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TRUST IN WORKPLACE: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY

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Abstract

Trust has emerged as a vital concept among researchers and practitioners in the area of organisational behaviour and organisational psychology for developing a healthy workplace relationship. On the other hand, in spite of its significance, there is no pervasive definition of the construct. Researchers from various fields have explored the construct empirically and have developed theories, models and measures concerning trust. The aim of this research paper was to investigate and review the extant literature available on trust in the workplace. A descriptive literature review method was adopted as it supports exploring and presenting wide-range insights on the construct. The study presents definitions, dimensions, theoretical foundations, approaches and their importance towards interpersonal, societal and organisation. This paper would be useful to researchers and practitioners in general to understand trust in the workplace, challenges and the process of trust building. The paper also discusses the practical and theoretical implications.

Keywords: *Trust in the workplace, Social Trust, Organisational Trust, Co-worker, Supervisor, Organisational Behaviour.*

INTRODUCTION

Trust is an important component of human life either personal or professional. It is observed that trusting employees trims down over-heads, enhancing the flourishing experience towards organisational citizenship behaviour (Srivastava and Mohaley, 2022; Fischer *et al.,* 2020). Trust is one of the factors which has played and has always given way to perform optimistically at the workplace, such as employee collaboration, problem resolving, and transparent communication (Taylor *et al.,* 2023). Researchers have recognised trust (interpersonal) in the workplace, among employees helps in the development of social capital within the organisation (Dirks and Jong, 2022; Ferres *et al.,* 2004). This facilitates positive experiences and healthier relationships among employees impacting organisational positive outcomes. Research indicates that trusting individuals are more contented and have healthier lives than mistrusting individuals (Kahkonen *et al.,* 2021).

A simple and generic explanation of trust in academic literature is barely available (Vieira *et al.,* 2021; Tomlinson, *et al.,* 2020; Ferres *et al.,* 2005). Trust is frequently demarcated in terms of one's defencelessness toward actions, faith and intentions of others behaviour leading to optimistic consequences (Schilke *et al.,* 2023; Blobaum, 2021; Kahkonen *et al.,* 2021; Ferres *et al.,* 2004). However, individuals choose whom they wish to spread out their trust and their selection is grounded on alleged reliability which acts as a foundation of trust (Hancock *et al.,* 2023; Vamahala and Tzafrir, 2021; Cui *et al.,* 2015). Organisations enable their employees to participate in diverse activities within the organizations to endorse trusting defiance and workplace behaviour. This is anticipated to support employees' nurturing of their emotion of cheerfulness and to connect emotionally with their team members to foster social trust (Arup and Svendsen, 2017; Putnam, 1995). It is a well-known fact about how relationships are applied at the workplace despite the mechanisms of developing teams within the organisation. Research indicates that trusting countries are more efficient and develop faster than less trusting countries (Lenton *et al.,* 2022). As Warren Buffet (2009) says "Trust is similar to the oxygen we inhale, while it is available in the atmosphere, no one is concerned and in case it's insufficient everyone is concerned".

Putnam's (1993, 1995) decisive research on "civic rendezvous and social trust", argued that associations at organisations are regarded as mutual or collective errands having affirmative outcomes. Employees participate collectively towards achieving common objectives though they are diverse. Developing the spirit of teamwork, mutual benefit and shared responsibility leads towards having a positive effect (Dinesen and Bekkers, 2017). This is transformed into an instinct, guiding towards a healthy interaction at the workplace. Social trust describes an individual's faith in honesty, reliability plus integrity of others that is confidence in people. But it has always been a concern and never been easy to figure out who trusts or why. Social trust emphasises trust that is relational amid individuals rather than straight down or apolitical, flanked by individuals (Putnam, 1995). It is an essential component of social capital and in general, used as a key indicator and sometimes the only single indicator. If trust is without a doubt an important factor, then it should be interesting to know more about social trust. "Social capital refers to values in human relations of social network and is associated with sustained competitive advantage (Arup and Svendsen, 2017; Putnam, 1995). Through organisational learning, knowledge sharing, innovation, reducing transaction cost and better financial performance are possible only when the employees effectively work together through trust" (Ramdas and Patrick, 2022; Lau *et al.,* 2014; McAllistar 1995). Social capital is the ability that arises commencing the occurrence of trust in the social order (community) or assured parts. It belongs to the smallest social group which is the family and also the largest group which is the nation. However, it differs from the types of human capital, as it is generally formed and spread through socio-cultural machinery like local practices, beliefs and habits. The literature on social capital suggests that individuals' social experiences are developed first and foremost over and done with varied societal relations in the middle age which enhances social trust or trust in the workplace (Arup and

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Svendsen, 2017; Putnam, 2005; Yamagishi and Yamagishi, 1994). Trust in the workplace is an important aspect based on employees' self-confidence in their ability to manage the workplace status quo.

Research Questions

The aim of this study was to understand the trust definitions, dimensions, theoretical foundations, approaches, development and its importance towards interpersonal, societal and organisation with reference towards organisational effectiveness.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study presents a literature review of trust in the workplace based on the available research works. The review is a process of collecting, understanding, analysing, refining and organizing the available information to present a broad prologue, explanation, and assessment of an explicit research topic or phenomenon of significance (Keele 2007). The study followed the guidelines of Kitchenham (2004) to understand the available information on trust in the workplace, its importance and its impact on relationships. During the process, the study adopted subsequent actions to perform the review-

a) Understanding and defining the research subject.

b) Searching for relevant research articles.

c) Selection of research materials from the available literature from various platforms.

d) Criteria for inclusion and exclusion

e) Summarising the literature based on the research question.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria ensured that all pertinent research articles were included and those which were not relevant to the study topic were excluded. If the inclusion is very broad, there is always a possibility of including sub-standard works which impacts the overall quality of the study outcomes. In another view, if the inclusion criteria are too stringent, the outcome would be a small aspect and cannot be generalised (Meline, 2006). The study relied on research articles, theses, books, reports and internet sources. This process enhances the quality, reliability and replicability allowing the amalgamation of the existing research towards providing a theoretical framework and generating future research questions (Witell *et al.,* 2016). The method supports to identify of similarities and contradictions in previous research works and blends existing research work to summarise and provide a new perspective.

