (Italians vs. British) for the comparison ingroup (Germans) resulted in the accentuation of different ingroup attributes, as well as the projection of different attributes onto the superordinate category. By adapting their description of attributes to different intergroup focuses of comparison, ingroup members were able maintain their relative ingroup prototypicality of the superordinate category.

Studies have also shown how the representation of the superordinate category can moderate whether or not a group projects its distinctive ingroup attributes onto a more inclusive category (Wenzel et al. 2003; Waldzus et al., 2003), and the present study suggests that the relative status of the group may play a motivating role in this process. However, as a complete understanding of intergroup relations requires an understanding of the motivations and social structural variable that defines a group's place in a given context, it could be that other socio-structural factors related to the intergroup context that were not considered in Study 2 may also affect participants' motivations to project.

Concerning the present experiment, if you accept that groups exist in a socially stratified society, then any negative score or trait that low status groups may have exists primarily as the outcome of a comparison with another group, and the meaning associated with the relative difference or similarity of that comparison. Negativity, or lack of value, and the identity threat associated with it, does not exist as some abstract norm that all groups seek to avoid. It is a consequence of one's groups place in society, and the acceptance of that negativity rests on the legitimacy that one places on the stratified system of social relations that exist in that particular context. Therefore, to the degree that participants see the social structure as legitimate, then they should accept the threat and not illustrate ingroup favouritism or projection.

If participants viewed the merger as legitimate, then any threat they felt for it might be justified as part of the experiment, and thus they would be likely to accept the change and display lower levels of ingroup projection. Thus a focus for Study 3 was to investigate whether perceptions of legitimacy surrounding the change process would moderate participants' social identity and enhancement strategies.

Chapter 4: The Legitimacy of Change: Perception of Voice and its Impact on Ingroup Projection

Thomas Jefferson attempted to define what an independent America would and should be when he inscribed the phase "*all men are created equal*" on the Declaration of Independence in 1776. While the forefathers of America held such "*truths as self-evident*", more than 200 years later the world was reminded by former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin about the inequalities that exist between people based on their membership to social groups. Accepting his Nobel Peace Prize in 1994 he stated that "*a child is born undemocratic: he cannot choose his father, mother, sex, colour or nationality. His fate is given to others to resolve*".

With this statement Rabin highlights the importance of how an individual exists in and as a function of certain social groups. Accordingly, he also illustrates an understanding of how inequalities between social groups brought about by history, resources, politics, violence or other means can provide an important framework in attempting to understand how people can resolve such inequity or discrimination.

And just as social groups consist of diverse people that bring with them their own personal histories and motivations, the formulation of a new group out of one or more subgroups is likely to result in the negotiation or implementation of a new identity that is not merely an average of the different characteristics that defines each subgroup. For example, in 1990 when East and West Germany were reunified after forty-five years of separation it was the wealthier higher status West Germany that set the standards and identity for the new country to develop to. It was these pre-merger differences and perceived inequalities that motivated and to a degree dictated, what form and identity the new country would take.

Taking a Social Identity Approach (Haslam 2001), it is argued in the present analysis that when two-groups merge into one, pre-merger identity features will be relevant in predicting which group will be motivated to seek dominance in the post-merger category. Following this, the present chapter also aims to extend the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) to examine and explain why the potential loss of a

positively distinct identity may motivate group members to project their pre-merger group attributes onto the post-merger group.

In these terms, I assume that ingroup projection is not an inevitable response to groups who merge, nor is it any more a default condition for achieving a positively distinct identity than ingroup bias is (Turner 1999). Instead, the present analysis argues that one way that ingroup projection can occur is as a response to certain conditions that reflect an interaction between group psychology and social context or social structure. Therefore, if one mechanism through which ingroup projection occurs is as a response to an identity threat related to two groups merging into one inclusive group, a process that implements the merger in a non-threatening way should reduce ingroup projection and its associated outcome of ingroup bias.

4.1   Continuation of Identity

The potential for negative reactions following a loss of a positively distinct identity is well documented in Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979). Because membership to social groups provides a basis for self-definition, group members are generally motivated to preserve their group and its positive distinctiveness from relevant comparison groups. Therefore, it is not surprising that the literature investigating changes to group identity such as the merging of two subgroups into one inclusive group, has proposed that negative reactions to mergers may stem from group members having to relinquish their pre-merger identity and adopt the new one (Haunschild et al. 1994).

This reasoning is consistent with Rousseau's (1998) description of identity related processes in organisational change, which argues for a sense of continuity of identity in organisational situations that require employees to restructure. In particular, it is suggested that reinforcing valued aspects of an individual's pre-merger group into a new context should be highly predictive of acceptance of change and internalisation of the new organisational identity. Following this argument, it has been proposed when a merger threatens the continuity of a pre-merger's valued characteristics that distinguished it from the pre-merger outgroup, it should constitute a threat to the pre-merger ingroup identity (Branscombe et al. 1999). This type of threat that is associated with a potential loss of a positively distinct identity should evoke reactions from group members to defend, restore or enhance their pre-merger identity in the new context through strategies such as displaying ingroup bias (Branscombe et al. 1999; Ellemers et al. 2002).

Experimental work by van Leeuwen, van Knippenberg & Ellemers (2003) investigated the relationship between continuity of identity and ingroup bias in the context of merging groups. In two separate studies involving minimal conditions the perceived continuation of the pre-merger group in the post-merger group strengthened the positive relationship between pre-merger identification and post-merger identification, the perceived continuation of identity also strengthened ingroup bias at the subgroup level. Thus while the continuation of identity from the pre-merger group to the post-merger group was beneficial for the acceptance of the new group, the higher levels of ingroup bias associated with the continuation suggest that subgroup identity dynamics were still relevant in the new group. Thus ingroup bias can be viewed as a subgroup identity protection strategy (Tajfel 1975; Tajfel & Turner 1979), especially in the context of an unstable changing intergroup context such as a merger where there is an attempt or threat to remove or change the existing structural relationship between two groups.

4.2   Dominance

As mergers very rarely happen between equals (Cartwright & Cooper 1992), dimensions of size, status, power and authority that define the pre-merger subgroups are likely to impact on how pre-merger subgroups feel the post-merger group should be defined. Put simply, some groups may consider that they have a right to extend their subgroup's identity and influence into a new group, and thus one would expect pre-merger groups that come to dominate the post-merger group to show stronger post-merger identification.

Based on this perspective, van Knippenberg et al. (2002) examined the effects of how identification with a post-merger organisation was moderated by whether or not a pre-merger party dominated, or was dominated by, the merger partner. Using surveys across two different samples of real-life organisations that had merged, van Knippenberg et al. (2002) found that pre-merger identification and post-merger identification were more positively related for members of the organisation who came to dominate the new organisation.

Thus, while it could be argued that taking a dominant position in a post-merger group creates a sense of continuity in identity that implies acceptance of and identification with the new group, there has been little research that has examined the pre-merger subgroup characteristics that may motivate pre-merger groups to claim dominance in the

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new group. However, one study investigating employee expectations of the future merger between two organisations suggested that employees expected the pre-merger high status group to dominate the merger (Dackert, Jackson, Brenner & Johansson 2003).

A similar finding was obtained in a study by Terry et al. (2001) who investigated the merger of two airline companies. One of the airlines involved in the merger was a domestic carrier with relatively low-status and was acquired and absorbed into the higher status national carrier. Thus the newly merged airline was representative of the pre-merger international carrier, where such identity relevant features as its name and corporate design were retained from the high status airline. Supporting the results of van Knippenberg et al. (2002) it was found that members of the pre-merger high status carrier had higher levels of post-merger identification than employees of the pre-merger low status carrier. Further evidence also suggests that high status pre-merger groups may be motivated to claim a dominant position in the merged group. For example, a variety of studies have illustrated how high-status group members will react to a potentially identity threatening change to their group by emphasising their status superiority on status relevant dimensions (Terry & Callan 1998; Terry et al. 2001; Ellemers & van Rijswijk 1997; Ashforth and Mael 1989).

These studies show preliminary evidence to suggest that a pre-merger group's relative status will impact on how they accept the merger, and also how they will interpret and define the new category. And while some researchers have argued for the creation of a common ingroup identity as a way of minimising subgroup bias and conflict (Gaertner et al. 1993), the results from the merger literature suggest that the relationship between re-categorisation and prejudice reduction is more complex, and that the new category is dependent to a degree on the comparative relationship between the pre-merger groups, and how this relationship is played out in the context of the new group. To the degree that subgroup identity concerns are deemed to be still salient or relevant in the post-merger group, a high status group should seek to protect or enhance their identity by perceiving a dominant role for itself in the new group and claiming it as "their" organisation. That is, identification with the global thinkers could be a strategic basis to establish the content of your subgroup identity for the new group.

4.3   Defining the New Group: Ingroup Projection

While there has been a wealth of recent research investigating the psychological consequences that the merging of two separate subgroups into one inclusive group has for

identity relevant concerns and subgroup relations (Giessner et al. 2006; Terry 2001; van Leuuven et al. 2003; van Knippenberg et al. 2002), little research has investigated what pre-merger identity defining features and *motivations* are related to a sub-group claiming representation in the new category. A relevant discussion on intergroup relations by Mummendey & Wenzel (1999) proposes that negative outgroup attitudes can occur as a result of an ingroup projecting its distinctive attributes onto a more inclusive category containing both ingroup and outgroup(s), and that this process may be motivated by a threat to an ingroup's identity.

Thus as a response to the threat, to the degree that an ingroup considers itself to be prototypical of the inclusive category relative to the outgroup, its members should achieve a positively distinct social identity. This claim of relative prototypicality for the superordinate group (ingroup projection) has already drawn empirical support illustrating that it is a process that operates across different contexts (Waldzus et al. 2004; Waldzus et al. 2005), that it is positively related to negative outgroup attitudes (Wenzel et al. 2003), and that it is an identity relevant process, where participants who identify more strongly with their ingroup are more likely to project.

The analysis from the previous two studies expanded on these results, by providing empirical support that in the case of a merger between two subgroups, projection of ingroup attributes onto the newly created more inclusive category was positively related to concerns for a positively distinct ingroup identity. That is, when participants felt that their pre-merger group's positive distinctiveness was threatened by merging with the comparison outgroup, they were more likely to project their pre-merger identity onto the new group. Importantly, it was the members of the pre-merger high status groups who felt the most positive distinctiveness threat associated with the change who were more likely to project. These studies provide preliminary evidence that one mechanism through which ingroup projection may operate is through subgroup identity concerns.

This reasoning follows from the Social Identity Approach that argues that just as a group is not simply the sum of its parts, when two groups merge the merged group can also not be considered as an aggregate of the pre-merger subgroups. Instead, it is postulated that each group will bring with it its specific and distinctive interpersonal interactions, values, norms, beliefs, styles of leadership and so on, and what shape and definition the new group takes will be based on how these pre-merger identities are negotiated in combination with

certain socio-structural variables to seek influence for the pre-merger group in its new context.

Thus comes the proposition that the identity threatening effects of mergers may be deflected for members of groups who come to dominate the post-merger category. In this case, while identifying with the new category can be seen to be a positive consequence of re-categorisation (Hogg & Turner 1987; Gaertner et al. 1993), if it is related to ingroup projection it can have potentially negative consequences for sub-group relations in the new category. Importantly, if projection occurs as a motivated response to a positive distinctiveness threat related to the merger, then any measure that seeks to reduce that threat should in turn reduce the projection of ingroup attributes onto the new category.

4.4   Legitimacy of Status Differences

While a group's relative status position in a social hierarchy plays an important role in how individuals respond to social stratification to achieve or maintain a positively distinct social identity, there are other important socio-structural variables that moderate whether ingroup favouritism will be the preferred psychological response. As the perception of status differences and their reality to individuals requires a full understanding of the existence of the socio-structural framework through which groups exist (Turner 1999), an individual's beliefs about the stability and legitimacy of the social structure should affect an individual's beliefs about what strategy they can use to achieve a positively distinct social identity.

In Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979; 1986), stability refers to the extent to which an alternative status position is a likely outcome of intergroup relations, while legitimacy refers to the extent that individuals see the status differences between the groups as legitimate. While theoretically separate constructs, there is recent evidence to suggest that the two can be intertwined in their effects on intergroup relations (Bettencourt et al. 2001). There is also evidence to suggest that the interactive effects of stability and legitimacy could have different effects for groups depending on their relative status.

A study by Turner and Brown (1978) illustrated that if a group occupies a legitimate high status position, perceived instability in the social hierarchy will cause the group to display ingroup bias. However, perceived instability was seen to increase ingroup bias for illegitimate low status groups. Thus, while a low status group must perceive the situation

as unjust or illegitimate before instability influences negative outgroup attitudes, a high status group who believes it has the right to occupy a superior social position will be most threatened when the intergroup situation is unstable.

Considering issues related to the stability of the status hierarchy, it is likely that when there is a structural change imposed on groups of differing status such as in a merger, the pre-merger relationship will become unstable. That is, the merger offers the possibility for a change in the status hierarchy, where low status group members can claim superiority, and where high status group members risk losing their superiority (Tajfel & Turner 1979). It thus makes sense to investigate legitimacy in this context, as it relates to change processes. For example, concentrating on members of high-status groups, when the high-status group's position is somehow threatened by the instability of the merger, the degree to which the threat is seen as legitimate may moderate people's acceptance of the change and attitudes to the outgroup. That is, it is not the acceptance of the legitimacy of the status relationship in itself, but also whether a change to the relationship between two different status groups can be viewed as legitimate.

4.5   Legitimacy of the Change

Terry & O'Brien (2001) expand on Tajfel's (1974; 1975) concept of legitimacy, when they suggest in their analysis of the merger of two scientific organisations that whether a status position is legitimately attained or not is an important factor in understanding the existing status relationship between two groups. In this case it is not just the perception of legitimacy of a stratified status relationship that is important in understanding social identity management strategies, but the procedures that contribute to manifesting the groups' relative positions are also important when attempting to understand when a group's relative status will be seen as legitimate.

While previous studies investigating the effects of legitimacy as it relates to the social status structure have often interpreted legitimacy or illegitimacy in terms of the differences between two groups either reflecting relative competence on a task (legitimate) or reflecting competence that is not clearly defined or differentiated (illegitimate) (Ellemers 2001), another relevant account related to the creation of legitimacy stems from procedural justice research. The basic premise behind the concept of procedural justice is that people are more willing to accept decisions or outcomes if there is the perception that those outcomes are based on fair decisions (Thibaut & Walker 1975).

While original interpretations of procedural justice hypothesised that the success of procedural justice could be attributed to a belief that people generally like to have control over outcomes, more recent theories have postulated inline with a Social Identity Approach that procedural justice achieves much of its significance as a result of people deriving identity relevant information from the way they are treated by groups that they belong to. One such understanding of procedural justice known as the Group Value Model (Lind & Tyler 1988), argues that procedural justice is a process that works because how a person is treated by groups and authorities reflects something important about who they are as a person. Among the processes and structures that are said to be important in developing perceptions of procedural justice is the perception of process control, but contrary to Thibaut and Walker's (1975) explanation related to outcome control, evidence consistent with the Group Value Model suggests that process control operates as a function of value-expressive influence that allows group members to understand their worth to the group (Greenberg 1990; Tyler & Blader 2000).

