VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE TRUST TOWARDS LEADERS INVENTORY IN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at identifying the level of trust in the leaders and describes the psychometric properties of the instrument of trust against the leaders modified according to the situation and the uniqueness of the organization's management system of education in Malaysia. The study was conducted through a survey using a questionnaire as a research instrument. A total of 19 items in Malay language translation which have been modified from the original instrument Affect- and Cognition-based Trust built by McAllister (1995) were used for this study. Data for this study were obtained from 251 randomly selected lecturers from four polytechnics. The results of factor analysis obtained two factors explaining 73.1 percent of the variance. Meanwhile, the level of trust in the leaders through descriptive analysis found that two dimensions of trust in leaders based on the affective and cognitive based trust showed high level from the perspective of the lecturers. These results demonstrate the reliability of the instrument modified on trust in leaders for this study could represent a desired two good dimensions as the original version of McAllister (1995) and provide strong justification for using the translated instrument in the education organizations in Malaysia. In practice, this finding suggests the utility of strengthening organizational support for increasing the potential among the followers.

Keywords: **Affect- and cognition trust, education organization, trust validity and reliability, leadership, inventory**

INTRODUCTION

Trust in an organization is seen as a critical aspect that determines organization performance. Organizational goals will not be realized unless the element of trust exists between leaders and followers. Moreover, the absence of trust in the organization will lead to various conflicts which easily spread. Thus, without trust between individuals the organization will struggle to achieve its goals.

Studies on the trust towards the organization effectiveness are seen to be necessary in forming a relationship and effective cooperation as well as open communication within the organization. Overall, trust is seen as a sign of the beginning of receiving the leadership process in an organization, apart from showing the willingness of one party to the other party based on the trust that the other party is more efficient, reliable, open, and caring (Tschannen-Moran, 2003).

Researchers have defined trust in many ways; the definitions vary according to the individuals and across the human relationship. According to Nelson-Jones (2003), trust is defined as the willingness of a party to take risks by believing in other people, regardless of the consequences faced as a result of the behavior. Tschannen-Moran (2003) also defined trust as the belief of the individual or a group to provide a good-faith effort to behave in accordance with the explicit involvement, be honest in any negotiations that preceded such commitments, and not to take any outrageous chances on the other party even if there is an opportunity to do so. Accordingly, trust includes ability, benevolence, and integrity (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Ability means skills and competencies acquired in a domain which can increase a person's trust. Benevolence refers to the relationship between the confidence shown by one of the mentors who help without expecting any reward. Next, integrity means all actions that are believed to have justice in line with the statements made.

Trust allows the culture to grow and enables the full potential of individual empowerment. This is consistent with the opinion of Cross and Rice (2000) in which trust is needed to be integrated in an education organizational leadership because it describes the open, positive relationship, and is able to motivate teachers in their jobs. In an organization, interpersonal trust between the leaders and followers have proven significant in influencing perceptions of performance evaluation, achievement, productivity, organization commitment, morale, turnover, absenteeism, and so on. Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985) have found that trust is constantly evolving through interpersonal relationship between employers and employees based on the level of reliability, confidence, and sense of security.

Leaders' trust towards followers may reflect employers' awareness of the integrity of the employee who is reliable and responsible in carrying out duties. People who have high degree of confidence are likely to expose themselves to information about the problem, and thoughts, ideas and feelings that is more

accurate, relevant, and complete. In this case, Ouchi (1981) emphasized that trust involves expectations of individuals behaving in consistent and reliable ways.

In the education context, lack of trust can reduce the enthusiasm and commitment of the teachers and restrict school expansion and development. As explained by Laschinger and Finegan (2005), lack of trust and respect in the work environment will harm the organization and affect the employees. This is because workers without trust will more inclined to be suspicious and not contribute to the organization goals and activities when compared to workers who have a high level of trust in their leaders.

Trust In Leaders

Leaders play an important role in an organization, especially in building trust which is the key to organizational success. Efforts to create an environment of mutual trust are the primary responsibility of leaders. This is because the leaders who succeed in uniting the group and creating a culture of mutual trust will be binding their followers. This opinion is consistent with the theory of leader-followers which focus on the quality of the two-way relationship between the leader and members of the organization. This theory also emphasized the element of trust as a key component in the two-way relationship.

Trust in the leader refers to the interpersonal trust based on daily interactions between the workers and leaders (Tan & Tan, 2000). According to Sherwood and DePaolo (2005), trust in the leader is a psychological condition among workers including their willingness to be occupied by the leader. This means that workers assess the situation and are willing to let themselves be used by the leaders, hoping that this relationship would be profitable. They explained the theory of the background of trust in the leaders is divided into three types. First, the background in which cognitive aspect is a significant predictor of trust with leaders including leader behavior and interaction justice. Employee perceptions of ethical leader behavior also affect the psychology of employees in creating the trust in leader. The second category is the affective or emotional background of individuals while the third category is the level of trust existing on a person.