Definitions of Trust

Research indicates the diversity in trust and its multiplicity which has led to immense interest and various operational definitions. Despite the petite accord, Hosmer (1995) acknowledged that different definitions and meanings have contributed to a superior understanding or consideration of trust. Various authors have defined trust in numerous ways.

Table 1: Lists a few of the trust definitions over a period of time

Trust Definitions	Authors/Year
"Willingness to act under circumstances of uncertainty"	Currall and Judge (1995) Albrecht and Travaglione (2003)
"The extent to which one is willing to ascribe good intentions to and have confidence in the words and actions of other people"	Cook and Wall (1980)
"Trust pertains to whether or not one individual is able to value what another is up to and demonstrate respect for him or her particularly when the individual's need and those of the person taking the action momentarily compete"	Culbert and McDonough (1986)
"Trust is the anticipation of ethical, fair, and non-threatening behaviour and concerns for the rights of others"	Carnevale and Wechsler (1992)

"It's a default expectation of other people's trustworthiness, is assumed to be a predictor for promotion of health and welfare in individuals as well as for strengthening of social capital in the community".	Yamagishi, T. and Yamagishi, M. (1994)
"A willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that party".	Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, (1995)
"Trust in the workplace is regarded as a willingness to be transparent and open towards co-workers and be positive about their behaviour and intentions in the key matters".	Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, (1995)
"The extent to which a person is confident in and willing to act on the basis of the words, actions, and decisions of another".	McAllister (1995)
"States that the association at a place of work are observed as mutual duties that are norms of reciprocity. As a result, employees learn to have mutual admiration, collaborate and dissent".	Putnam (1993)
"One party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the belief that the latter party is (a) competent, (b) open, (c) concerned, and (d) reliable".	Mishra (1996)
"A psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another".	Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer, (1998)
"The attitude that an agent will help achieve an individual's goals in a situation characterized by uncertainty and vulnerability".	Lee and See (2004)
"Individual's positive expectations about others' benevolent motives during social interactions".	Yamagishi (2011)
"An individual's calculated exposure to the risk of harm from the actions of an influential other".	Hancock, Billings, Olsen, Chen, de Visser, and Parasuraman (2011; 2023)

Source: Author's Compilation

These definitions of trust put forward the guidelines of the meaning and its significance. Starting with individuals, groups and institutions, a trust may engage the belief, intentions and behaviour as expected per the ethical conduct (Hsu, 2022; Kaplan *et al.,* 2020; Engelbrecht *et al.,* 2017; Bowen *et al.,* 2017). Next, it indicates a barter association where the trustor is keen to interact by demonstrating the behaviour of trust and risk propensity to an extent that none will be oppressed. (Hancock *et al.,* 2023; Kmieciak, 2021; Fisher *et al.,* 2020; Dias, 2018; Yamagishi, 2011; Ferres and Travaglione 2003; Mishra, 1996) For instance, when trust is engaged in excess, the progress of an individual's trustworthiness and readiness to perform is based on their judgements.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Though there has been considerable attention, 'trust' has gained in the recent past, yet Mistzal, (1996) acknowledged that there has been "uncertainty and it continues with an augmented assortment of approaches and perspectives". However, recent literature indicates that there have been attempts to put together the viewpoints of trust into hypothetical or notional categories based on the consequence and their contribution toward trust (Taylor *et al.,* 2023; Blobaum, 2021; Kahkonen *et al.,* 2021; Cook and Santana, 2020: Tomlinson *et al.,* 2020; Masacco, 2000; Clark and Payne, 1997; Lewiki and Bunker, 1995; Mishra, 1996: Putnam, 1993). Later workplace trust or trust in the workplace was examined based on early experimental, dispositional, sociological, psychological, ethical and generalist organisational perspectives as advocated by

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Massaco (2000) and later supported by other researchers works (Metz *et al.,* 2022: Blobaum, 2021; Kahkonen *et al.,* 2021; Cook and Santana, 2020; Tomlinson *et al.,*

2020). The below table outlines the importance and analysis of the theoretical approaches.

Table 2: Theoretical Approaches to Trust

Orientation/ Authors	Importance	Analysis/Censure
Early or Initial Experimental/Investigation on **Social Psychologists** Deutsch (1958, 1960a, 1960b); Loomis (1959)	Revolutionised trust studies. Confirmed trust is concerned with expectations or hope, exploring alternatives towards making conscious decisions. Trust may inspire an individual's prospects and boost their potential. It establishes the significance of assurance in others' framework, collaboration and communication to trust.	Considered as an artificial investigational environment. The subjects were strangers. Deutsch imprecisely understood that 'cooperation' was similar to trust (Mayer *et al.,* 1995). Cooperation is considered an improved version of trust (Power *et al.,* 2018; Masacco, 2000) and a cognitive-based approach to trust, disregarding the emotional aspect (Shamin *et al.,* 2023; Tsurumi *et al.,* 2021; Tomlinson *et al.,* 2020).
Dispositional Perspective / Erikson (1963) Rotter (1967, 1971); Johnson-George, and Swap (1982); Rempel and Holmes (1986)	Trust is based on personality capricious. Individuals do have a tendency to either trust or not. Past experiences or socialisation can be considered as antecedents to trust.	While Rotter stressed that trust was being influenced by uncertainty in the situation (Bigely and Pierce, 1998; Couch and Jones, 1997). However, earlier works did not consider trust as an appropriate variable and there is partial clarification with reference to other factors which decisively affect the outcome of trust (Ferres and Travaglione, 2003; Masacco, 2000). Nevertheless, recent work does consider trust as an important variable which influences positive outcomes (McCarthy *et al.,* 2017; Ramdas and Patrick, 2019)
Sociological Perspective Luhman (1979, 1988); Barber (1983); Lewis, and Weigert (1985); Doney, Cannon, and Mullen (1998); Seligman (1997);	Trust is entrenched in social systems that are patterned networks of associations based on cultural constructs. It is well–planned, clear and sensible amid individuals, groups and institutions on societal norms (Albrecht and Sevastos, 1999). It helps to decrease the difficulty in social life towards an easy process for social order and concord.	Not much literature was initially available with empirical evidence (Masacco, 2000; Ferres and Travaglione 2003) making it difficult for researchers to understand the specific behaviour of individuals within social groups (Mayer and Davis, 1999). However, currently, there is quite some work on social/psychological dimensions of trust among individuals or groups (Schilke *et al.,* 2023; Cook and Santana, 2020; Power *et al.,* 2018; Wang *et al.,* 2015).