4.6   Creating Legitimacy Through Perception of Voice

One important factor in creating a sense of being a valued group member as it relates to procedural justice is through the perceptions that a person has their voice respected by relevant groups or authorities (Tyler & Smith 1999; Van Yperen, van den Berg & Willering 1999; Greenberg 1990). In fact, participation (also referred to as voice) is considered one of the primary elements in judgements of what constitutes a fair procedure (Tyler, 2000). Participative decision making through voice has been seen to be related to a number of positive organisational outcomes such as increased satisfaction and performance (Black & Gregersen 1997; Birdi, Allan & Warr 1997), increased organisational citizenship behaviour (that is, discretionary behaviours that promote the organisations goals, Van Yperen et al. 1999) and also lessening resistance to change for employees adopting new work systems (Howcroft & Wilson 2003).

As previously referred to, recent studies have illustrated support for the relational Group Value Model that argues that the effects of voice on procedural justice judgements operate outside instrumental concerns. An example can be seen in a laboratory study conducted by Lind, Kanfer and Earley (1990), who manipulated a fair procedure by allowing some participants to voice their opinions before a decision was made, thus providing the perception of process control, compared to a condition where participants had

no opportunity to express their thoughts. An additional non-instrumental voice condition was also included where participants could only voice their opinions after a decision had been made. While it was found that instrumental voice did increase perceptions of fairness amongst participants, participants provided with non-instrumental voice also rated the procedure as more fair compared to the no-voice conditions. These results have been replicated (Platow, Fliardo, Troslej, Grace and Ryan 2006), and they provide support for the key relational concerns that the Group Value Model outlines (Blader & Tyler 2003; Tyler & Blader 2001) and illustrates one mechanism through which a perception of procedural fairness can be created.

Additionally, procedural justice research has shown that the way groups and authorities treat people influences not only their satisfaction and acceptance of unfavourable decisions, but it also shapes perceptions about legitimacy (Tyler 1990; 2001a; 2001b; Lind & Tyler 1988; Tyler et al. 1997; Tyler & Smith 1999). The functional aspect that procedural fairness factors may have in enhancing legitimacy received recent support in a study investigating public judgements related to the legitimacy of the police (Tyler 2004). It was found that the public's evaluation of the police was based primarily on their assessment of the fairness of the authority's procedures, and factors such as the opportunity for people to have their voice heard was seen as a central component in predicting the public's satisfaction with these procedures.

Thus, the finding that procedural fairness enhances an authority's legitimacy to regulate identity relevant behaviour is important in understanding voluntary compliance of decisions (Tyler et al. 1996). However, as the perception of legitimacy implies deference to authority and their decisions, it may be that when the continuation of a relevant identity is threatened by change, perceptions of whether the change is considered legitimate or illegitimate may moderate people's acceptance of the change. Support for this assumption has recently been provided by Tyler and De Cremer (2005) who in the context of an organisational merger found that perceptions of procedural justice helped to shape employees' reactions to the change. Specifically, despite the threat to identity that a merger implies, the degree to which leaders connected to the implementation of the merger were seen to act in procedurally fair ways, the more legitimacy employees associated with them and the more accepting they were of the change.

Accordingly, it is predicted that to the degree that procedures associated with the merger enhance the legitimacy of the change through participatory measures such as voice, it is expected that people will be less likely to feel identity threat associated with the change. While the analyses have previously concentrated on positive distinctiveness threat, the lack of respect that procedural injustice can convey could have important implications for categorisation threat. Following Barreto & Ellemers (2002; 2003), it is argued that in the event of the potential loss or disregard of a chosen identity, it is important to distinguish between the way a target is externally categorised by others, and the way they are treated by others. Following a similar argument to the Group Value Model and its assumptions on group-based respect, Barretto & Ellemers argue that it is the treatment from others rather than the discrepancy between internal (how people wish to be seen) and external (how people are seen) categorisations per se that is the crucial determinant of psychological and behavioural outcomes related to such a discrepancy. Therefore, to the degree that the change is implemented through fair procedures that conveys respect for identity concerns, one would expect participants to experience not only less positive distinctiveness threat related to the change, but also less categorisation threat.

4.7   Study 3

Hypotheses

Based on previous procedural justice research (Tyler 1990, 2000; 2001b; 2004) the first objective of Study 3 was to establish a relationship between perceived participation in the implementation of a merger and participants' perceptions that the merger was implemented in a legitimate way (Hypothesis 1).

Additionally, while low status groups may be able to view a merger as a chance for status improvement, it is likely that when no clear post-merger identity is specified, members of high status groups will be motivated to continue and preserve their positively valued pre-merger identity in the new group. While each group entering a merger brings with it identity relevant motivations and features such as its relative status, how the merger is implemented can convey identity relevant information to pre-merger sub-group members that may moderate how pre-merger group members respond to the change. Being treated in a procedurally unfair way can imply that a subgroup's identity is not valued. It is therefore predicted that participants who come from a high status group and have no-voice in the merger process will attempt to continue their group's relative superior identity by not only

identifying with the new category (Hypothesis 2), but by interpreting that new category as prototypical of their original group attributes, identity and influence (Hypothesis 3). The present analysis utilised two different measures for ingroup projection. The first was the perceived prototypicality measure taken from the first two studies (Hypothesis 3a), while the second measure was adapted from previous research (Waldzus et al. 2005) and measured the projection of identity relevant pre-merger attributes onto the post-merger category (relative prototypicality, Hypothesis 3b).

As the first two studies illustrated that ingroup projection could be attributed to pre-merger identity concerns related to the potential loss of a valued identity, it was further predicted the identity threat would mediate the relationship between pre-merger value/participation and perceived prototypicality. Specifically, it was predicted that participants who came from a positively valued pre-merger group would feel more positive distinctiveness threat associated with the change to the degree they felt they had no opportunity to preserve their identity (no-voice in change process). Additionally, the same relationship was predicted between pre-merger value and participation with categorisation threat, as this type of threat should be particularly salient if a new categorisation is inexplicitly forced on participants (no-voice). Accordingly, voice in the change process should alleviate feelings of positive distinctiveness (Hypothesis 4a) and categorisation threat (Hypothesis 4b) and as a consequence reduce ingroup projection.

Finally, it is also predicted in line with Studies 1 and 2 that ingroup projection would be a positive predictor of ingroup favouritism (Hypothesis 5).

Method
Participants and Design

The sample comprised 21 males and 46 females with an age range from 18 to 26 years ($M = 19.9$ years, $SD = 2.0$ years). Participants were first year university students enrolled in Psychology at the Australian National University and took part in return for partial course credit.

The experiment consisted of a 2 (value: high status vs. low status) x 2 (participation: voice vs. no-voice) factorial design with random allocation of participants to conditions. Both variables were manipulated between subjects. For some analysis, a factor of

legitimacy of the change was included as a between subjects variable that was built on median splits on the legitimacy measures.

Procedure

The procedure used for Study 3 was comparable to that used in Studies 1 and 2. On arrival at the laboratory, participants were seated in isolated cubicles in front of personal computers where they were informed they would be participating in an "on-line" computer study with other participants in separate cubicles. However, to make the participants' isolation from each other more realistic, a change in instructions from the first two studies was implemented. In this experiment, participants were informed that the study aimed to investigate how different levels of communication affected the performance of different groups in problem solving tasks. They were informed that they would be broken into groups based on their thinking style to see if these types of groups were affected by limited on-line communication when conducting problem solving tasks.

Categorisation

Participants were once more split into the categories of inductive and deductive thinkers based on two bogus association style tests that were identical to the ones used in Study 2. For the first association test, participants were asked to select one of four words that best matched a key word that was also presented, while the second association test asked participants to indicate which word or picture best matched a picture that was presented. Participants were then informed that they belonged to either the inductive thinkers or the deductive thinkers based on their results from the association tests. In reality, all participants were assigned to the inductive thinkers that were represented on the computer screen by a blue symbol. Participants were informed the deductive thinkers would be represented by a red symbol.

As in Study 1, participants were asked to send an e-mail greeting to the other members in their group to increase the salience of the experimental paradigm. Participants then received five on-line messages back from the other inductive thinkers, which were in fact messages that the experimenter had pre-programmed. While participants were not told how many inductive thinkers there were, they were informed the there generally tends to be an equal number of inductive and deductive thinkers and that there is usually an equal split of males and females in each group.

Group Tasks

Both brainstorming exercises used in Study 3 were the same as the exercises used in Studies 1 and 2. The first brainstorming exercises asked participants to develop five possible solutions for a farmer whose farm had been affected by a drought using a selection of materials provided by the experimenter. Participants were informed that all suggestions that members of their thinking style group made would be stored in an inductive thinkers' file, and all solutions would be treated as one set of data. Participants were also informed that they would be provided with some feedback as to how the inductive thinkers performed on the brainstorming task in relation to the deductive thinkers at a later stage of the experiment.

The second brainstorming task was similar to the first except instead of facing drought, the farm had suffered severe flooding. Using the same materials that were supplied in the first task, participants now had to develop solutions that would contribute to their group's folder on how the farmer could best deal with the flooding.

Change

Before the second brainstorming exercise, all participants were informed that the inductive thinkers would be merging with the deductive thinkers into a new combined group. Participants were informed that the new category would be referred to as the global thinkers, and the merger was simulated on the participants' computer screens by merging the inductive and deductive thinkers blue and red symbols into one purple symbol. Participants were instructed that the global thinkers were an equal representation of inductive and deductive thinkers.

Independent Variables

Value. Value was manipulated by means of false feedback from the experimenter, and was identical to the value manipulation used in the second study. After participants had completed the first farmer's task participants were told that the experimenters would send them an e-mail with their group's results as soon as they had been calculated. All participants then received one pre-programmed response from the experimenter. The false feedback in the <u>low-status</u> condition informed participants that the inductive thinkers' solutions for the first task did not score as highly as the deductive thinkers, and that this was consistent with previous research investigating these types of problem solving tasks.

Participants in the <u>high-status</u> condition were given the same feedback with the exception that they were informed that the inductive thinkers' solutions scored more highly than the deductive thinkers solutions for the first farmer's task.

Participation. Participation was manipulated by introducing the merger to participants with different justifications supplied by the experimenter. In the <u>voice</u> condition, participants were informed after the false value feedback that there was one more task to be completed, but before that, the experimenters would like to know which group participants would prefer to complete the task in. Participants were then given the option of nominating one of three groups; the inductive thinkers, the deductive thinkers, or a combination of the inductive and deductive thinkers that would be called the global thinkers. When participants had selected the group they wanted to complete the second farmer's task with, they were informed that they should wait until the experimenter had considered all the participants' wishes before they would know which group they would be in. Participants then received a fake e-mail from the experimenter that stated:

> *Hello all participants! The experiment has one more task for you to complete before you can meet each other! But first!*
>
> *Based on the number of people who suggested they would like to complete the second task in a new merged group, we are going to merge the inductive thinkers and deductive thinkers into one group called the global thinkers for the rest of the experiment. Good luck!*

The procedure for introducing the <u>no-voice</u> condition to participants was similar to how change was manipulated in the previous studies. Participants were informed after the false value feedback that while there was one more task to be completed, based on some preliminary results, the experimenters were going to force a change to their groups composition, and that participants would have no say on it. The instructions read:

> *Hello all participants! The experiment has one more task for you to complete before you can meet each other! But first!*

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After looking through all of your results we have decided that we are going to force a change to your groups' composition for the next task. We are not too concerned about how you feel about this as it is essential for the experiment and our results. For the second task you will no longer be working as inductive thinkers or deductive thinkers. For this task, we have decided that we are going to make the inductive and deductive thinkers develop solutions in one single merged group called the Global Thinkers. Good Luck!

Dependent Variables

Manipulation Checks. The first manipulation check was designed to assess whether or not participants had felt that the inductive thinkers were positively or a negatively valued as a group when compared to the deductive thinkers. A single item measure was used, that asked participants the extent to which they strongly agreed (1) or strongly disagreed (7) with the following statement: "The deductive thinkers outscored the inductive thinkers on the first farmer's task".

The second manipulation check was designed to assess whether participants felt they had had a choice to change groups for the second farmer's task. A single item measure was used asking participants the extent to which they strongly agreed (1) or strongly disagreed (7) with the following statement: "I was given a choice as to what group I could belong to for the second farmer's task".

Global Thinker Identification. Four measures adapted from Haslam (2001) were used to measure identification with the global thinkers: "I see myself as a typical global thinker"; "I feel committed to the global thinkers"; "I like being known as a global thinker"; and "I think I am a valuable member of the global thinkers". All scores were also averaged across global thinker items to create a measure for global thinker identification (α = .65).

Social Identity Threat. Following the classification scheme of social identity threat proposed by Branscombe et al. (1999), identity threat was split on the same three dimensions outlined in the previous studies. All three proposed concepts (categorisation threat, distinctiveness threat and value threat) were measured in the same way as outlined in Study 2.

Once the reverse coded categorisation threat measures had been re-coded a principal components analysis with varimax rotation requesting three factors was performed on the scores of all the threat measures to see if the same pattern of results could be replicated as seen in the first two studies. Data from all 67 participants was used. The assumptions for a principal component's analysis were met, with Kaiser's test of sampling adequacy (KMO = .853) greater than the required .6, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < .05$). While three components were extracted, Kaiser's criterion (eigenvalues > 1) suggested the extraction of two principal components, and these will be concentrated on for the rest of the analysis (component loadings can be seen in Table 1). The two components accounted for 69.5% of the variance.

Table 1: Component Loadings for Identity Threat

Item	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Distinctiveness Threat 1			.82
Distinctiveness Threat 2	.66	.50	
Distinctiveness Threat 3			.82
Distinctiveness Threat 4	.64		.49
Value Threat 1	.70		.44
Value Threat 2	.92		
Value Threat 3	.85		
Value Threat 4	.70		
Categorisation Threat 1	.59	.66	
Categorisation Threat 2 ®	.60	.59	
Categorisation Threat 3		.87	
Categorisation Threat 4 ®		.78	

Note: Component loadings under .4 not displayed

The data were largely consistent with results from the first two studies. The first component consisted of items intended to measure both distinctiveness and value threat and explained 59.1% of the variance. However, two items intended to measure categorisation threat also loaded on this component which may again highlight the complexity and difficulty in translating a conceptual model of threat into measurable concepts. Because the loadings of the measures on the components were similar to the results from the first two

studies, the first component was again interpreted as positive distinctiveness threat. A measure for positive distinctiveness threat was then created using the distinctiveness and value threat items that loaded on the first component. This created a sufficient reliability (α=0.92) and a measure for positive distinctiveness threat was obtained by averaging across items.

The second component was interpreted as categorisation threat and explained 10.4% of the variance. It consisted of all four items designed to measure categorisation threat and the second measure of distinctiveness threat. Due to previous theoretical conceptions of categorisation threat, a measure was built by averaging scores only across the categorisation threat items. The reliability was sufficient (α=.90), and the measure labelled categorisation threat.

The third component loaded positively on three of the distinctiveness threat items and the first value threat item. While it explained 8.1% of the variance, as mentioned it fell short of Kaiser's criterion (eigenvalues > 1), and so was left out of further analysis.

Legitimacy. Legitimacy was directly related to participants' perceptions of the actual change process. The legitimacy of the change process was thus measured using four items (1 = strongly disagree through to 7 = strongly agree): "I think the merging of the inductive and deductive thinkers into one group was carried out in a fair manner", "I thought the process of group selection for the second farmer's task was far from reasonable" (reverse coded), "I was happy with the methods used by the experimenters to create the global thinkers", and "I felt the group composition for the second task was justified by the experimenter". Scores were averaged across the items to build a measure for legitimacy (α = .68).