Psychological Perspective Lewicki and Bunker (1995, 1996); Sheppard and Tuchinsky, (1996); Tyler and DeGoey (1996);	Trust as a psychological state was recognised by most researchers. Many theoretical perspectives on trust exist within this category, e.g., calculus-based, knowledge-based, identification-based, and rational-choice models. Early experimental or investigational work on trust in the area of organisational perspective is also looked upon, focusing on the psychological perspective.	There are criticisms based on trust types framed within the psychological state perspective (Cognition state). That is, the evidence of trust is due to a lack of meticulous cognitive computations (Bigley and Pierce, 1998). Also, affective, social and relational dimensions of trust are not addressed sufficiently in solely cognitive models earlier (Albrecht and Sevastos, 1999; Ferres and Travaglione, 2003). In recent times there has been good empirical work in this area too (Hsu, 2022; Clement, 2020; Punyatoya, 2019)
Organisational Perspective Zand (1972) Jones and Bowie, (1998); Shaw, (1997); Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, and Werner (1998); Creed and Miles (1996)	Organisational perspective is always an interesting area, inspiring researchers to investigate trust as a vital component towards organisational effectiveness. Focuses on the trust's theoretical approaches to establish its impact and influence on employees or supervisors or leaders, teams or groups and the structure of an organisation and its processes.	Though a recent entrant has restricted consistency in the understanding, analysis and interpretation, with reference to comparability and assessment of organisational trust via empirical works. It's the standard pointer for organisational and employee effectiveness with reference to productivity and efforts – intangible. Principle indicators of employee and organisational effectiveness, such as 'effort' or 'productivity' are occasionally intangible and complex to measure trust. (Karhapaa *et al.,* 2022: Driks and Jong, 2022; Fisher *et al.,* 2020; Cohen, 2015; Ferres and Travaglione 2003)

Source: Author's Compilation

Table 3: Theoretical Approaches - Behavioural and Psychological Trust

	Behavioural		Psychological	
Key Issue		**Uni-dimensional**	**Two-dimensional**	**Transformational**
How trust is defined and measured?	Derived from confidence. Measured by observable behaviour in experiments	Optimistic expectations; scales from distrust to high trust	trust = optimistic expectations distrust = pessimistic expectations	expected costs and benefits; qualitative indicators
At what level does trust begin?	From zero or cooperative behaviour	from nought (0) to initial trust	from low levels	begins at the calculus-based stage
What causes trust (distrust) over time?	Enhance due to cooperative behaviour (increase in competitive behaviour)	greater number of positive (negative) interactions	number of optimistic/ pessimistic interactions	grows with positive relationships (grows with

				disconfirmed expectations)

Source: Author's Compilation

Note: Adapted from Dias 2018; Lewicki, Tomlinson and Gillespie, 2006; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer, 1998; Mayer, Davis and Schoorman, 1995; Lewicki and Bunker, 1995, 1996

As per table 3, trust is seen through two theories of behavioural and psychological studies, where it is looked from three dimensions that is 1) *the uni-dimensional model, where trust and dis-trust are* opposites and 2) the *two-dimensional model*, where trust and dis-trust are independent and 3) *the transformational model*, where trust is considered as a dynamic factor.

Trust Dimensions, Theoretical Foundations and approaches

Studying trust in the workplace can be difficult and challenging. To offer similar views across a number of conceptualisations based on the multiplicity of approaches (refer to Table 2). Research indicates that efforts have been made to fit the trust viewpoints into theoretic classifications grounded on the importance towards trust (Dirks and Jong, 2022; Kahkonen *et al.,* 2021; Blobaum, 2021; Tomlinson *et al.,* 2020: Dias, 2018; Engelbrecht *et al.,* 2017: Masacco, 2000; Yamagishi and Yamagishi, 1994). However, the uniqueness of the trust perspectives can be debated, since each perspective has endorsed the advancement of construct and its importance towards the examination of interpersonal, societal and organisational levels as initially argued by Ferres and Travaglione, (2003). Trust is a multifaceted paradigm in the workplace and it takes time and effort to build trust. Supervisor must first demonstrate their trustworthiness among their followers to instil confidence about the organisation's core values, beliefs etc. It reflects the leader's/supervisor's attitude towards creating a trusting work environment for better engagement (Patrick *et al.,* 2022). Researchers have also used various dimensions to frame and structure trust, based on the trust dimensions, i.e., dispositional, dyadic and impersonal (Breuer *et al.,* 2020; McCarthy *et al.,* 2017; Gupta *et al.,* 2016; Mayer and Gavin, 2005; Leana and Van Buren, 1999).

a) Dispositional trust is based on behaviour predisposition or perspective; as well speaks of the tendency to trust. This is enhanced by the experience of teenage years and is steady through the status quo once imprinted and acts as a reference point of trust at the workplace (McCarthy *et al.,* 2017; Cue *et al.,* 2016)

b) Dyadic trust is based on identification or contributory trust that is based on the information or facts engaged toward a specific individual's trustworthiness through frequent communication or interaction. It results from their social distinctiveness, or through a certified third party (Breuer *et al.,* 2020: Gupta *et al.,* 2016; Rousseau *et al.,* 1998)

c) Impersonal trust in dissimilarity does not depend on the information of a specific person nonetheless recounts to people at large. An individual's ability to handle social situations established through other's faith or opportunistic behaviours is social trust. Emotional bonds play a pivotal role in developing social trust due to involvement in the workplace as they are regarded as mutual benefit and the norm of the workplace (Evan *et al.,* 2021; Safari *et al.,* 2020; Vanhala *et al.,* 2011).

Research indicates that cognitive, affective and cognitive-affective as the additional three dimensions to the integrative trust perspective, that were initially initiated by Levin (1999). In addition, researchers like Shamin *et al.,* (2023); Legood *et al.,* (2023); HSu, (2022); Fischer *et al.,* (2020); Reinares-lara *et al.,* (2019); Albrecht and Stevastos (2000) suggested that trust might have a rational, emotional and social basis. Putnam (1993, 1995) advocates that social interactions develop emotional bonding among employees which nurtures social trust in the organisation by creating positivity and feelings of happiness. Employees with

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different objectives come together to collaborate, share responsibilities and achieve a common goal (Kleynhans *et al.,* 2022; Krug *et al.,* 2020; Arup and Svendsen, 2017; Putnam, 1993, 1995). They increase an individual's competency to handle social encounters with unknown individuals (untrustworthy) and facilitate individuals to uphold trust in the workplace. The antecedents to trust in the workplace are moderately un-mapped as most of the literature has looked at dyadic trust (Gupta *et al.,* 2016; Cui *et al.,* 2015). The seminal work of McAllister (1995) distinguished cognition-based trust (confidence about others' consistency and trustworthiness) in addition to affect-based trust (reciprocal, relational and disquiet).

Cognitive-based Trust

It is an uncertain choice of approved behaviour reflecting self-assured anticipation, that individuals concerned will perform proficiently and devotedly. Individuals believe that philosophies about consistency and trustworthiness are interrelated rational methods from a psychological perspective. Deutsch (1958) stated that an individual's expectations from events lead to specific behaviours due to cognitive trust and by and large emphasising anticipations, assessing alternatives over coherent decision-making. It involves a slow thinking structure that assigns consideration to thoughtful thinking and mindful dispensation of information (Hsu, 2022; Punyatoya *et al.,* 2019; Reinares-Lara *et al.,* 2019; Cui *et al,* 2015). A cognitive process is involved in three kinds of trust which have a direct impact on an individual's trust experience and development of trust based on i.e., i) calculus ii) knowledge and iii) identification. In inclusion, CBT is necessary but they do not offer an acceptable explanation of trust occurrences (Legood, *et al.,* 2023: Shamim *et al.,* 2023; Tomlinson *et al.,* 2020: Fine and Holyfield, 1996).

Affect-based Trust (ABT)

Going up on the CBT model, Fine and Holyfield (1996) put forward that "individuals not only think trust but also feel and experience it" which highlights the emotive connections and assets among individuals. Research indicates that individuals who believe in emotive investment in societal relationships genuinely express disquiets regarding individual's well-being and trust

these feelings will be reciprocated (Legood *et al.,* 2023; Emad, 2019; Punyatoya, 2019; Cui *et al.,* 2015; Rempel *et al.,* 1985). Further, this has been operationalised as an "emotional trust" component by integrating affective-based items in organisational trust investigations (Wu *et al.,* 2023; Legood *et al.,* 2023; Driks and Jong, 2022; Tomlinson *et al.,* 2020; McAllister, 1995).

Cognitive and Affective Systems (CAS)

CAS play a significant part in developing trust in social gatherings as they can independently or jointly agree on individual responses. Trusting individuals without the necessary information to judge one's trustworthiness (i.e., fast thinking) is directed by experiences gained through various social interactions or contexts and after careful evaluation of social conditions with more thoughtful analysis of social encounters is known as a 'slow thinking system' (Kahneman, 2011). When individuals understand the importance of social interaction and experience the positive effect of trust in a positive way, it helps them develop an expectation towards positive relationships at the workplace which provides the base for social trust. It contributes to the development of equally cognitive and affective fundamentals of trust in the workplace (Punyatoya, 2019; Patrick and Sunil, 2019; Cue *et al.,* 2015).

Normative-Based Trust (NBT)

Normative anticipation about individuals is motivated by the social system and social norms that are an essential contributing factor to trusting intentions (Driks and Jong, 2022; Evans *et al.,* 2021; Dirks and Ferrin, 2002; Albrecht and Sevastos, 2000). NBT is related to rule-based trust due to socialisation and continues adherence to a normative system rather than acquiring through cautious calculation of consequences. When the interaction is restricted between an individual and their trust referent (e.g., a co-worker or a manager), NBT of trust will likely be more salient than an individual perceives significance about others in the workplace as truthful and could have an emotional impact on an individual's deliberate actions.

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Behavioural Based Approach

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) behavioural intentions are the most significant predictors of actual trust behaviours. It predicts behaviour by assigning relationships between subsequent actions of behavioural intentions, attitudes and the subjective norm held by the individual. It's a central conceptualisation of trust as appeared in the various literature (de Groote and Bertschi, 2021; Tsurumi *et al.,* 2021; Reinares-lara *et al.,* 2019; Albrecht and Sevastos, 2000). Trust as behavioural intention identifies the trustor's readiness to perform according to other's opinions. In the behaviourist approach, the cognitive, affective and normative viewpoints might support the concept of trustworthiness reasonably than trust as aforementioned. Since trust is about willingness to be vulnerable; it needs to be assessed and measured the willingness. Even though the researcher's focus is on measuring the perceptions of trustworthiness and both cognitive and affective dimensions of individuals (Patrick *et al.,* 2022; Tsurumi *et al.,* 2021; Reinarea-Lara *et al.,* 2019 and McAllistar, 1996).