Perceived Prototypicality. The perceived prototypicality of inductive thinkers for the new category was measured with the same four items taken from the second study Scores were averaged across all items to build a measure for perceived prototypicality, where higher scores illustrated greater perceptions of perceived ingroup prototypicality for the merged group (α = .70).

Relative Prototypicality. The relative prototypicality of inductive thinkers and deductive thinkers for global thinkers was also measured by a similar method outlined by Waldzus et al. (2005). After participants were informed they were inductive thinkers, they

were then asked to type in four distinctive attributes for inductive thinkers, compared to deductive thinkers, and four distinctive attributes for deductive thinkers compared to inductive thinkers. The computer saved these responses, and after the second farmer's task had been completed the participants were asked to rate the self-generated attributes of inductive thinkers and deductive thinkers in terms of their typicality of global thinkers on seven-point likert scales from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). An overall measure of relative prototypicality was computed by subtracting for each item the deductive thinker attributes from the inductive thinker attributes, and averaging the resulting four prototypicality measures into one scale (α = .77). The result is a measure where positive scores indicate greater perceived relative prototypicality for the global thinkers. This measure of relative prototypicality was also significantly correlated with the measure of perceived prototypicality, r = .30.

Ingroup Favouritism. Ingroup favouritism was assessed by measuring attitudes towards members of the inductive and deductive thinkers after the second task had been completed with the same four items from the first two studies. An overall measure of ingroup favouritism was computed by subtracting for each item the outgroup attitudes from the ingroup attitudes, and averaging the resulting four favouring measures into one scale (α = .81). The result is a measure on which higher (more positive scores) indicate greater ingroup favouritism.

Results

Prior to analysis all data were analysed for missing values, accuracy of data entry and the assumptions of multivariate analysis. No data were missing and all assumptions were met.

Manipulation Checks

Value. After the assumptions of an analysis of variance were checked, a 2 (value: high status vs. low status) x 2 (participation: voice vs. no-voice) between groups ANOVA was performed with the manipulation check as the dependent variable. The results revealed that there was a main effect of value on the manipulation check F (1,66) = 44.54 p < .001 indicating that participants in the low status condition perceived the deductive thinkers (outgroup) to have performed more strongly than the inductive thinkers on the first task (M=4.79) compared to the high status condition (M=2.73).

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Participation. After the assumptions of an analysis of variance were checked, a 2 (value: high status vs. low status) x 2 (participation: voice vs. no-voice) between groups ANOVA was performed with the manipulation check as the dependent variable. The results revealed that there was a significant main effect of participation on the manipulation check (F (1,66) = 50.09, p < .001), indicating that participants in the voice condition felt they had more say in deciding the composition of the groups for the second task (M=4.85), than participants in the no voice condition (M=2.03). The manipulations thus appear to have successfully affected participants' perceptions of their pre-merger group's value and the perceived voice of the change process.

Participation and Value on Legitimacy

A 2 (value: high status vs low status) x 2 (participation: voice vs no-voice) univariate between subjects ANOVA with legitimacy as the dependent variable was run to see if the perception of voice created a sense of legitimacy about the change for participants (Hypothesis 1). The results revealed a marginally significant main effect for participation in predicting legitimacy, F (1,63) = 3.84, p < .064, indicating that participants who had voice in the merger perceived the change to be more legitimate than participants who had no voice.

Participation and Value on Global Identification

To investigate whether participants in the high-status/no voice condition would be more likely to identify with the global thinkers, perhaps as a way of claiming perceived prototypicality for the new category (Hypothesis 2), a 2 (value: high status vs low status) x 2 (participation: voice vs no-voice) univariate between subjects ANOVA was run with global thinker identification as the dependent variable. The results revealed a significant main effect for value on global thinker identification F (1,63) = 7.09, p < .01, indicating that participants who came from a high status group were more likely to identify more strongly with the new category than participants who came from a low-status group. However, this was further qualified by a significant interaction of value and participation on global thinker F (1, 63) = 4.72, p > .034. The interaction of this effect is presented in *Figure 1*, while means and standard deviations for the conditions can be seen in *Table 2*.
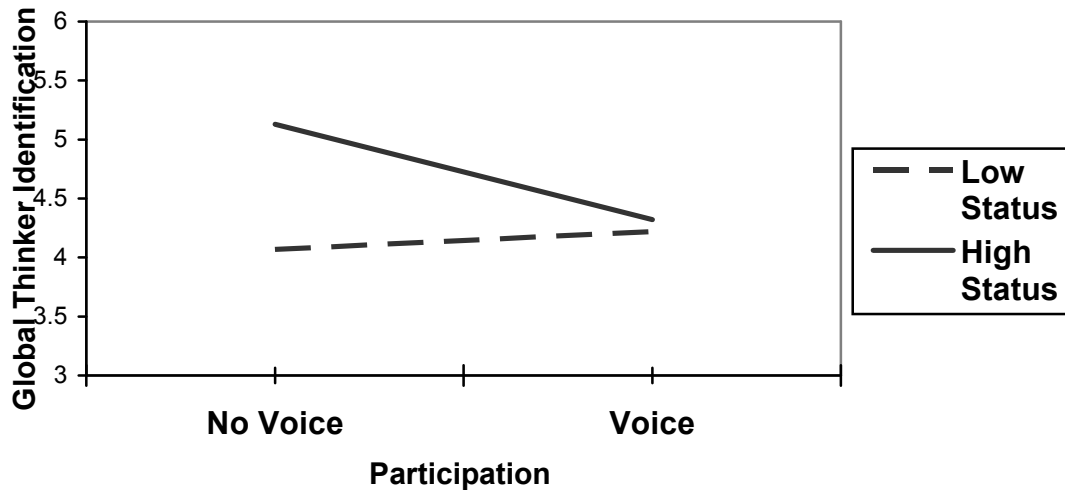
Figure 1: Interaction Effect of Status and Participation on Global Thinker Identification.

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations for Value and Choice Contrast on Global Thinker Identification

			Value	
Participation	Negative		Positive	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
No-Voice	4.07	.64	5.13	.98
Voice	4.22	.94	4.32	.95

Planned comparisons were conducted to analyse the meaning of the interaction and test Hypothesis 2, namely that it will be participants who come from a high status group and have no-voice in the merger process who will be more likely to identify with the new category, perhaps as an attempt to continue their group's relative superior identity. To test this separate ANOVAs were run for both voice and no-voice conditions, while the mean differences between low and high value in these separate conditions were examined. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, the results revealed that participants who had no-voice in the change process, and came from a positive valued group were significantly more likely $(F (1, 33) = 14.02, p < .001)$ to identify with the global thinkers (new group) $(M = 5.13)$ than participants who came from a negative valued group $(M = 4.07)$. There were no significant

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difference in levels of global thinker identification threat in the voice condition between participants who belonged to a negative or positive valued group $(F (1, 30) = .10, p > .05)$.

Participation and Value on Perceived Prototypicality

To examine whether participants who came from a high status pre-merger group and who had no-voice in the change process would be more likely to define the new group in terms of their pre-merger group identity (ingroup projection), a 2 (value: high status vs low status) x 2 (participation: voice vs no-voice) univariate between subjects ANOVA was run with perceived prototypicality as the dependent variable (Hypothesis 3a). The analysis revealed no significant effects.

Participation and Value on Relative Prototypicality

Contrary to Hyptothesis 3a, the combination of participation and value had no significant effect on pre-merger ingroup prototypically for the new category, however it was decided to proceed with the proposed analysis and investigate whether value and participation interacted in their effects on the new measure of ingroup projection adapted from previous research (Waldzus et al. 1995) labelled relative prototypicality (Hypothesis 3b). A 2 (value: high status vs low status) x 2 (participation: voice vs no-voice) univariate between subjects ANOVA was run with relative prototypicality as the dependent variable, but the analysis also revealed no significant effects.

Legitimacy Median Split

As both Hypotheses 3a and 3b revealed no significant results, it was decided to re-evaluate the assumptions guiding the prediction that a lack of procedural justice should contribute to the prediction of ingroup projection when two groups merge. In relation to Hypothesis 1, it was seen from the analysis that participation caused participants to feel that the merger had been conducted in a legitimate manner. While only marginally significant, this result reflects a strong theoretical position established by research associated with the Group Value Model (Tyler 1990; 2000; 2001b; 2004) where it has been found that factors such as voice (Lind, et al. 1990; Platow et al. 2006) can reflect identity relevant information that are predictive of people's perceptions of procedural fairness and their perception of legitimacy. As voice is an important predictor in perceptions of legitimacy, it is thus possible to reconsider participation in the present analysis as a means of creating a sense of legitimacy for the change process. Based on this reasoning, it was decided to conduct a

post-hoc analysis of participants' perceptions of perceived and relative prototypicality based on their pre-merger group value and their perceptions of how legitimate they perceived the change to be.

The re-evaluation of Hypotheses 3a and 3b were analogous to the original, and it was predicted that participants who came from a positively valued group and viewed the change as illegitimate would be more likely to perceive their pre-merger ingroup as the prototypical group for the post-merger category. The replacement of participation with legitimacy was conducted via a median split into participants who perceived the change as legitimate (greater than 4.5; n = 31) and those who perceived the change as relatively illegitimate (lower than or equal 4.5; n = 36).

Legitimacy and Value on Perceived Prototypicality

A 2 (value: high status vs low status) x 2 (legitimacy: low legitimacy vs high legitimacy) univariate between subjects ANOVA was run with perceived prototypicality as the dependent variable. It was predicted that participants in the high-status/low legitimacy condition would claim perceived prototypicality for the new category. The results revealed a significant main effect for legitimacy on perceived prototypicality $F(1,63) = 4.60$, $p < .036$, indicating that participants who perceived the change to be low in legitimacy, were more likely to think the new category was prototypical of their pre-merger group ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.10$), than participants who perceived the change to be legitimate ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.78$). The expected interaction was only marginally significant $F(1, 63) = 3.05$, $p < .086$, however, because an interaction was predicted, it was decided to proceed with a specific contrast that compared pre-merger high status group members who perceived the change as illegitimate, with the other three combinations of low status/low legitimacy, low status/high legitimacy and high status/high legitimacy (-1, -1, 3, -1). Means and standard deviations for the contrast can be seen in *Table 3*.

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations for Value and Legitimacy of Change Contrast on Prototypicality

		Value		
Legitimacy of Change		Negative		Positive
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Low Legitimacy	3.88	.41	4.57	1.47
High Legitimacy	3.79	.73	3.67	.84

The contrast effect was statistically significant, $F(1, 63) = 7.95$, $p = .004$. Consistent with the prediction, participants perceived the new group to be more prototypical when they came from a high status group and perceived the change to be illegitmate ($M = 4.57$) compared to the other three combinations of conditions (Ms = 3.88, 3.79 and 3.67, respectively). The interaction can be seen in *Figure 2*.
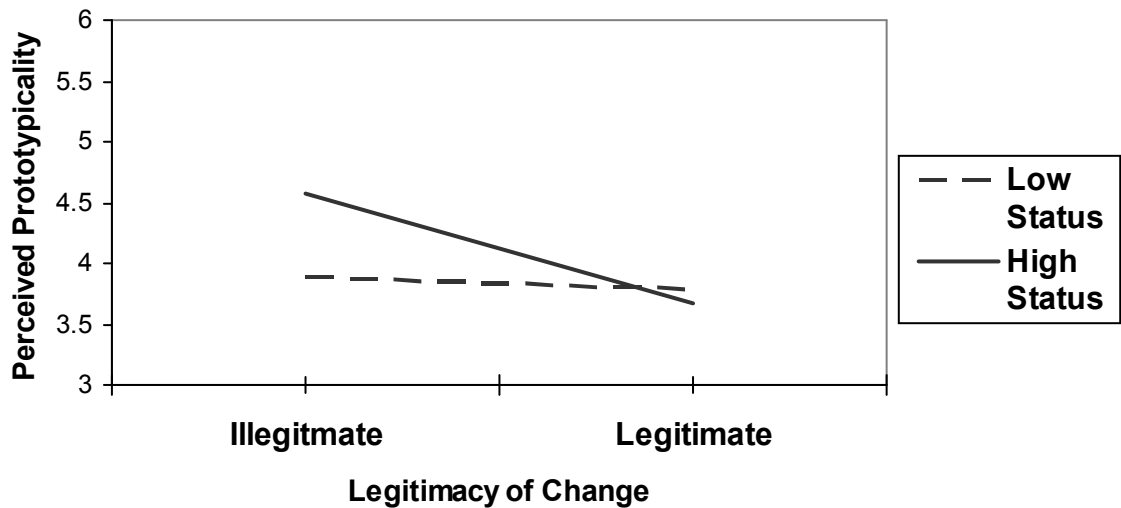
Figure 2: Interaction Effect of Status and Choice on Perceived Prototypicality

Legitimacy and Value on Relative Prototypicality

To see if the results of legitimacy and pre-merger group value on perceived prototypicality could be replicated with a different and established measure of ingroup projection, a 2 (value: high status vs low status) x 2 (legitimacy: low legitimacy vs high

legitimacy) univariate between subjects ANOVA was run with relative prototypicality as the dependent variable. It was predicted that participants in the high status/low legitimacy conditions would consider the new category to be prototypical of their pre-merger group's attributes relative to the pre-merger outgroups' attributes. The results revealed a significant interaction of legitimacy of the change and value on relative prototypicality F (1, 63) = 4.51, $p < .038$. The interaction of this effect can be seen in *Figure 3*, while means and standard deviations for the interaction can be seen in *Table 4*.
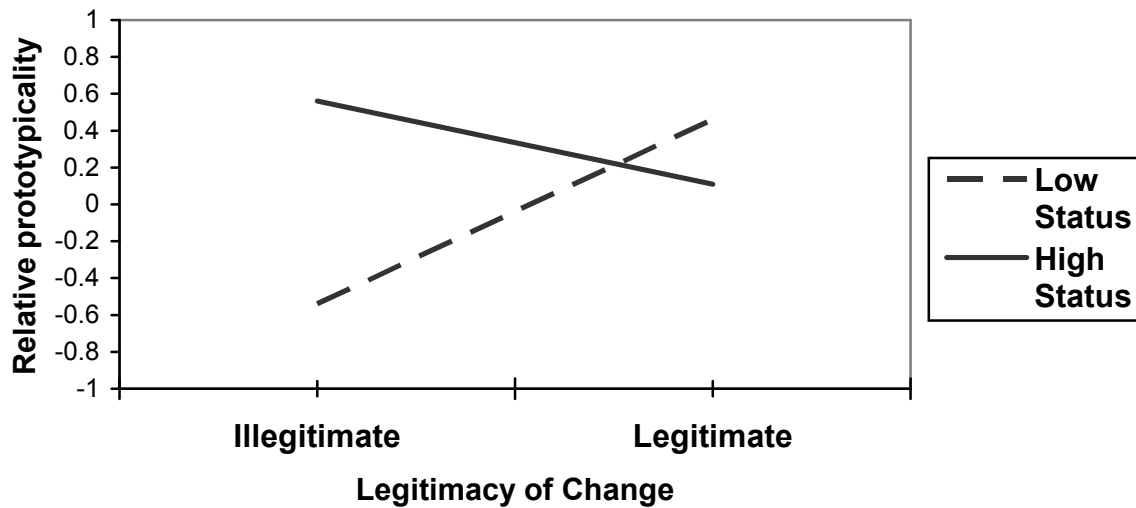
Figure 3: Interaction for Legitimacy and Value on Relative Prototypicality

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations for Legitimacy of Change and Value Contrast on Positive Distinctiveness Threat

	Value			
Legitimacy of Change	Low Status		High Status	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Low Legitimacy	-.54	1.3	.46	1.9
High Legitimacy	.56	1.1	.11	1.1

To investigate the interaction and test the revised Hypothesis 3b, namely that those participants who come from a positive valued group and perceived the merger as

illegitimate will show greater levels of relative prototypicality compared to participants who come from a low status group, a simple effects analysis was run. Separate ANOVAs were run for both high status and low status conditions, while the mean differences between low legitimacy and high legitimacy in these separate conditions were examined. The results revealed that participants who came from a positively valued group and viewed the merger as illegitimate were significantly more likely $(F (1, 34) = 4.70, p < .05)$ to think that the post-merger group was relatively prototypical of their pre-merger group $(M = 4.83, SD = 0.79)$ than participants who came from a negatively valued group $(M = 3.69, SD = 0.78)$. There were no significant differences of perceptions of relative prototypicality in the high legitimacy condition between participants who came from a low or high status group $(F (1, 30) = 1.35, p > .05)$, thus lending partial support to the revised hypothesis.