Relationships at the workplace are based on an individual's clarity in communication and trustworthiness. This is based on the trust that individuals develop due to their self-confidence and competence. Trust in leadership is vital for the effective functioning of the organization and it shows one's action which reflects beliefs, assumptions and personal commitment involving readiness to perform under the state of activities of vagueness (Krug *et al.,* 2020; Bligh, 2017). Effective leaders understand that for any organisation to move forward in terms of being recognised as a great place to work, trust in the workplace acts as a base that holds the organisation together in terms of work engagement and flourishing (Kleynhans *et al.,* 2022: Krugs *et al.,* 2020; Ramdas and Patrick, 2019). It's also observed that a lack of trust in the workplace has been found to be very expensive. In an organisation where a perception of lack of mutual trust exists, the management and employees become distrustful. Communication is an important medium in an organisation towards building trust among management and employees and most of the

misunderstanding happens due to lack of communication or the inability of the management or leaders to address the situation in a transparent and logical manner. This leads to mistrust or lack of trust which in turn affects the organisation in terms of employee's expression of dis-satisfaction towards work engagement and commitment towards organisational goals. Decreasing the level of trust in the workplace leads to further implications on organisational performance, customer satisfaction and organisational image or brand (Fischer and Walker, 2022; Hough *et al.,* 2020; Brown *et al.,* 2015).

Literature reviews have recognised that it is essential to study trust in the workplace within an organisational setting. Trust in the workplace is an important feature during the change process and offers individuals with aptitude to support transformation. Trust in the workplace and its values do have an influence on the organisation's functioning and the behaviour of the workforce. Employee and employer obligation and strap line presented towards organisational values and objectives, display more degree of trust in the workplace and cautiousness leading to higher efficiency and novelty (Kleynhans *et al.,* 2023; Fischer and Walker, 2022; Men and Jin, 2022). The supervisor plays a decisive part in developing trust, as they are the ones who regulate the movement of data. Trust in the workplace upholds cooperation within the workplace and leads to a better relationship among employees and teams, which allows information sharing, problem-solving and skirmish resolving leading to healthier organisational recital (Taylor *et al.,* 2023; HyeonUk, 2020; Maxio *et al.,* 2019; Brown *et al.,* 2015). Maintaining trust in the workplace among co-workers and immediate managers is very important and has meaningful implications.

Trust development in the Workplace

The basic model of trust development was developed by Mayer *et al.,* (1995) Refer to Figure 1. The model explores the relationship between trustor and trustee apart from factors that contribute towards building trustworthiness that is

a) ability,

b) benevolence,

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c) integrity and their integration.

The ability to take risks is also considered in the relationship which has a long-term effect on trust development. Recent studies support this model and have also highlighted the role of contextual factors apart from the trustor and the trustee, which has a significant influence in the workplace (Hancock *et al.,* 2023; Hancock *et al.,* 2021; Kaplan *et al.,* 2020).

**Figure 1:** Adapted from Trust Development Model; Mayer *et al.,* (1995)
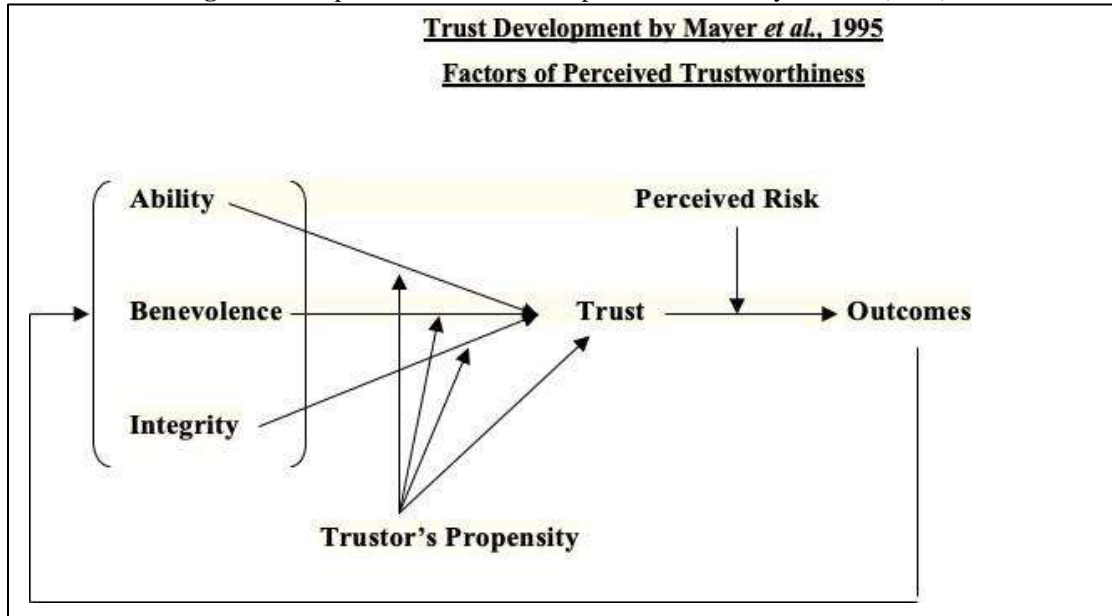
Source: Author's Compilation

Hancock *et al.,* 2023 in their meta-analysis work have improvised the original model (refer to figure 1) Mayer *et al.,* (1995) by adding a new dimension which was not integrated earlier in trust research with references to trustee and trustor characteristics. They argue that contextual elements play a significant role in influencing trust development (refer to Figure 2). Though the scope of the model is limited, the additional characteristics of the trustor, trustee and contextual factor need to be considered or thought about in terms of the development of interpersonal trust. These are exhibited in the dashed boxes in the figure 2.

Figure 2: Adapted from Hancock *et al.,* 2023 Meta-analysis work based on the original model by Mayer *et al.,* 1995
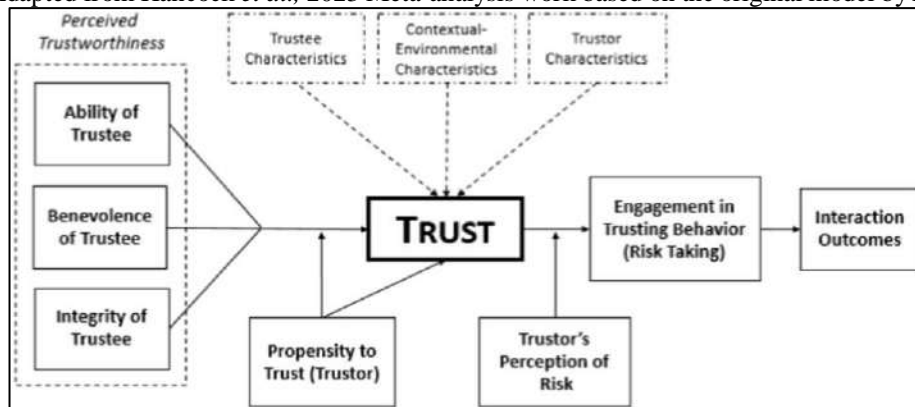
Source: Author's Compilation

Trust in the workplace is an important constituent in building institutional processes. The amount of trust in the workplace relies on the management's decision-making philosophy, action, structures and employee expectations towards mutual benefit. A leader's positive attitude and approach influence an optimistic approach in the organisation leading to employees' faithfulness and obligation from the employees. The leader needs to instil trust, and confidence, build reliability and develop shared association. This leads to building mutual admiration and credulous relationships among the team members (Oliver *et al.,* 2023; Kleynhans *et al.,* 2022: Fisher and Walker, 2022; Gara and la Porte, 2020; Miersch, 2017; Mishra and Mishra, 2013). Research indicates that the uniqueness of each trust perspective has endorsed the concept expansion and the aforementioned importance to interpersonal, societal and organisational levels of the study (Driks and Jong, 2022; Kahkonen *et al.,* 2021: Costa *et al.,* 2018; Ferres 2003). Further, these dimensions can be explored to measure the possible trust modality in the corporate/organisations/institutions as workplace trust by classifying them into trust in

a) organisation

b) managers/supervisor/leaders and

c) colleagues/peers/team members

Trust at an Organisation Level

Trust in the workplace is always looked upon by the management as the solution provider towards organisational development. It increases work engagement by instilling confidence in employees towards the organisation (Oliver *et al.,* 2023; Delhey *et al.,* 2023; Schilke *et al.,* 2023; Vanhala and Tzafrir, 2021; Dinesen and Bekkers, 2017). However, as per a study by the APA (American Psychological Association) in 2014 and the Edelman Trust Barometer (ETB) (2013) indicates that 1 out of 4 employees (APA) and 45 percent (ETB) don't trust their employers. A recent study by Elements Global Services in September 2021 published in Forbes magazine also indicates that employees don't trust their organisation, affecting their performance negatively. Trust at the organisation is about employee faith in their

employer, for their ways of being ethical, transparent and committed towards the actions taken benefitting employee well-being (Singh, 2019: Jain *et al.,* 2019). Employees trust in the organisation is an important component which influences the effectiveness, productivity and performance of an organization (Ramdas and Patrick, 2019; Costa *et al.,* 2018). A theoretical explanation of organisational trust may possibly be constructed using qualitative method. Through the analysis, it is stated as an individual's willingness to act on the basis of their perception of a trust referent (peer, supervisor/manager/organisation) being supportive/caring, ethical, competent and cognisant of others' performance (Fischer and Walker, 2022). Management plays a vital part in building trust in the workplace and their responsibility differs from those of immediate managers and co-workers. Since the management team is accountable for formulating the business strategies and planning the resource allocation. These decisions have a bigger implication over the period of time and one of its important tasks is to communicate the organisation's goals to the employees and how it intends to effectively evaluate their performance and take care of their well-being (Oliver *et al.,* 2023; Kleynhans *et al.,* 2022; Krug *et al.,* 2020; Safari *et al.,* 2020; Ramdas and Patrick, 2019; Costa *et al.,* 2017).

Organisational Trust and Performance

Research indicates a significant association organisational trust and task performance have a significant association with Organisational citizenship behaviour, and teamwork (Srivastava and Mohaley, 2022; Fischer *et al.,* 2020; De Jong *et al.,* 2016; Colquitt *et al.,* 2007- meta-analysis study), organisational commitment (Srivastava and Mohaley, 2022; Lambert *et al.,* 2020; Fischer *et al.,* 2020), psychological contract (Lambert *et al.,* 2020), job satisfaction (Srivastava and Mohaley, 2022) and flourishing (Ramdas and Patrick, 2019). Organisational trust is the basis for building competitive advantage and is expected to create an optimistic experience at the workplace in terms of supervisor performance, cooperation and behaviour at

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workplace (Karhapaa *et al.,* 2022: Vanhala and Tzafrir, 2021; Ramdas *et al.,* 2022).

Importance of Trust in the Workplace and its Influence on Organisational Effectiveness

Trust is fundamental to the organisation and organisational change. Jacobs (2014) states that "The willingness for somebody to take a risk, to allow themselves to feel vulnerable, believing the other person has an attitude of goodwill towards them". Further, trust in the workplace focuses on trustworthiness, grounded on four carters: kindness, capability, expectedness and integrity. He concludes by saying that trust in the workplace is a "rigorous academic area and it's extremely precise". The management must build trust in the workplace by hiring and promoting individuals who are capable of forming positive, trusting interpersonal relationships with individuals by displaying competence in his/her domain and exhibiting empathy and sensitivity towards the employees. By developing their skills, mentoring and coaching towards their career progression, Clark and Payne (1997) first empirically demonstrated the relationship between the trustworthiness of management. It clearly distinguishes that management team and reporting supervisors are key towards building "trust in management or organisation" (Taylor *et al.,* 2023; Karhapaa *et al.,* 2022; Vanhala and Tzafrir, 2021; Victor *et al.,* 2017). The flip side is, that if there is a lack of trust in the organisation, there will be in-effectiveness (Oliver *et al.,* 2023: Dinesen and Bekkers, 2017; Delhey *et al.,* 2023; Patrick and Sunil, 2019), and employees are likely to demonstrate unwanted behaviour such as absenteeism, lack of interest and attrition (Vieira *et al.,* 2021). Organizational trust is an important aspect in terms of having healthy relationships with colleagues/peers, supervisors and team members. A report in Harvard Business Review (ZAK, 2017) indicates that when there is a high level of trust, it enhances work engagement (76 percent), and productivity (50 percent), and reduces work stress (74 percent). Trust is relational or institutional in the environment. To analyse, understand, and explicate trust in an organizational background, it is vital to understand and classify competence, benevolence, and integrity.