Interestingly, to the degree that participants in the low status group perceived the change to be legitimate, the more they considered their pre-merger attributes typical of the new category compared to attributes of the high status group. A post-hoc simple effects analysis revealed that this difference was significant $(F (1, 30) = 6.35, p < .017)$, indicating contrary to expectations that members of a negatively valued pre-merger group were more likely to consider their group to be relatively prototypical of the post-merger group when they perceived the merger to be the outcome of a legitimate process as opposed to an illegitimate one. However, there were no significant differences of perceptions of relative prototypicality in the high status condition between participants who viewed the change as legitimate or illegitimate $(F (1, 33) = .82, p > .05)$. Thus the results from the perceived prototypicality measure and the relative prototypicality measure are not entirely consistent with each other. Implications for this are investigated in the discussion.

The Mediating Role of Identity Threat in Predicting Perceived Prototypicality

As relationships had been established between legitimacy of the change and prototypicality it was decided to proceed with the rest of the analyses by replacing the manipulation of participation with the median-split of legitimacy. Additionally, the following mediational analyses used the perceived prototypicality measure for ease of comparison between studies.

In order to assess whether positive distinctiveness and categorisation threats had a mediating effect on the relationship between the legitimacy and value interaction and

perceived prototypicality (Hypotheses 4a and 4b), a series of hierarchical regression analyses were performed with perceived prototypicality as the dependent variable. The first step of the model was to show that participants in the value/legitimacy condition would feel a positive distinctiveness and categorisation threat associated with the merger. The correlations between the variables associated with the mediation analysis can be seen in *Table 9*, while *Table 5* displays the results for the two regression models, which included the independent variables legitimacy and value and the interaction term between legitimacy and value, with positive distinctiveness and categorisation threat as the separate dependent variables. Both variables in the interaction term (legitimacy and value) were first centred before building the product term to avoid problems of multi-collinearity.

Table 5: Hierarchical Regression for Positive Distinctiveness and Categorisation Threat

Predictor	Positive Distinctiveness Threat			Categorisation Threat		
	B	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Value	.43	.16	.32**	.57	.14	.41***
Legitimacy	-.37	.16	-.28*	-.51	.14	-.36***
Value x Legitimacy	-.07	.16	-.05	-.39	.14	-.27**
(Constant)	3.52	.16		3.35	.14	
adjR^2	.13**			.34***		
ΔF	4.18***			12.17***		
df	4363			3,63		

$^t = p < .1$, $* = p < .05$, $** = p < .01$, $*** = p < .001$

The results show that value and legitimacy were significant predictors for both positive distinctiveness threat and categorisation threat. In the case of positive distinctiveness threat, when participants perceived the merger as illegitimate or came from

a pre-merger high status group they were more likely to believe that their pre-merger group's positively distinct identity had been compromised by the merger. However, there was no significant interaction effect from the legitimacy/value interaction to positive distinctiveness threat as was predicted (Hypothesis 4a). Similar results can be seen with categorisation threat, where participants felt that the external categorisation of the merged group did not represent them when they also came from a pre-merger high status group and perceived the change to be illegitimate. However, as predicted, a significant interaction effect was also seen for value and legitimacy on categorisation threat, and so a planned contrast analysis was run to test for this specific pattern (as such a pattern cannot be easily modelled in regression analyses, a median split technique was applied again). The specific contrast compared pre-merger high status group members who perceived the change as illegitimate, with the other three combinations of low status/low legitimacy, low status/high legitimacy and high status/high legitimacy (-1, -1, 3, -1). Means and standard deviations for the contrast can be seen in *Table 6*.

Table 6: Means and Standard Deviations for Value and Legitimacy of Change Contrast on Categorisation Threat

Legitimacy of Change	Negative		Positive	
	M	SD	M	SD
Low Legitimacy	2.65	.32	4.81	.28
High Legitimacy	2.89	.26	3.02	.27

The contrast effect was statistically significant, $F(1, 63) = 36.23$, $p < .001$. Consistent with the hypothesis, participants experienced higher levels of categorisation threat to the degree they came from a pre-merger high status group and perceived the merger to be low in legitimacy. *Figure 4* displays the interaction and its effect.

Thus while the first part of the mediational analysis was generally supported, there was no significant interaction between legitimacy and value on positive distinctiveness threat as predicted. However, as there were significant main effects from value and legitimacy in predicting both positive distinctiveness and categorisation threat and a

significant interaction in predicting categorisation threat I proceeded with the proposed mediational analysis.
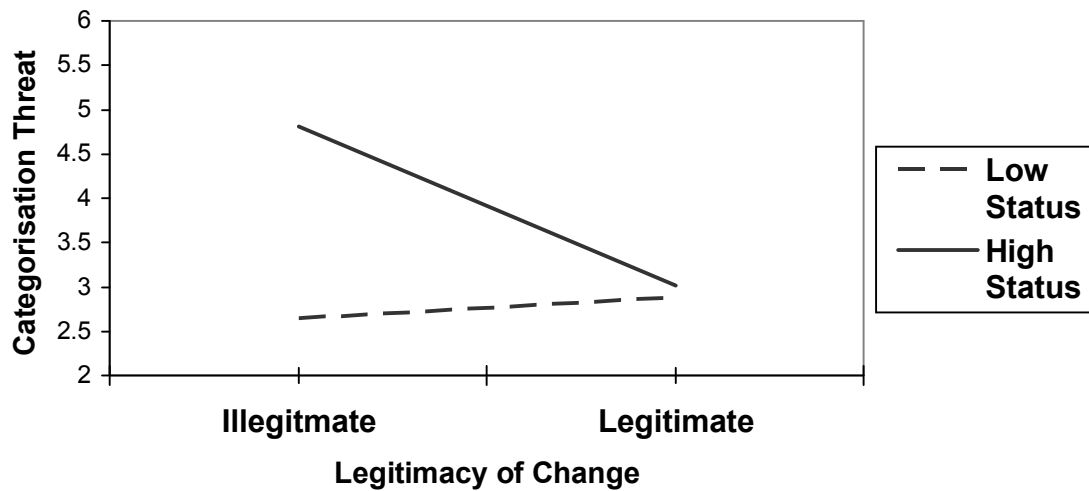

Figure 4: Interaction effect of legitimacy of change and value on categorisation threat

The second link of the mediational analysis that needed to be verified was whether there was a total effect between legitimacy and value on perceived prototypicality. This link had already been established through the ANOVA and contrast analysis previously, and these relationships can be seen in *Figure 2*. The third link that needed to be verified was whether positive distinctiveness and categorisation threat (the proposed mediators) were significantly related to perceived prototypicality. To investigate this, a hierarchical regression was run with legitimacy, value and the centred interaction term of legitimacy and value in the first step, and the second step included the addition of positive distinctiveness and categorisation threat to the prediction of relative prototypicality. *Table 7* displays the results from the regression.

Table 7: Hierarchical Regression for Perceived Prototypicality

Predictor	Step One			Step Two		
	B	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Value	.14	.12	.15	-.13	.10	-.14
Legitimacy	-.25	.12	-.25*	-.01	.10	-.01
Value x Legitimacy	-.20	.12	-.21 ^{t}	-.07	.10	-.07
PD Threat				.22	.11	.31*
Categorisation Threat				.31	.12	.45*
(Constant)	.67	.68		-1.38	.89	
adjR^2	.09*			.44***		
adjΔR^2	.13*			.35***		
ΔF	3.15*			20.61***		
df	3,63			2,61		

^{t} = $p < .1$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

As can be seen from *Table 7* the first model explains 9% of the variance in perceived prototypicality, with legitimacy having a significant total effect on perceived prototypicality (β=-.25, t = -2.3, $p < .036$), indicating that the more legitimacy participants perceived there to be in the change process, the less likely they were to perceive the new category to be prototypical of their pre-merger ingroup.

Model two is seen to explain an increased amount of variance in perceived prototypicality and this increase is significant ($ΔR^2 = .29$, $ΔF$ (1,62) = 31.44, p < .001). Concentrating on this model it can be seen from Table 7 that legitimacy is no longer a

significant predictor of perceived prototypicality (β=-.01, t = -0.1, p > .05), however there is a significant effect of positive distinctiveness threat on perceived prototypicality (β= .31, t = 2.1, p < .045), suggesting that the more participants feel a positive distinctiveness threat related to the change, the more likely they were to perceive the new category to be more prototypical of their pre-merger ingroup. There is also a significant effect of categorisation threat on perceived prototypicality (β= .45, t = 2.6, p < .011), suggesting that the more participants feel a categorisation threat related to the change, the more likely they were to perceive the new category to be more prototypical of their pre-merger ingroup. While this does not provide precise support for the hypothesised mediation, it does illustrate a mediation effect from legitimacy of the change to perceived prototypicality via positive distinctiveness and categorisation threat. A path analysis of the effects relevant can be seen in *Figure 5*.
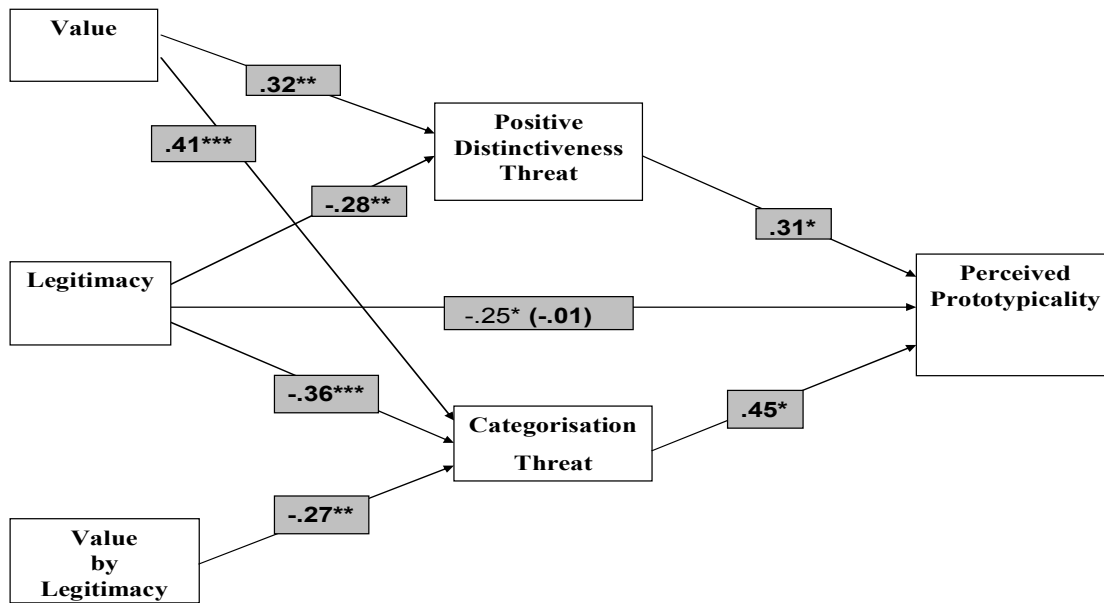
Figure 5: Path Analysis of the Mediation Effect between Legitimacy and Perceived Prototypicality via Positive Distinctiveness and Categorisation Threat

^{t} = p < .1, * = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001

Perceived Prototypicality and Ingroup Favouritism

The last part of the analysis that needed testing was whether perceived prototypicality would positively predict ingroup favouritism (Hypothesis 5). To test this relationship a mediational analysis was run via a series of hierarchical regressions in case perceived prototypicality also mediated the relationship between positive distinctiveness threat and ingroup favouritism as had been suggested in Studies 1 and 2. As in the previous mediational analysis, three links needed to be established to see if perceived prototypicality mediated the relationship between positive distinctiveness threat and ingroup favouritism. The first link that needed to be established was whether positive distinctiveness threat significantly predicted relative prototypicality. This analysis has already been run, and results for it can be seen in *Table 7*. The results show, as predicted, that positive distinctiveness threat significantly predicted relative prototypicality ($\beta = .31$, $t = 2.1$, $p < .036$).

The second link that needed to be verified was whether there was a total effect between positive distinctiveness threat and ingroup favouritism, and the third link that needed to be verified was whether perceived prototypicality (the proposed mediator) was significantly related to ingroup favouritism. To investigate these, a hierarchical regression was run with legitimacy, value, legitimacy by value, positive distinctiveness and categorisation threat in the first step, and the second step included the addition of perceived prototypicality to the prediction of ingroup favouritism. *Table 8* displays the results from the regression.

Examining *Table 8*, it can be seen that the first model explains 4.0% of the variance in ingroup favouritism with positive distinctiveness threat positively predicting ingroup favouritism as expected ($\beta = .40$, $t = 2.07$, $p < .043$), indicating the more positive distinctiveness threat participants felt as a result of the merger, the more they favoured their pre-merger ingroup over the pre-merger outgroup thus supporting the second step of our mediation analysis. There was also a non-significant trend for categorisation threat, indicating the more categorisation threat people perceived, the less ingroup favouritism they showed ($\beta = -.38$, $t = -1.70$, $p = .094$). However, the model as a whole did not significantly predict ingroup favouritism ($F (5,61) = 1.52$, $> .05$). Model two is seen to explain an increased amount of variance in ingroup favouritism (7%), and the model as a whole is a significant predictor of ingroup favouritism ($\Delta F (1,60) = 4.87$, $p < .031$).