Trust at the Co-worker Level

The workplace environment can either increase or reduce employee morale and productivity as it's important to learn and work towards building trust among co-workers to improve efficiency, attitude, and confidence at the workplace. Trust in co-workers characterizes a relational method of trust (Men and Jin, 2022; HyeonUk, 2020) and is frequently observed as the symbol of effective relations (Driks and Jong, 2022; Kmieciak, 2021; De Jong *et al.,* 2016; Dirks, 1999) and association with the organisation. The trust of co-workers involves the feeling of being confident about the competence of their peers and whether they will act ethically while at the same time sharing required information in the organisation. Trust among co-workers is optimistically associated with trust in organizations, and it completely mediates the relationship with trust in the co-workers and commitment towards the organisation, as well as performance (Dirks and Jong, 2022: Lambert *et al.,* 2020) and job satisfaction (Srivastava and Mohaley, 2022). Edelman Trust Barometer Report (2023) indicates that employees are more comfortable discussing controversial issues with co-workers than with neighbours.

Trust in co-workers supports output-efficiency by nourishing social capital first demonstrated by Cook and Wall, (1980) within the organisations. Co-workers' trustworthiness influences societal undermining actions and plays an important part in influencing employee behaviours in the workplace (Breuer *et al.,* 2020; Tomlinson *et al.,* 2020; Nowel *et al.,* 2017). Trust influences group process and performance when there is channelling of co-workers' energy toward the realisation of organisational goals (Srivastava and Mohaley, 2022; Dirks and Jong, 2022; De Jong *et al.,* 2016). Organisational involvement, identification and job satisfaction have an optimistic association with trust at the peer level (Srivastava and Mohaley, 2022: Lambert *et al.,* 2020; Cook and Wall, 1980). Research indicates that trust in co-workers was associated with organisational citizen behaviour (OCB) (Srivastava and Mohaley, 2022; Fischer *et al.,* 2020) and interpersonal citizenship behaviour (ICB) directed at peers.

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Employees, who communicate frequently with co-workers, share a similar construal of organizational issues (Fischer and Walker, 2022; Fischer *et al.,* 2020). Further research indicates that focusing on trust in management's viewpoint frequently overlooks the trust association at the co-worker level (Ghosh, 2018). It is important that capitalizing in social capital needs expansion of trust mutually within and amongst management.

Trust at the Manager (Immediate Supervisor) Level

Trust in supervisors has a strong relationship with team members' performance (Driks and Jong, 2022: Kahkonen *et al.,* 2021: Ramdas and Patrick, 2019) and job satisfaction (Srivastava and Mohaley, 2022). Employees who trust their supervisors are likely to participate in perform better, have extra citizenship actions, and fewer counter-productive actions, as well as plans to exit the organisation and immediate supervisors' trust in the team members, would lead to vigorous communications that express a sense of enablement, self-assurance and motivation which would inculcate a sense of faithfulness to the affiliation to retain in the organisation for longer duration (Men and Jin, 2022, HyeonUK, 2020).

As per the study by APA, 2014 indicates that the employee's trust in the supervisor was (1:4) ratio and one of the reasons was that they were not truthful or transparent in their communication. Edelman Trust Barometer, (2013) indicates that 82 percent of employees wanted to be transparent in their communication with their supervisors but due to a lack of trust they weren't. Supervisors' transparency in their communication builds trust and enhances job performance (Campbell, 2015). Research indicates that when a team member is treated in a positive and fair means by the immediate supervisors, there is a display of commitment and a positive attitude towards the immediate supervisor through the development of trust in the workplace (Kmieciak, 2021; Ramdas *et al.,* 2020; Tomilison *et al.,* 2020 and Costa *et al.,* 2017). Edelman Trust Barometer Report (2023) indicates that managers are creating teams that represent

employee levels all across to address work issues towards developing trust.

Organisational leaders' aptitude to predict change reinforces their business knowledge which establishes trust among the employees. Leaders can cultivate positive associations towards building trustworthiness and respect of team members through their transparency in communication, ethical values and philosophies (Valentini, 2020: Hough *et al.,* 2020; Oswald *et al.,* 2019). Craig (2017) indicates that 90 percent of employees have a higher level of trust with supervisors due to their appreciation and recognition as opposed to 48 percent who were not acknowledged for their work. Positive leaders always recognise their team member's competence and acknowledge it by extending trust and want to build trustworthiness to increase work engagement and well-being by building workplace trust at every opportunity (Patrick *et al.,* 2022).

The relationship of trust between the immediate manager/supervisor and co-workers is of utmost importance towards upholding workplace collaboration and having expressive inferences. To develop trust within leader-follower bonding, practicing transparent communication, collaboration, readiness to sacrifice, and expectedness leads to organisational commitment (Maximo, 2019; Xiong *et al.,* 2016). The best way to build trust in the workplace is to trust one another as "trust begets trust" is a good approach to follow. A leader, who is trusted, is looked upon by others as having integrity (integrity means possession of thought, word and action) and communicating audaciously of what one feels, attempting to keep promises or commitments or what is popularly termed as "walk the talk" are indicators of integrity and trust of leaders at work place. In conclusion, employees' social trust in the place of work is certainly linked to their societal collaboration and diversity in both collectivistic and individualistic philosophies. The diversity of societal relations in the workplace nurtures social trust expansion mostly in collectivistic cultures.

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THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The study highlights the importance of trust in the workplace in fostering positive outcomes at the workplace. Research indicates that the theory of trust concept is subjugated due to cognitive analysis. However, the affective-oriented viewpoint has drawn minimal awareness though it seems to be important and has more influence than cognitive with reference to performance and behavioural outcomes at the workplace. The study observed that not much empirical work on trust is related to employee's viewpoint (employee and employer). Lack of empirical evidence to identify independent cognitive, affective, behavioural and normative dimensions; the author's opinion is that it is prudent to separate them conceptually. For example, organisational leaders wishing to foster trust should focus on the impact of their actions on the feelings of employees, and be aware of the trust norms within the organisation. Affective trust is related to an individual's commitment towards the assignment and the organisation leading to job satisfaction. At the same time, trust is the key factor for demonstrating citizenship behaviour. It is also important to understand factors that influence certain positive outcomes with reference to workplace trust (Legood, 2022; Dirks and Jong, 2022).

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Sufficient indications suggest that an environment of trustworthiness and interpersonal trust is essential for organisational growth. The organisation must facilitate and create prospects for more societal interfaces among employees. By promoting such interactions employees develop trusting attitudes and behaviours in the workplace. Immediate supervisors need to recognise the benefits of the societal and demographic background of their team members within and outside the work environment. By encouraging supervisors to espouse a positive leadership alignment as trust in the workplace is branded by vagueness and change. It is expected that positive leaders bring change, a precondition of the contemporary towards the survival of the organisation. Trust is about relationships and these relationships are developed in the workplace through frequent interactions and shared interests. The chain of command in the

organisations make it more challenging to develop and build relationships based on trust. It's important for leaders to focus on employees as individuals rather than their designation to build trust in the workplace and look at organisational trust as a business priority. Leaders must contribute towards the expansion and application of development programs that nurture relational abilities involved in stimulating trust in the workplace. It plays a key role in immediate supervisor's relations with their team members. Given the significance of trust in the workplace, supervisors ought to vigorously pursue to

develop trust within their work group. Trust among individuals in the team creates an effective and cohesive group. When individuals trust each other, the workgroup can accomplish meaningful objectives. How can supervisors build trust for team members to flourish? A few practices that can build trust in the workplace are to

Practice openness: Supervisors who demonstrate behaviour of openness will lead to building trust. It's about sharing information and listening to opinions and feedback. Psychological control is an influential and vital quality of a supervisor. It's important to demonstrate openness to have enhanced control over the oscillations of thoughts or thought patterns. Act rationale about the decisions made be candid about teething troubles, and fully disclose relevant information to build transparency.

Being transparent: The Supervisor's positive actions and transparent behaviour enhance his credibility and trustworthiness. Transparency is an important factor of leadership behaviour and offers trust to develop. It is strategic, targeted, and purposeful and not to be looked at from an action where one cosset in practising over-sharing every minute detail (not relevant to the team) or putting up his habits and information on social media. It's important to provide constructive feedback for improvement consistently towards one's productivity and career growth.

Being impartial in management practices: Supervisors treat team members impartially without ambiguity and allow fair participation. In terms of decision-making, assessment without bias, preferential treatment or self-interest; acting objectively in terms of

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all relevant facts and fair criteria. This creates respect and openness which is vital for the success of the supervisor. Supervisors must play the role of participative leaders and involve the team during decision making etc. at the team level. It is very important from a management perspective to understand how team members or employees perceive their supervisors and management practices in terms of objectivity, organizational justice and consideration of equity perceptions in terms of reward distributions (appreciation and recognition) and career prospects.

Expressing one's feelings: Individuals are wired to different types of emotions and it needs to be expressed properly to avoid any disconnect in the workplace relationship. Similarly, emotions connect individuals and help in workplace bonding towards achieving shared objectives. Supervisors are seen as cold and unreachable when they only share hard facts. When team members express their emotions and demonstrate positivity in the work environment, this increases mutual respect and trust for working together.

Demonstrate consistency: Supervisors have to reproduce positive behaviour and walk the talk day after day until it defines one's personality. This creates a positive environment and things appear more organized in times of organizational change. Employees expect their supervisors to demonstrate consistent behaviour to confide in them. Employees need their supervisors to be dependable and not send contradictory or confusing communications. It might be an exhausting and difficult task for a supervisor to demonstrate consistency; however, it's of vital importance for building trust in the workplace. Employees also perform and deliver their best when the work environments are predictable as supervisors or management inconsistency leads to uncertainty, stress and anxiety leading to negative outcomes.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The scope of the literature review is narrowed only to trust in the workplace (interpersonal, societal and organisation), its perspective and influence on the work environment. The article only gleaned the available literature which itself is a limitation in terms of

methodology. There are a variety of studies undertaken in the area of trust, yet very little focus on trust in the workplace, its influence on the organisational and an individual's positive outcomes. This limits the review analysis and understanding of the literature in the context of trust. Literature review credibility is dependent upon the robustness of the literature reviewed, especially qualitative reviews which may have multiple outcomes. Trust in the workplace can be researched further focusing on trust deficits, mistrust in the workplace, and team trust perspective due to increasing complexities experienced by employees in the organisations.

CONCLUSION

Trust in the workplace is an important component in building institutional processes and is likely to grow in the workplace environments. Organisation leaders must be mindful of the altering features of trust creation and proliferation. Organisations that make available the right to use resources in terms of data, information etc., to inspire by empowering participative leadership to focus on synchronization and amalgamation are more expected to nurture trust among employees The literature reviews highlight the significance of varied societal collaborations in the expansion of societal trust at place of work. Social trust in the workplace is certainly linked to societal collaboration and diversity in both collectivistic and individualistic cultures. Organisations must promote trusting attitudes and behaviours in the workplace, so that the employees, immediate supervisors and other stakeholders can develop a trust culture in their workplace. Trust in the workplace is a sturdy forecaster of employees' (OCB) organizational citizenship behaviour, which in line affects enriching employee and supervisor performance. There are various tools to measure workplace trust which can be further explored for its effectiveness.

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