Table 8: Hierarchical Regression for Variables Predicting Ingroup Favouritism

Predictor	Step One			Step Two		
	B	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Value	.25	.17	.20	.31	.17	.25 [t]
Legitimacy	-.17	.17	-.14	-.17	.16	-.13
Value x Legitimacy	-.19	.16	-.16	-.16	.16	-.13
PD Threat	.37	.18	.40*	.27	.18	.30
Categorisation Threat	-.34	.20	-.38 [t]	-.47	.20	-.54*
Perceived Prototypicality				.45	.20	.36*
(Constant)	.32	.49		-.64	.65	
adj*R²*	.04			.10*		
adjΔ*R²*	.11			.07*		
Δ*F*	1.52			4.87*		
df	5,61			1,60		

[t]= *p* < .1, * = *p* < .05, ** = *p*< .01, *** = *p* < .001

Concentrating on this model, positive distinctiveness threat is no longer a significant predictor of ingroup favouritism (β=.30, *t* = 1.51, *p* > .1), however consistent with the third and final step of our mediation assumptions, perceived prototypicality was seen to be a significant predictor of ingroup favouritism (β=.36, *t* = 2.21, *p* < .031) indicating that the more participants perceived their pre-merger group's identity to be prototypical for the merged group (projection) the more ingroup favouritism they displayed. There is also an unexpected and curious effect of categorisation threat on ingroup

favouritism ($\beta = -.54$, $t = -2.36$, $p < .021$), indicating that the more participants felt that the new group did not represent them, the less they favoured their pre-merger ingroup. Explanations for this result relating to possible suppressor variables are investigated in the discussion, while the full model predicting ingroup favouritism can be seen in a path analysis conducted through the regression outlined below in *Figure 6*.
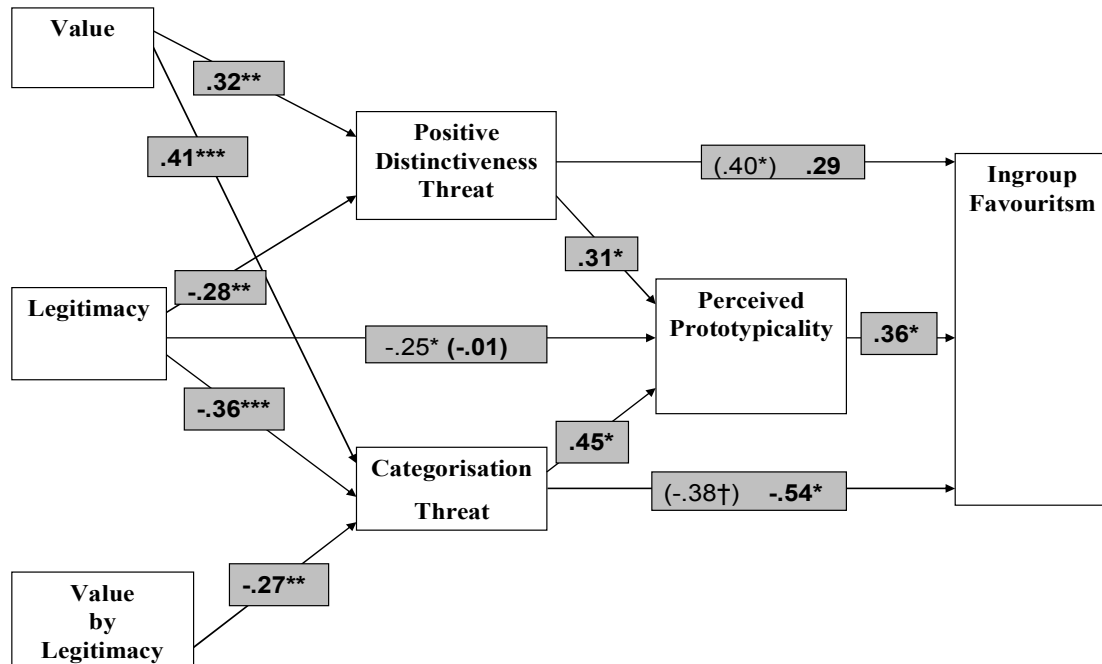

Figure 6: Path Analysis of Variables Predicting Ingroup Favouritism

t = $p < .1$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Value	—					
2. Legitimacy	.11	—				
3. Value X Legitimacy	-.08	.05	—			
4. Positive Distinctiveness Threat	.29*	-.24*	-.09	—		
5. Categorisation Threat	.39**	-.33**	-.33**	.77***	—	
6. Perceived Prototypicality	.13	-.25*	-.23 t	.62***	.65***	—
7. Ingroup Favouritism	.17	-.10	-.09	.22†	.10	.28*

t $= p < .1$, * $= p < .05$, ** $= p < .01$, *** $= p < .001$

Note. While there are some high correlations, analysis of tolerance in the regression analysis indicated no score $< .20$, suggesting no problem with multi-collinearity.

4.8   Discussion

Since a post-merger group is a body that is shared by two pre-merger groups, the final shape and identity that the post-merger group takes is largely dependent on how each pre-merger group negotiates, imposes or relinquishes its identity in the new entity. The present study illustrated how aspects of pre-merger identity concerns (the relative status of the groups entering the merger) interacted with the process used to implement the merger (whether it was perceived as a legitimate process or not) to create different representations of the post-merger group. Accordingly the following discussion investigates the potential for such processes to create acceptance to a change in a status hierarchy and their influence on managing the consequences associated with the loss of a positively distinct identity such as asserting ingroup dominance on the new group and ingroup favouritism. However, as legitimacy of the change was included as a post-hoc factor, the following discussion also investigates implications of this for the present results.

Two Types of Social Identity Threat and Ingroup Projection

While previous studies have investigated how subgroups react to different post-merger structures that enable pre-merger groups to either continue or lose their pre-merger identity in the new category (Giessner et al. 2006; Terry 2001; van Leuuven et al. 2003; van Knippenberg et al. 2002), the present study highlights when and why group members may

be motivated to exert their pre-group's identity onto the post-merger category. Following a basic tenant tenet of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979), namely that when a group is threatened with the loss of a positively distinct identity, group members are likely to seek ways to preserve or enhance that identity, it was proposed that projecting a pre-merger ingroup identity onto the post-merger group would be motivated by such a threat. Support consistent with this argument was found, as it was members of the pre-merger high status group (the most positively valued group) who expressed greater positive distinctiveness threat as a result of the merger. However, participants from the pre-merger high status group also felt a categorisation threat as a result of the merger, indicating that the experimenter's external categorisation of participants into a merged group did not correspond with how members of the pre-merger high status group wished to be categorised.

Importantly the perceived legitimacy of the change also had consequences for participants' reactions to the merger. Following a post-hoc rationale of the original prediction regarding the consequences of implementing the change through a procedurally fair way, it was found that when participants perceived the change to be the result of unfair treatment to their pre-merger group's identity concerns and was thus considered to be illegitimate, participants felt greater levels of positive distinctiveness and categorisation threat, as opposed to participants who felt the merger had been created through a legitimate process. Thus the results were consistent with predictions from the Group Value Model (Tyler 1989; Tyler & Blader 2000) and Barretto & Ellemer's (2002; 2003) argument that it is the respectful treatment from others rather than the discrepancy between internal and external categorisations per se that determines psychological and behavioural outcomes to threatened identity. That is, to the degree that the legitimacy of imposing the merger represented fair treatment for pre-merger identity concerns, participants experienced less positive distinctiveness and categorisation threat.

Also, consistent with the conceptualisation of ingroup projection (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) as an identity protection or enhancement strategy, both types of social identity threat were positively related to participants' perceptions that their pre-merger ingroup identity should be typical of the post-merger group's identity. That is, to the degree that participants felt their pre-merger group's positive distinctiveness had been compromised by merging with another group, or to the degree that participants felt the

merger hadn't respected their pre-merger identity concerns, they were more likely to insist that their positively distinct subgroup identity should be reflective of the merged group's identity.

While theoretically an undefined post-merger group can be considered open to identity negotiation between the two subgroups that constitute the merged group, the present results illustrate the causal role that pre-merger identity concerns such as subgroup status have in predicting the new group's identity relevant features. Thus while other studies have investigated how group members can react to a dominant or dominated subgroup position (van Knippenberg et al. 2002), or the continuation of a pre-merger group identity in the post-merger group (van Leeuwen et al. 2003; & Terry et al. 2001), the present study illustrates how subgroup identity concerns such as pre-merger status can be important in predicting who feels their group has the right to assert their pre-merger identity on to the post-merger group. Importantly for the present analysis, the results also illustrated (by using two separate dependent measure of ingroup projection) how these subgroup identity concerns are moderated by the process used to implement the change.

The first measure of ingroup projection used (referred to as perceived prototypicality) was the same measure of ingroup projection used in Studies 1 and 2, and it was found in Study 3 that participants from a pre-merger high status group were more likely to claim perceived prototypicality for the merged group when they perceived the change process as illegitimate, compared to participants from the other status and legitimacy conditions. The second measure was referred to as relative prototypicality, and is similar to measures used in other studies that have investigated ingroup projection (Waldzus et al. 2005). This measure illustrated how prototypical participants thought attributes that defined their pre-merger ingroup were for the newly merged group, compared to attributes that defined the pre-merger outgroup. Again, results were partially consistent with the analysis using perceived prototypicality, and following predictions it was participants from the pre-merger high status group who perceived the change as illegitimate, who considered attributes that defined their pre-merger group to be relatively prototypical of the post-merger group.

However, a note of caution must be issued when comparing the results for the perceived prototypicality and the relative prototypicality measures as results for both ingroup projection measurements were not identical. This could indicate subtle variations

as to what identity based features people feel are appropriate as a basis for claiming prototypicality. It maybe that identity features that are more flexible and adaptable (such as attributes) will more likely be used by group members to contest their prototypicality for a superordinate group. A diret measure of identity imposition (as the perceived prototypicality variable represented) maybe less contestable and thus limit ingroup projection to groups with consensually higher status or power. Further examination of the relationship between these two measures deserves further attention.

Interpreting the rest of the analysis, it was also predicted that identification with the newly merged group could reflect participants' perceived ownership or dominance of the post-merger group. That is, while theoretically identifying with a superordinate category suggests the embracement of its constituents and positive intergroup relations (Turner et al. 1987; Gaertner et al. 1993), research has shown that identification with a newly merged group can be related to the perceived continuation of a sub-group identity in a new category or the dominant position of a subgroup in a post-merger categorisation (van Leeuwen et al. 2003; van Knippenberg et al. 2002). The motivation to extend a pre-merger identity into the post-merger group should be particularly relevant to participants who feel that their positively valued identity is threatened by the change, as it would be for participants who came from a pre-merger high-status group and who were denied participation in the change process. Consistent with these assumptions, it was found that it was participants from the pre-merger high status group whose pre-merger ingroup was denied voice in the change who were more likely to identify with the post-merger group.

The final part of the analyses investigated the relationship between ingroup projection (using the perceived prototypicality measure) and ingroup favouritism. Following previous research it was found that perceived prototypicality was positively related to ingroup favouritism. Further, the relationship between positive distinctiveness threat and ingroup favouritism was fully mediated by perceived prototypicality, as can be seen by positive distinctiveness threat ceasing to be a significant predictor of ingroup favouritism when prototypicality was included in the analysis (see *Figure 6*). However, while categorisation threat positively predicted prototypicality as predicted, it had a direct negative effect on ingroup favouritism indicating a possible suppression effect (Baron & Kenny 1986). However, it is thought that this may be explained by the high intercorrelation seen between categorisation threat and positive distinctiveness threat as the

zero-order correlation between categorisation threat and ingroup favouritism was not negative, indicating that categorisation threat was not negatively related to ingroup favouritism.

Points and Issues Raised by the Present Analysis

The findings of all three studies presented in this thesis provide good evidence that one mechanism through which ingroup projection can occur is as a motivated response to a threatened identity. Importantly, the findings from the studies differ in the important respect that they illustrate the quest to establish norms, values and subgroup identity relevant concerns onto a newly merged group that does not have any specific criteria that define it. Whereas previous studies have manipulated the valence and structure of the superordinate category as a mechanism for limiting ingroup projection (Weber et al. 2002), the present analysis differs in that it provides evidence to suggest how a process such as voice may also regulate ingroup projection.

However, while voice was manipulated by granting half of the participants the opportunity to have a say in whether they wanted to change their group membership for the second farmer's task, the majority of results are based on the split of legitimacy into a categorical variable. While potentially problematic, it is felt that the reasoning surrounding this is solid, and reflects a strong theoretical position established by research associated with the Group Value Model (Tyler 1989; 2000; 2001b; 2004). Here it has been found that factors such as voice (Lind et al. 1990; Platow et al. 2006) reflect identity relevant information that are predictive of people's perceptions of procedural fairness and their perception of authorities as legitimate. The purpose of voice in the present study was thus intended to create a sense of legitimacy for the change process, and the above theoretical review illustrates the importance of this.

In particular, the perceived legitimacy of the change served a vital function in managing ingroup projection when the intergroup status hierarchy was threatened by the unstable nature of a merger. Other studies might investigate what other process are likely to create a sense of procedural fairness. Following the Group Value Model, other factors that may contribute to an authority or process being seen as legitimate may relate to the respect and dignity that groups are treated with (Tyler 2000; 2001b). Factors that may

induce a sense of respect may include the perceived neutrality of authorities or the perceived transparency of decisions that have been made.

Noting the practical implications for managing identity threat and ingroup projection in an unstable intergroup context, a note of caution must be issued as the manipulation of voice in the present study was nothing more than a charade. While participants' felt they had instrumental voice in deciding their group's future, in actual fact their participation in the merging process had no influence on their group's future. While this process created legitimacy in the present study, I would argue that outside a laboratory using minimal groups where people are able to have personal interactions, that deception related to democratic participation may become apparent to people quite quickly and result in negative consequences of distrust and worse for authorities.

It may also be the case that voice may have other effects on ingroup projection that the present analysis did not pick up. For example, if a group is likely to gain influence and power as a result of a democratic vote that involves participation by members of different subgroups as is the case in democratic elections, it is logical to assume that the perception of voice in this process gives legitimacy to the status differences created by the election. It may be then that the high status group feels it has the right or mandate to impose their identity on the superordinate category. Thus while voice and participation can be a pre-cursor for social change, it can also result in social stability and dominance. Thus similar to Weber et al. (2002) who have argued that the degree to which a high status group views its position to be legitimate, the more they will consider their group to be relatively prototypical of a more inclusive category, it is argued that procedures that create legitimate status differences may then legitimise ingroup projection.

Finally, although legitimacy reduces projection tendencies for high status groups, in our analysis using the measure of relative prototypicality it actually increased levels of ingroup projection for low-status groups, albeit only on the relative prototypicality measure. This raises an interesting point, in that by giving people the perception that a potential change to the status quo will be decided through an anonymous vote may be sufficient in initiating low-status groups to believe they have an opportunity to challenge the status-quo and assert their group identity on the superordinate category. While this is only a post-hoc description of one result, it deserves further attention by researchers as it may help in promoting a psychological understanding of how democracy has the ability to

regulate the implementation and acceptance of social change as seen in democratic countries throughout the world.

Chapter 5: Implications for Conceptual Development

Following a Social Identity Approach (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Turner et al. 1987; Haslam 2001), the present thesis follows the reasoning that individuals are motivated to belong to groups that offer them a sense of positive distinctiveness, and that belonging to social groups allows individuals to form a basis for self-definition (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Hogg & Abrams 1988). An understanding of how these social identities interact with an individual's general motivations and the social context has led to a variety of research that has gained great insight into positive and negative outcomes of group membership. More recently, research has investigated how group members perceive and react to changes to their social identities. The objective of the present thesis was to examine the potential identity threatening effects that the change or loss of identity through a merger implies. Specifically, based on the assumption that groups act as a source of self-definition, the present thesis examined how, when a merger is seen to sacrifice or diminish a pre-merger group's positively distinct identity, group members will seek to preserve or enhance that sub-group identity through ingroup projection (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) as a response to the threat. Further, the motivational aspects of identity threat that predicted ingroup projection were reduced when a merger was implemented with perceived participant involvement in the process, thus suggesting one avenue in which change can be managed to prevent potential conflict between pre-merger subgroups. In this final chapter, a summary of the main findings will be presented and then following from the conceptual framework in which the thesis was developed, a detailed analysis will be given for directions for further theoretical expansion.

5.1 Contribution of Present Research

Analysing Identity Threat

A typology of threat, or indeed any typology, can be said to be justified to the degree that it brings clarity to a subject and thus a major aim of the present analysis was to see if Branscombe et al. (1999) typology of social identity threat clarified the nature and consequences of different types of identity threat.

In three separate experiments, all following an experimental model based on the minimal group paradigm (Tajfel et al. 1971), two groups were merged into one inclusive

group to see how different types of identity threat could motivate ingroup members to define the post-merger group in terms of their pre-merger groups' identity (ingroup projection). This analysis of identity threat has three important consequences in developing past theory and research that has generally used identity threat as an explanation of results, rather than creating measures that explicitly test these assumptions.

Firstly, regarding the typology of identity threat outlined by Branscombe and colleagues (1999) three types of group based identity threat were created: distinctiveness threat; value threat; and categorisation threat. Contrary to the analysis of identity threat proposed by this typology, it was found that measures intended to represent distinctiveness threat and value threat created one factor that was labelled positive distinctiveness threat, while the items created to measure categorisation threat loaded on one factor that was labelled categorisation threat. These results were replicated across all three studies, suggesting that the differences that theoretically separate distinctiveness and value threat may not be as clear-cut as originally hypothesised.

Second, it was illustrated how a change to an identity created through merging an ingroup with an outgroup was sufficient to cause a positive distinctiveness threat (Study 1). Thus while previous research has proposed that a potential change to an identity can be identity threatening (Tajfel, 1975; Terry & Callan 1998), this is the first study to my knowledge that has illustrated the causal relationship that a merger has in threatening a pre-merger group's positive distinctiveness. Thus while recent studies investigating identity threat have used physiologically based measurements such as blood pressure to attain an implicit measure of identity threat (Scheepers & Ellemers 2004), the present analysis illustrates how it is also possible to utilise explicit measures of identity threat in the context of an unstable intergroup comparison. Importantly, identity defining aspects of participants' pre-merger groups were important in shaping their reactions to the merger. Extending this analysis in Study 2, it was participants who came from a positively valued pre-merger group (high-status) and who under went a merger with a negatively valued group (low-status) that experienced the most positive distinctiveness threat. The consequences of this result are consistent with research that has shown that members from high-status groups are more likely to seek status protection strategies when their group's higher status position is somehow compromised or threatened (Ellemers et al. 1993; Ellemers et al. 1992; Ellemers et al. 1990). This result was replicated in Study 3,

demonstrating that while a change to a group membership can be considered identity threatening, it is only when that group is positively valued that group members will feel a positive distinctiveness threat as a result of the change.

And third, based on perceptions of identity threat related to participant's pre-merger identity, it was found that a primary determinant of projecting a pre-merger identity onto the post-merger group was related to the motivation to reduce an identity threat associated with the potential loss of a valued pre-merger identity. In Study 1 positive distinctiveness threat positively predicted how prototypical participants' felt their pre-merger identity should be for the post merger category, while in Study 2 this relationship was replicated, albeit with only a marginally significant result. However, a notable strength of the series of experiments is the control and consistency achieved as a result of repeating the same experimental design. Thus following Study 3 which replicated the significant relationship between positive distinctiveness threat and perceived prototypicality from Study 1, it is felt that taken together the series of studies provides strong evidence that one mechanism through which ingroup projection can occur is as the result of a positive distinctiveness threat. While theorising of the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) has associated identity threat as one mechanism through which ingroup projection may operate, this is the first systematic investigation to my knowledge of these processes and relationships.

Assessing the Impact of Ingroup Projection in a Merger

While previous research on the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) has made important discoveries investigating the conditions under which group members are more likely to perceive the ingroup, relative to the outgroup, as more prototypical of a superordinate category encompassing both groups (Waldzus et al. 2003; Wenzel et al. 2003), there has been left the important question of whether ingroup projection operates as a function of cognitive or instrumental concerns. Following from previous research, the present analysis illustrated how ingroup projection could be an action taken by group members to defend or enhance their social identity, and thus act out of instrumental concerns to defend a threatened identity.

Consistent with these results, the present thesis found in minimal-style experiments that the perception that a pre-merger ingroup identity should be prototypical of the post-merger category was positively related to ingroup favouritism. This result was consistent

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across all three studies and suggests that the motivation to establish and maintain pre-merger identity concerns in the post-merger category is partly justified by the perception that pre-merger ingroup members see themselves as more deserving of a prototypical place in the post-merger category. Therefore, these results not only reaffirm Mummendey & Wenzel's (1999) analysis of outgroup difference and discrimination when an ingroup perceives itself to be more prototypical of a more inclusive category, but also extends the analysis to a merger context when two groups combine to form a new inclusive category.

However, while ingroup projection can be considered as one explanation of how group difference can create and reflect intergroup discrimination, it is also possible to consider the processes involved in ingroup projection as psychologically adaptive procedures that help to create the conditions where discourse and influence between groups can be initiated or disputed to reflect either an ingroup's motivation for social dominance or social change. For example, the adaptive nature of ingroup projection has already been shown to occur across different intergroup contexts and frames of reference (Waldzus et al. 2004) and in changing intergroup contexts (Waldzus et al. 2005). Combined with this, research by Reicher, Hopkins and Condor (1997) has illustrated how groups can present arguments to construe and define the overarching social context to promote social action consistent with their subgroup identities. In their example, Reicher et al. investigated how political parties in Scotland used discourse to define what it meant to be Scottish in order to create and enhance their influence as a guide to social action. In the case of the present analysis, it was illustrated how strategic identity concerns relating to the loss of a positively distinct identity were influential in predicting the projection of a pre-merger identity onto the post-merger category. Noting the various identity management strategies set out by Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979) that are available to group members who face a negative or threatened identity, ingroup projection may also be considered as a social identity or enhancement strategy, whereby group members adapt their representation of the social context to protect or enhance identity relevant concerns.

Also, while previous research has shown ingroup projection to be an adaptive psychological phenomenon dependent on the comparative context (Waldzus et al. 2005), this is the first analysis to my knowledge that investigates the concept of ingroup projection in a changing intergroup context. While a Social Identity Analysis of mergers to date has examined how people react to a merger with an outgroup, and how these reactions are

moderated by whether or not a pre-merger ingroup is dominant or dominated in the post-merger group (van Knippenberg, et al. 2002; Terry & O'Brien 2001), the addition of the Ingroup Projection Model to this analysis has helped to specify when group members will be motivated to preserve and continue their positively distinct pre-merger group identity in the newly formed category.

However, one important note of caution should be issued when applying this finding to other research conducted on ingroup projection. While the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) focuses on perceiving ingroup attributes, relative to outgroup attributes, of being prototypical of a more inclusive psychological group, our studies focused on the projection of an ingroup identity onto a new group formed through a merger. While it is assumed that the psychological processes involved in both cases to be similar, it may be that the social reality of forming a new physical group may prevent low status groups from making claims of relative prototypicality that they can not physically support. However, when the idea of a more inclusive level of categorisation is more abstract, it may promote group members to dispute and negotiate how the superordinate category is defined (Waldzus et al. 2004).

Additionally, an important lesson to be learnt from the present series of studies, and a point made in earlier research (Waldzus et al. 2004), is that while social context and frame of reference help shape intergroup processes, group members do not simply passively adhere to them. Rather the definition of the social context, as is represented by the post-merger category in these studies, is actively construed, disputed and negotiated in terms of an ingroup's identity, norms, values and goals that are in themselves partly defined by identity concerns. Furthermore, when processes are introduced to manage identity concerns in a specific social context, the expression of subgroup identity through ingroup projection can be reduced or changed.

The Effects of Legitimate Change

Because of the positive relationship that has consistently been found between ingroup projection and negative outgroup attitudes, previous experiments analysing the Ingroup Projection Model have suggested a variety of strategies to reduce the projection of distinctive ingroup attributes onto a more inclusive category. To date, these strategies have mainly been concerned with altering subgroup members' perceptions of the structure or valence of the superordinate category in an effort to reduce ingroup projection. For

example, it has been shown that when a complex representation of the superordinate category (eg. Europe) is primed by emphasising its diversity and hence heterogeneity, subgroups (eg. Germany) are less likely to claim relative prototypicality for the superordinate category than when it is primed with a simple representation (Waldzus et al. 2005; Waldzus et al. 2003). It has also been found that when a superordinate category is primed negatively, then the tendency for subgroup members to project their ingroup identity onto the superordinate category is reduced (Wenzel, Mummendey, Weber & Waldzus 2003). The same study also illustrated a positive relationship between the priming manipulation and less negative outgroup attitudes. That group members may dis-identify with or distance themselves from a group that has a negative social identity is consistent with the positive distinctiveness motivational platform of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979), and it is also resonant of the present series of studies that illustrated how group members who come from a negatively valued subgroup were also less likely to project a negative subgroup identity onto the merged group (Study 2).

However, while the above studies have investigated the relevant group structures and conditions that are sufficient to reduce ingroup projection and promote intergroup tolerance, the manipulation of voice in the present analysis (Study 3) was created to reflect a process that could also reduce ingroup projection. The argument behind this proposal was based on assumptions derived from the Group Value Model (Tyler 1989) that suggests that people are more likely to accept decisions if they feel they have been dealt with through fair procedures. This perception of procedural justice is seen to be a critical determinant in the creation of legitimacy, and it is to the degree that authorities are considered legitimate that the conditions for people to follow and accept rules through self-regulatory behaviour are created (Tyler 2001; 2004; Tyler & Blader 2001).

Extending this analysis it was proposed in Study 3 that to the degree that a merger would be implemented in a procedurally fair way, the change to the socially structured hierarchy that a merger represents could be perceived as legitimate. Further, based on participants' perceived involvement in the change process through perceived voice, members of pre-merger groups would be more willing to comply with the change and feel less identity threat related to the change. It was then proposed that the reduction in identity threat should thus reduce participants' motivation to use ingroup projection as an identity enhancement strategy. While voice was seen to be a marginally significant predictor of

legitimacy, its other predicted effects were not significant. However, with legitimacy being considered the driving mechanism in the predictions, it was decided to focus directly on the perceived legitimacy for the remainder of the analysis. Thus it was re-hypothesised that to the degree that participants' viewed the change as legitimate, they would experience less identity threat and display lower levels of ingroup projection.

Study 3 supported this line of argument where it was shown that when participants perceived the process leading to a merger and redefinition of the two groups as legitimate, they were less likely to feel positive distinctiveness or categorisation threat. Additionally, participants were also less likely to consider the post-merger category as prototypical of their pre-merger ingroup. In fact, the relationship between legitimacy and prototypicality was mediated by positive distinctiveness threat and categorisation threat, suggesting that a reduction in identity threat through legitimate procedures is one mechanism through which ingroup projection can be reduced. While previous research has focused on altering perceptions of group inclusiveness, structure and valence to reduce ingroup projection, this analysis offers an additional process-based strategy to the management and regulation of ingroup projection. However, while the addition of legitimacy was based on solid theoretical and empirical work, a note of caution should be issued when making claims regarding these results as legitimacy was included as a post-hoc factor and further empirical investigation should be conducted to verify these results in a more systematic analysis.

Another notable strength of this present analysis was that similar results were found for the direct effects of pre-merger group status and the legitimacy of the change on two different measures of ingroup projection. The first measure was used across all three studies, and referred to the projection of a pre-merger ingroup identity onto the merged category, while the second measure used in Study 3 referred to the projection of distinctive ingroup attributes compared to distinctive outgroup attributes onto the merged group, and it is a similar method used in previous research to measure relative prototypicality (eg. Waldzus et al. 2003; Waldzus et al. 2005). It was found across both measures of ingroup projection that when participants considered the merger to have been illegitimately carried out, it was the participants who came from a pre-merger high status ingroup who were more likely to project their ingroup identity and distinctive ingroup attributes onto the merged group.

While the theorising of the present thesis argues that this occurred primarily as a function of pre-merger identity concerns, as signaled by the mediation of ingroup projection through identity threat, it may also be the case in the real world that pre-merger identity concerns are controlled or developed to a large degree by certain reality constraints. Indeed, Waldzus et al. (2004) have illustrated the importance of reality constraints related to relative group size, status and power in predicting the divergence of subgroup views on their perceived relative prototypicality of a superordinate category. Utilising this perspective, it may be that the legitimacy in the present analysis had an impact in defining the perceived reality constraints of the experiment. For example, participants who came from a low status pre-merger group and perceived the merger to be the outcome of a legitimate process, were more likely to project their distinctive ingroup attributes onto the new group than the high status pre-merger group participants. It may be that in Study 3 the opportunity for voice in the process of changing groups offered an opportunity for low status group members to challenge or change the reality constraints that existed before the merger. While this is only a post-hoc analysis of one result, further investigation of this proposal would be beneficial as it has the potential to add to the literature on how the perception of legitimate mechanisms such as democratic political processes can form the basis for acceptance of social change.

Bringing the Studies Together

The results of the combined studies indicate that in a changing intergroup environment such as a merger, the context and content of identity draw much of their relevance from each other. Based on identity relevant concerns, group members are motivated to use identity relevant features in responding to and guiding a change that threatens their group's *positive distinctiveness*. It has been shown in the present thesis how a group's relative status was important not just to their attitudes for intergroup behaviour at a snapshot in time, but also as a means of extending, planning and strategically influencing the continual positive distinctiveness of their ingroup after a change to the social hierarchy. Importantly, an examination of the processes involved in implementing the change illustrated that measures aimed to enhance ingroup members' perceptions that they had been given an opportunity to have input in the change process, created a sense that the change to the social structure had been legitimate, and reduced ingroup members' claims of dominance in the new group. Thus one major consideration when analysing a change to a

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social hierarchy is to develop processes or structures that are able to manage subgroup identity concerns in order to reduce any identity threat that may develop as a response to that change. While the perceptions of process involvement and creating a sense of legitimacy for the change were examined in the present thesis, it is proposed that other factors related to procedural justice, such as creating respect for ingoup members in the change process, should serve the same function in reducing threat, and through this, ingroup projection.

5.2 Theoretical Issues and Implications

Taxonomy of Social Identity Threat

Although the reported empirical systematisation of identity threat maps to some extent the distinction made by Branscombe et al. (1999) there are some important empirical and theoretical qualifications suggested by these results that need some further analysis. Empirically, the present analysis attempted to create an experimental paradigm that would isolate the difference between distinctiveness and value threat. This was done through manipulating distinctiveness through a merger, and value through false feedback indicating a group had either lower or higher status than the relevant comparison group. What seems clear from the present thesis is that the dimensions that social category salience is based on (the perceived similarity or difference of social categories) has some form or relationship with the content or meaning of those social categories. This may be a reminder that the complexity of social identity can not be reduced to a "sum of its parts", and that perceived distinctiveness or distinctiveness threat achieves much of its meaning because of the content associated with it by individuals, and more broadly society. Therefore, a divorce of the context and content of social categories while theoretically interesting, does not accurately describe or reflect the complex nature of intergroup relations.

Having said this, there is a valuable point to be made that, while the results indicate that distinctiveness and value threat are closely related, this may also be a result more readily found in minimal group contexts. Arguably, an important difference between artificially created laboratory groups on the one hand, and real groups on the other, is that people are more likely to care about or feel committed to their groups in the latter case (Jetten et al. 1996). This may lead people to be generally more concerned about their groups continual fate and hence its general distinctiveness.

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However, it is hard to imagine a group that accentuates its distinctiveness without attributing some sort of value to the content of that distinctiveness. While a negative comparison with a high status group may result in the low status group accentuating attributes related to its consenually lower status position, there is no reason why it may not be re-interpteting those attributes in a socially creative way to achieve some form of value significance. Therefore, while the intergroup comparison may make a relatively lower status position salient, the social reality of the situation may see members of the low status group accepting their position but also "making the most out of it". That is, they have or highlight unique characteristics typical of their group that may be of low status, but which they may be still proud of. In this way the "distinctiveness motive" may be more accurately referred to as an aspect of social creativity. Thus further studies replicating the measures developed for the present analysis and used in diverse real world settings would be highly desirable.

It should also be noted in the multi-faceted interaction of identities based in the real world, there may be other combinations of the taxonomy of threat that exist. Barreto and Ellemers (2003) illustrate this point when they investigate the psychological costs of social identity management. They provide the example that when a person's social identity is strongly devalued by others, the value threat associated with this can exacerbate the threat of the categorisation. An example of this may be seen in people who have traditionally been devalued in society such as the untouchables in India or blacks in South Africa. In these cases, the threat of belonging to a particular category and thus feeling a categorisation threat, would achieve much of its psychological significance through society's devaluation of that group of people.

Overall, the analysis of identity threat and the taxonomy developed to reflect its multi-faceted nature requires further examination. While Branscombe et al. (1999) have provided a valuable framework in which to conceptualise different types of identity threat and their consequences for intergroup relations, the present results suggest that they need further clarification. The combination of different measurement and experimental techniques under a coherent and practical framework would be beneficial in specifying the situations under which different levels of identity threat may act in tandem, or when specific types of comparisons, interactions and social structures are likely to make a specific type of threat more salient. For example, while it has been shown how

distinctiveness and value threat can operate as a function of each other in a merger context, further investigation could examine different contexts to see whether this is a general and robust psychological phenomenon.

Ingroup Projection

Following Social Identity Theory's (Tajfel & Turner 1979) prediction that there are three general ways of preserving or enhancing a negative or threatened social identity, the present evidence suggests that ingroup projection may be a process of social creativity (changing the frame of reference), that enables group members to not only claim a positively distinct identity, but also reflects a mechanism that can create or extend an ingroup's dominance and influence. In this sense, the process of an ingroup claiming relative prototypicality for a new or superordinate category while resembling social creativity can also be seen as an important step in facilitating social action. Again, this is consistent with evidence provided by Reicher et al. (1997) who argue that various political parties in Scotland define the social context of Scottishness through discourse in order to promote their political party's positions which will then act as a guide for social influence.

This illustration of ingroup projection as a mode of creating or extending social influence between groups draws important parallels from the literature investigating influence, conformity and deviance in an intragroup context. Thus while literature investigating social conformity has primarily investigated the deviant individual in the consensual group, where movement by the discrepant person(s) towards the group norm functions as a consequence of social pressures from the group (Turner 1991), it seems analogous that the same processes seem to be at work with ingroup projection, albeit at an intergroup level. That is, to the degree that a subgroup is considered deviant to the norms of the more inclusive group, the superordinate group should be able to exert explicit or implicit social pressure on the subgroup to conform to the superordinate standard; or, as Mumendey & Wenzel (1999) suggest, under some circumstance this may manifest itself in terms of discrimination. The basis to these assumptions is grounded in the social identity assumption that to the degree that a deviant person or minority group is considered a part of a larger group, then there is the potential for influence (Turner 1991; David & Turner 1996; 1999).

Thus further work on the Ingroup Projection Model may benefit from an analysis investigating its role as a strategy to establish normative influence at the intergroup level.

In as much as conformity can be assumed to be functional for a group to reach its goals, a study investigating how an inclusive group comprised of different subgroups is defined and deals with dissenting subgroups when it has a clearly defined goal to achieve, may illustrate the instrumental role that ingroup projection has in establishing and extending subgroup influence to achieve some form of superordinate goal.

Another additional challenge for the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) is to investigate processes that may influence or reduce projection that are not merely related to priming a certain type of structural categorisation or valence related to that categorisation. While the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner et al. 2000) has illustrated how a common identity can reduce conflict between groups, it is also apparent through an analysis of the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999) that the flexibility and adaptability of human beings means that subgroup identity concerns can still be relevant and influential in a re-categorisation. Therefore, while studies have illustrated the positive outcomes of tolerance that occur when a complex representation of the superordinate category is primed (Waldzus et al. 2005; Waldzus et al. 2003), researchers must also address the question of how different types of category formation can be developed and not simply imposed. In this sense, this line of research has similarities with Haslam's concept of organic pluralism and the ASPIRe model, where a series of processes are developed to nurture and respect subgroup identities in terms of the goals of an overarching organisational framework (Eggins et al. 2002). The similarities of this approach to the present analysis that sought to reduce Ingroup Projection through processes that respected subgroup identities is striking, and the investigation of this relationship deserves further research attention.

The Impact of Voice

While the present analysis examined the role of voice in facilitating the acceptance of change, in some forms voice can become a mechanism for high status groups to promote social stability rather than acting as an agent for social change. According to Tajfel (1975), the decline in the relative position of a group or the threat of such a decline has certain psychological consequences relevant to the use of group voice. As the relativities of the higher status group are primarily concerned with the preservation of differentials, it is logical to expect that granted the opportunity higher status groups will be likely to use group voice to maintain their relatively higher status position. While Tajfel (1975) used

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this example of voice in resisting a decline of the positive distinctiveness of a group in an organisational context, a recent example in a Southern Hemisphere rugby union tournament illustrates a similar point. The Super 14 tournament comprises 14 rugby union teams from New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, and in 2006 the latter country decided that the South African team that finished lowest on the table would be replaced by the regional team in South Africa that finished highest in the South African national competition. However halfway through the 2006 Super 14 tournament, and with relegation becoming a possibility for a number of South African teams, there was a change of perspective where 2006 Super 14 South African teams began using their voice and influence to demand that the relegation rule be abolished.

Thus while the use of voice in the present thesis was created to represent procedural justice concerns in a changing intergroup context, voice can also act as a barrier to change when high status groups are motivated to exert their relative power and influence through voice in order to maintain their relatively superior position. This analysis suggests that voice by itself is not a magical ingredient in promoting change, but instead is a reflection of the social context and the ability of groups to engage with that social structure in order to achieve a positively distinct social identity.

5.3 Directions for Further Research: The Importance of a Psychological Interpretation of a Group's History in Understanding the Present Context

The concept of identity has often been conceptualised as Janus-faced (Freeman 2001; Mummundey & Wenzel 1999; Breakwell 1992), where the content and meaning of a social identity is normatively defined through processes operating at a social structural level, but group members also exhibit considerable agency in constructing their social identities to achieve a sense of positive distinctiveness. The Social Identity Approach adopts an interactionist framework to explain the flexibility of human beings in relating to, adapting to, understanding and modifying the cultural and structural settings that define the social context (Haslam 2001, Reicher 2004). However, the normative function of identities that can develop as a function of a group's recent past or history has received little analysis in a tradition that has focused its research on intergroup comparisons. The problem with this limitation of experimental research on intergroup relations is that it tends to obscure the process of how groups evolve and "become", through its neglect of the dimensions of time, or in broader terms the "historical dimension" (Drury & Reicher 2000: Spears et al. 2001).

While the present analysis has investigated the motivations associated with maintaining a recent ingroup in a changing context, there is no comprehensive analysis of how, why or when an ingroup in the present will return to the past (possibly as a response to a threat), reconstructing or utilising an historical aspect of their identity to develop or protect a sense of positive distinctiveness in the present.

According to Tajfel (1981), attempts at applications of social psychological generalisations to any concrete social context are bound to fail unless they are made against the background of detailed social, cultural, economic and historical analysis. While not diminishing the importance that Tajfel placed on these factors, it is evident that these were not his primary focus, as he describes them as "*not within the competence of the social psychologist*" (p. 48). However, concentrating on one of these factors, the history of a group, it seems that recent research investigating psychological aspects of an ingroup's negative history reflected through collective guilt (Branscombe, Doosje & McGarty 2002; Doosje & Branscombe 2003; Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, Manstead 1998) would suggest that such an analysis is in the competence and interest of the social psychologist. It seems surprising that an investigation of how present day group members can actively pursue social action as a function of their group's recent past or even reconstruct their group's history to reflect a sense of positive distinctiveness has received little research, especially as its value to social psychology seems so extensive as there are many circumstances where the violent, symbolic and real exclusion of people from the narrative of the past acts as a source of violence for the present.

The Importance of Identity Processes in Conflict Formation

For example, if you think of the example of the Israeli Palestinian situation in the Middle East, one may ask how it can be explained in terms of a simple ingroup/outgroup comparison. It can probably be construed that the Israeli occupation and creation of Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories is in part an attempt to increase or at least maintain the current differences between the Palestinians and themselves. Likewise, the Palestinians use of suicide bombers may be seen as a strategy aimed at making Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories appear unstable and illegitimate. But what does this tell us psychologically about how these groups of people came to be in the present situation? And what do these methods mean for *future* intergroup relations in the Middle East, as to how

these groups could put aside their past histories and present ideologies to move forward and live peacefully?

One way that has become increasingly popular in describing the situation is to describe one side as "evil" and one side as "good". While this may provide a useful context for some people to place themselves and their ideologies in the general framework of the situation, I find it personally a very unsatisfying account for the following reasons. The first is that the words good and evil give no psychological account of why people are behaving in a certain manner, apart from perhaps suggesting that your group (the we) is "good", while the comparison group (the them) is "evil". One consequence of this may be the de-humanisation of those labelled as evil, with the consequence of treating those described as evil as sub-human. This can be seen in the conflict between the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda, where the Tutsis were referred to as "inyenzi" (cockroaches) by the Hutus, which served to justify the Hutus' slaughter of the Tutsis. This type of de-humanisation can also be seen in the invasion of Iraq by the "coalition of the willing", as the following quote by an American soldier makes clear:

"This is as pure a fight of good versus evil as we will probably experience during our lifetimes," said Colonel Craig Tucker, a US Marine Corps team leader. A US commander, Gareth Brandl, was even more emphatic. "The enemy has got a face. He's called Satan. He's in Falluja and we're going to destroy him." (On the American assualt on Falluja, 9.11.04).

In both circumstances this form of de-humanisation has led to the erosion of human rights. In Rwanda the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Tutsis illustrate the point, and in Iraq investigations into the abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib are ongoing.

The second problem I see with these words is that they take no account of the processes that led to the two groups being in the situation they are now in. There is no account of history, culture, politics or psychological processes that contributed to the formation of attitudes and behaviours that are being displayed. This erosion of the understanding of the *processes* involved in a group or people developing such attitudes and

behaviour is one of the greatest misgivings in relying on these words to explain such phenomenon.

But to truly understand the psychological processes involved in explaining the violence of the present, a greater emphasis must be placed on how these identities are formed as a consequence of their history in combination with the comparative context of the present. If we take ethnic groups as a starting point, the variety of inter-ethnic contact situations that people may engage in is enormous, and can not be simply reduced to a contextual comparison with a relevant outgroup at a set period of time. The historical context of relationships with relevant outgroups can play an enormous part in the formation of an identity, and the attitudes and behaviours that come to be prototypical of that group because of that historical context. In other words, each new generation is in part the product of its inheritance. A case in point can be seen in ethnic nationalities in Israel and the Palestinian territories. What it means to be Jewish, or Palestinian is not just purely determined by their comparison at a snap shot in time, but the history of what it means to be Jewish or Palestinian, as well as the history of their contact with relevant groups, plays an important part in defining and redefining identities.

Israel: Development of Identity

One example to illustrate this point is through an analysis of the construction of a Jewish identity that is assumed to reflect a single, timeless, cultural essence (Herman 1977). According to this perception, Jewish people are one people who are bound together by a common history and destiny. Yet the concept of identity in the Social Identity Tradition (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Turner et al. 1987) conceives identity as a process that is fluid and adaptive. A sense of identity cannot be divorced from history or context, and is in fact reliant on these factors in its development and how that identity is displayed. As Reicher and Hopkins (2001) argue, identities cannot always be defined by one single timeless prototype. Identities are constantly interpreted and adapted, evolving or dissolving as time progresses. This can be seen in the development and modification of what it meant to be Jewish after World War II, in comparison with what it meant to be Jewish in the centuries preceding the war. Before the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, the dominant language for approximately 1000 years for Jewish people living in the diaspora was Yiddish. It was an expression of their distinctive identity as a people, and it reflected a secular, humanist and often socialist expression of Jewish identity that was in association with Jews living in

exile in the diaspora, also a reflection of an identity of acceptance and passivity. Yiddish was thus a language that represented Jewish people living as a minority in the diaspora.

With the establishment of the State of Israel, a situation arose where Jewish people were now able to be members of a majority in their own sovereign state. Yet their identity was still closely intertwined with the recent past, where the passivity of Jewish people living in the diaspora was no longer seen as a positive aspect of Jewish identity and arguably posed an identity threat as a perspective grew that in the holocaust Jews had been guilty of "going like lambs to the slaughterhouse". As a consequence, Yiddish, and the passive identity associated with it was not embraced as the official language for Israel. What arose as the official language was the ancient biblical language of Hebrew. Hebrew represented an identity that was both distinctive and positive from Yiddish. It represented an action-orientated ideology, reminiscent of Jews relating themselves to the warriors such as Ben Cochba at the fortress of Masada, or even further back to Jews of the earliest biblical days (Herman 1977). In comparison to Yiddish, it also reflected a language that represents religion as much as it does the State. In this case it is far from secular, as can be seen in November 1948 with the creation of the Academy for Hebrew Language in Jerusalem (Pappe 2004).

This reinterpretation of identity represented by language, can be seen as an attempt by a generation of Jews, particularly Jewish people living as a powerful majority in their own sovereign State, to address their contemporary location, identity and interests in contrast to their past. It also represents an altered psychological condition where Jewish people face up to a threat or attack on their identity through action and not passivity, whether the threat be real or perceived. Israel's fierce determination not to repeat the past is thus a guide for the present and the future, and Jewish identity traditionally or historically perceived influences how Jewish people will embrace their identity in its current form, or reinterpret it in contrast to the current system of social relations to guide social action.

The reinvention of what it meant to be prototypically Jewish, not by simply rejecting a past or current identity, but by comparing that form of identification with a more ancient interpretation of their cultural identity also helps to illustrate that there is not a timeless, common identity that all Jewish people hold true. Instead that people can be adaptive entrepreneurs of identity, reinventing the content of identity, not just through

comparisons with different outgroups as Doosje et al. (1999) have shown, but also in comparison to past representations of their own group.

Finally, it is possible that this strategic re-interpretation of history can act as a source of social influence in defining the present. Similar to ingroup projection, by re-categorising history not only can a sense of positive distinctiveness for a group be created in the present, but it can also provide an ingroup with the opportunity to define what the more inclusive "we" in the current time should be. Through this a prototypical position is established for other subgroups and individuals to conform to. For example, on the 33rd anniversary of the Row v. Wade United States Supreme Court decision that established federal abortion rights, President George Bush Jr invoked a sense of common history to support his view of the decision. Addressing anti-abortion activists he stated that:

"We, of course, seek common ground where possible, we're working to persuade more of our fellow Americans of the rightness of our cause, and this is a cause that appeals to the conscience of our citizens and is rooted in America's deepest principles – history tells us that with such a cause we will prevail".

Therefore, while the present set of studies has illustrated how in a merger situation, pre-merger groups will interpret the post-merger situation according to the relationship that existed between groups before the merger, a fuller theoretical and empirical analysis of how returning to that recent or distant past to justify and create relevant aspects of identity for present and future intergroup relations and actions would aid in the evolution of the Social Identity Tradition.

5.4 Concluding Remarks

To conclude, although the present research provides some progress in both of its major aims of analysing social identity threat and ingroup projection, there is still progress to be made both theoretically and empirically on these concepts. Firstly, based on my investigation of social identity threat, it is suggested that while Branscombe et al's. (1999) typology may provide a useful tool through which a functional distinction can be made between different types of identity threat and its outcomes, perhaps the relationship between the proposed types of threat is more complex and interrelated than the typology

suggests. For example, the present thesis showed that to the degree that participants felt their group's distinctiveness had been compromised by a merger, they also felt that the value of their group had been threatened, thus reflecting a threat to both the context and the content of the pre-merger identity. However, while my results suggest that value and distinctiveness threat draw much of their relevance and meaning from each other and should be conceptualised as one factor, I would hesitate to treat these results as dogma. As Mlicki & Ellemers (1996) have shown in realistic group settings, it may be the case that there are certain circumstances where a group will be motivated to pursue a distinctive identity at the expense of a positive identity. To examine this theoretical point further, it is probably necessary to investigate in more depth the origins of both of these positive and distinctive aspects of self across different settings and contexts. Does one occur generally as a consequence of the other, or is there another factor that explains the development of both?

Regarding the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999), the present thesis has made an important step forward in illustrating how ingroup projection can occur out of instrumental identity concerns related to a threatened identity. And while research investigating ingroup projection has previously manipulated the valence and structure of the superordinate category as a mechanism for limiting ingroup projection (Weber et al. 2002), the present analysis differs in that it provides evidence to suggest how a process such as voice may also regulate ingroup projection in a merger context. To this degree, while understanding how people will respond at the perceptual and behavioral level when different levels of categorisation are invoked, it is also important to understand when individuals will be particularly motivated to affirm an identity in a certain context.

Finally, while I have examined how new categories are defined in terms of merging groups, the knowledge and theoretical understanding that guided this research was developed from a school of thought that seeks to understand discrimination and prejudice. The motivations for the development of Social Identity Theory can be seen with Henri Tajfel's experience in Prisoner of War camps throughout the holocaust (Turner 1996), and while the present thesis has not directly investigated this phenomenon, it is felt that by researching the structures and circumstances under which groups can cooperate or discriminate, a small step has been added to the general understanding of how such atrocities can occur or be prevented. Moving away from an analysis that sees prejudice as a

function of individual factors, the present thesis has taken the view that outcomes of prejudice and discrimination are normal psychological processes that are the outcome of a number of different psychological, historical, sociological and political variables and processes (Reynolds & Turner 2001).

By highlighting processes aimed to increase perceptions of acceptance of social change and legitimacy in the present thesis, a line of justice research that nominates processes and structures as one way of achieving justice and fairness has been continued. Associated with procedural justice is the creation of conditions that encourage respect and tolerance, and it is through these that the negative outcomes of group membership such as prejudice and discrimination should be reduced. The importance of these procedures and structures is epitomised by Martin Bormann, the son of Adolf Hitler's private secretary and Hitler's own god son who attempts to manage the shame and guilt he feels at being psychologically associated and identified with Hitler's Third Reich and its atrocities:

"I no longer have the luxury of believing there are evil people and good people: These possibilities lie very close together and this means we are all much more defenceless. You cannot simply "screen out" the evil people. The important thing is to make sure you do not create the circumstances where this side of human nature can thrive".

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Appendix A

**Association Test A:**

The questions below were presented to all participants in all three studies as part of a set of association tests designed to place participants in quasi-minimal groups. In actual fact, participant's answers to the questions were not recorded, and the series of questions were primarily designed to give a sense of legitimacy to the groups the experimenter created and placed participants in for the series of studies. The following series of questions asked participants to match a keyword with one of four possible word matches, and was referred to as Association Test A.

Which word would you associate most closely with the keyword:

(1) Cow: Horse, Farmer, Milk, Grass

(2) House: Number, Street, Living, Room

(3) Park: Trees Picnic, Playground, Outside

(4) Dinner: Meal, Cutlery, Hungry, Eating

(5) Computer: Keyboard, Technology, Screen, Internet

(6) Weather: Seasons, Temperature, Rain, Climate

(7) Watch: Time, Wrist, Hands, Clock

(8) Calendar: Days, Months, Year, Date

(9) Potato: Food, Vegetable, Ground, Pumpkin

(10) School: Read, Learn, Teacher, Student

(11) Chair: Sit, Legs, Furniture, Table

(12) Car: Garage, Transport, Road, Vehicle

Association Test B:

The questions below were presented to all participants in all three studies as the second part of a set of association tests designed to place participants in quasi-minimal groups. In actual fact, participant's answers to the questions were not recorded, and the series of questions were primarily designed to give a sense of legitimacy to the groups the experimenter created and placed participants in for the series of studies. The following series of questions asked participants to match a key picture with one of four possible word or picture matches, and was referred to as Association Test B.

(1) Which picture do you associate most closely with the following Key Picture?
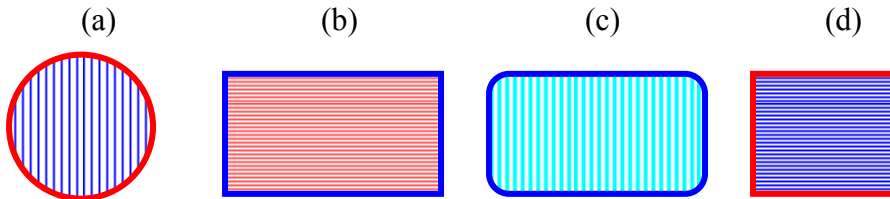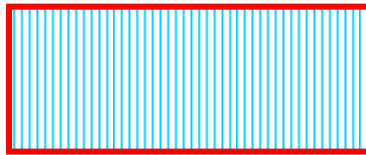
(a)   (b)   (c)   (d)

(2) Which word do you associate most closely with the following picture?
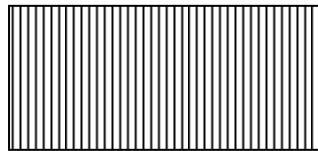
(a) Barcode   (b) Jail   (c) Grill   (d) Ladder

(3) Which picture do you associate most closely with the following keypicture?
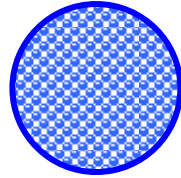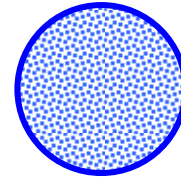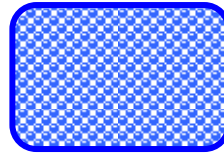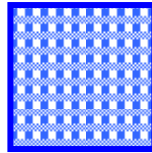
(a)   (b)   (c)   (d)

(4) Which word do you associate most closely with the following picture?
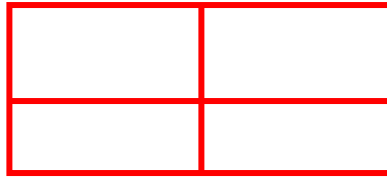
(a) Flag   (b) Window   (c) Cross   (d) Table Tennis Table

(5) Which picture do you associate most closely with the following key picture?
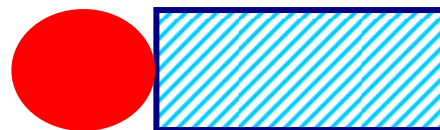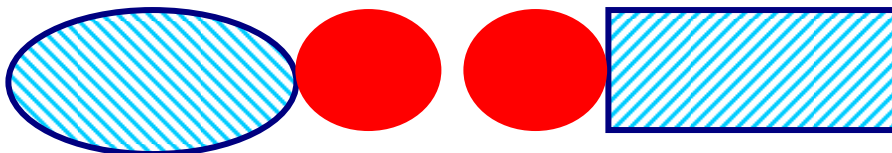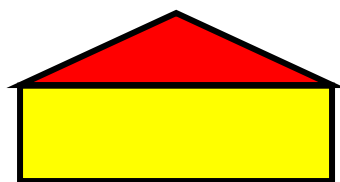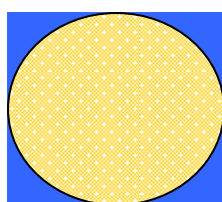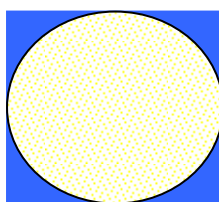

(a)   (b)
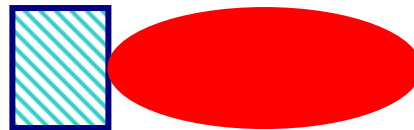
(c)   (d)

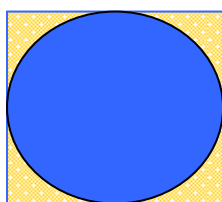(6) Which word do you associate most closely with the following picture?

(a) House   (b) Cake   (c) Box   (d) Circus Tent

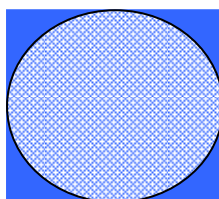(7) Which picture do you associate most closely with the following keypicture?
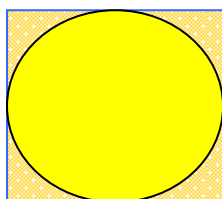

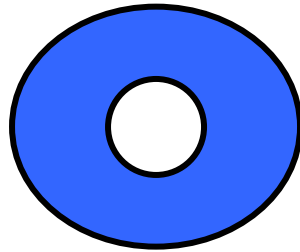(a)   (b)

(c)   (d)

(8) Which word do you associate most closely with the following picture?

(a) Hat   (b) Factory   (c) Vase   (d) Chimney

(9) Which picture do you associate most closely with the following key picture?

(a)   (b)

(c)   (d)

(10) Which word do you associate most closely with the following picture?
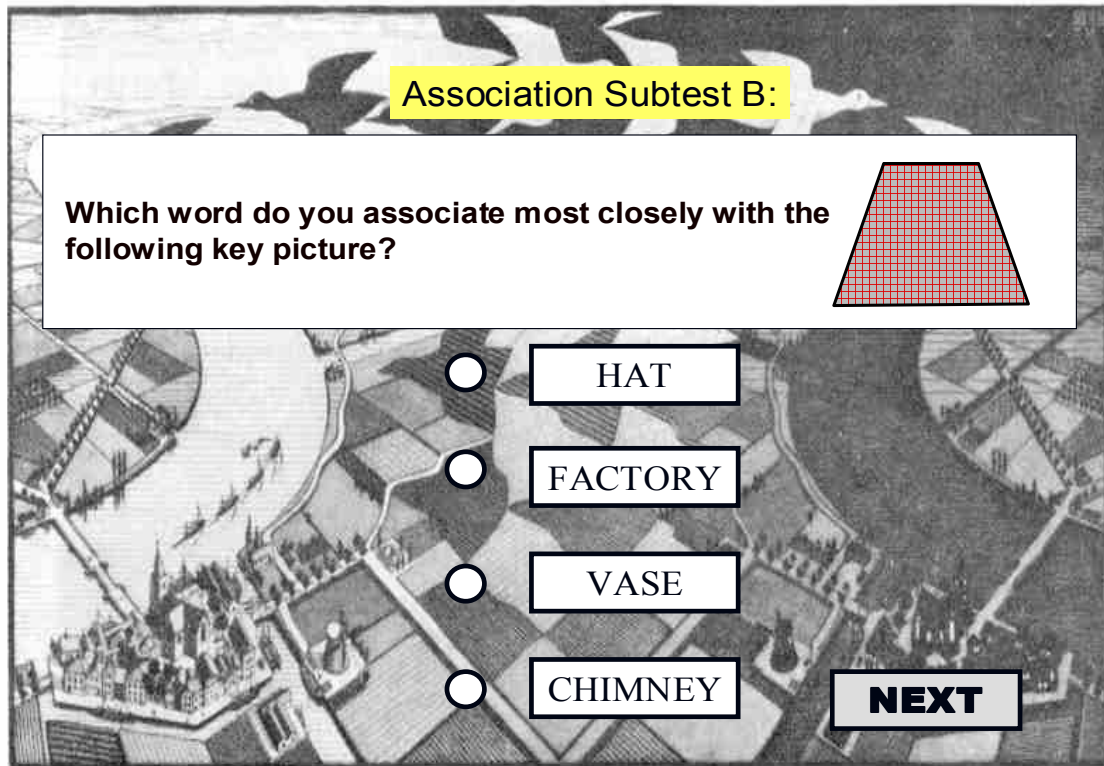

(a) Doughnut   (b) Button   (c) Wheel   (d) Hole

Appendix B

Association Test Visual Representation:

Below is an example of the the visual display in which the association tests were presented to participants on their computer screens.

Appendix C

Example of E-Mail System

The picture below is an example of the fake computer e-mail system that was intended to give a sense of legitimacy to the experimental design.

WHAT TO DO?	Sending eMAIL

Sending Messages

Please write a short e-mail to the other participants (e.g. "Hello", etc) in the top box on the right hand side of this page. The message will be sent to the masterpc and distributed to the other participants.

Reading Messages

If you receive messages, a box will appear which will show the number of incoming messages from the other inductive thinkers soon after you send yours. Please click on START below to write an e-mail.

Sending eMAIL

Send to: masterpc@thinkstyle.anu.edu.au

Receive eMAIL

Connected to: masterpc@thinkstyle.anu.edu.au

Message 1: From A129: Just checking this is real!

Message 2: From A112: I hope these tasks are interesting!

Message 3: From A139: Do you think we can finish early?!

Message 4: From A127: Inductive thinkers hey.....how are you?

Message 5: From A114: Hello! Hope everyone is well!!

START

Next

Appendix D

Identification Manipulation

Below are the questions that participant's were informed their manipulated identification score was derived from, and after the questions is an example of the computer simulation that informed participants whether they were a high identifier (as in the example) or a low identifier.

(1)   Relationships with other people are important to me

(2)   Sometimes I feel lonely

(3)   I feel relaxed explaining my views to strangers

(4)   Public speaking makes me nervous

(5)   I generally speak to people before they speak to me

(6)   I enjoy membership to many different groups

(7)   I prefer not to stereotype people

(8)   I prefer not to be dependent on others

(9)   My emotions are usually stable and not affected by mood swings

(10)   It is important to listen to other people's points of view, even if you do not agree with them

(11)   I am always ready to take on new challenges
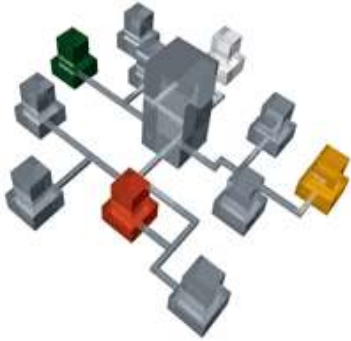
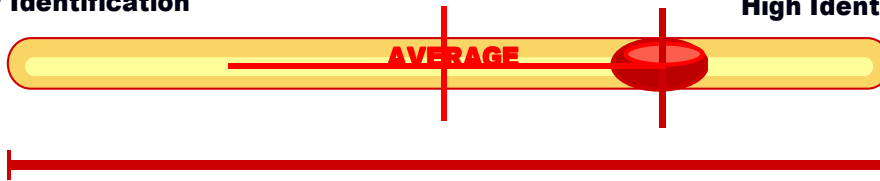|	**Performance Feedback on the Online Identification Questionnaire**
	The Masterpc is now evaluating your responses to the Identification measures.
	Please wait a moment for your feedback.

<p style="color:red; text-align:center;">You scored 57! You are a high identifier!</p>

<p style="color:red; text-align:center;">The average for participants in this session was 40!</p>

Low Identification   **High Identification**

AVERAGE

Appendix E

Freeze Time Example of Merger Manipulation

Below is an example of the merger manipulation that visually indicated that the inductive and deductive thinkers had merged into one category called the global thinkers.