Employees' Perceptions on Organization Support

The encouraging feedback environment created by the leaders will allow the followers to know their performance and improve their weaknesses. In addition, the followers will always be on the right career track based on the feedback received. Followers as active participants in the organization look toward feedback from their leaders. Thus, if the followers trust their leaders, they will receive, use, and act based on the constant and ongoing feedback from their leaders. In other words, individuals with higher

levels of perception of organizational support will (1) meet the requirements for validation, recognition, and social identity, and (2) place the expectation that outstanding performance and conduct in reaching role in the organization will be recognized and rewarded as described by Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, and Lynch (1997).

Accordingly, when the organization shows concern for employees, this will encourage employees to right action based on positive feelings, attitudes, and behavior in the organization (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). This opinion is supported by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchson, and Sowa (1986) that the perception of high organizational support will create a sense of obligation to give consideration to the organization on the benefits received in the form of increased efforts to reach the expected role and behavior. Their views align with that of Rousseau (1989)who posited that when employees think the organization has done the best for them, they will feel obliged to give consideration to the organization through actions beyond their formal role as employees.

Previous empirical studies found that perceptions of organizational support are associated with positive work (Hochwarter, Kacmar, Perrewe, & Johnson, 2003) an increase in affective commitment (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001; Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002), decreased downtime and absenteeism (Eisenberger et al., 1986), high job satisfaction (Shore & Tetrick, 1991), and organizational citizenship behavior (Wayne et al., 2002). The meta-analysis performed by Riggle, Edmondson, and Hansen (2008) shows the perception of organizational support has a positive and significant relationship with organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

Trust and Social Exchange Theory and Norm of Reciprocity

One of the most common theories used to explain the construct of employee trust is social exchange theory. According to Blau (1964), the underlying principle of social exchange lies in the obligation that exists where when someone does good to others then there will be the expected return in the future against the advantages. This means that individuals who receive benefits or services from the other party are expected to respond to the good at the appropriate time.

Social exchange theory is closely related to the norm of reciprocity introduced by Gouldner (1960) which says that every individual has a belief of change in which one should help others who have helped them. Desire to reward for assistance received arises from the sense of responsibility to give a positive reaction on the preferred treatment. Normally, when people are happy with the gift or hospitality received, they will tend to give the same consideration to the other party.

According to Gouldner (1960), norm of reciprocity can exist either through formal or informal means. Employee is a medium that exhibits reciprocal relationship in which the employee provides venture in exchange for tangible rewards (such as salary and other benefits) and intangible rewards (such as awards and honors) received from the organization. Types of rewards given may be present in the same or different but with the equal value or appropriate. Thus, in the context of the organization, reward given more in the form of sociological which is different but having the same value. For example, an organization that cares for the welfare of the employees will receive rewards in the form of employees who are committed and willing to behave beyond their expected role.

One of the major studies focusing on the social exchange relationship between the employee and the organization is the study of Eisenberger et al. (1986) that has focused on the perceived organizational support. Perceptions of organizational support refer to the trust that employees formed in relation to the extent to which organizations they work for assesses their contribution and cares about their welfare. They also explained that workers who have a high perceived organizational support are expected to feel an obligation to contribute to the organization.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the study is to report on the validity and reliability of an instrument assessing trust toward leaders in educational organizations. The purpose of the study is divided into (a) produce a set of items for measuring the level of trust based on cognitive and affective in educational organization; (b) conduct exploratory factor analysis to assess the factor structure of the items that measure trust; and (c) estimate the internal consistency of each item in the sub-scale formed.

In addition, the study aims at identifying the level of trust in the leader and describing the psychometric nature of the modified instrument for trust in the leaders according to the situation and the unique culture of the educational organization in Malaysia. This is done with the hope that further research to establish the trust in leaders as the educational organization support to enhance the self-efficacy of teaching among the instructors in particular.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research instrument

This study used a survey method to collect data. This design is found to be applicable to large populations where the uniformity of the facts and information from respondents is systematically

tapped. For the purpose of this study, the questionnaire used was adapted to suit the local environment with the permission of the original researchers. So, the instrument consists of a questionnaire prepared to be answered by the respondents.

The questionnaire has two parts. The lecturer demographic information was used to collect data on the respondent's background. This section contains four items related to the personal information such as gender, highest academic qualification, teaching experience, and age on 1 January 2014. The second part of the questionnaire is on trust in the leaders. In this part, respondents are asked to give their views about the trust in their leaders based on the affective and cognitive based trust at their workplace. For this purpose, the instrument Affect- and Cognition-based Trust adapted from McAllister (1995) was used to measure the trust in leaders in their workplace. Two dimensions make up a total of 19 items which were used in this study based on a seven-point Likert Scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". The dimensions are: trust based on affective (9 items) and trust based on cognitive (10 items). All the items are translated into Malay language and modified to suit the current environment. For example, one of the original items stating that "We can both share our feelings" was translated into "Saya boleh berkongsi perasaan saya dengan Ketua Program/Ketua Kursus" ("I can share my feelings with my Program Coordinator/Course Coordinator").

Translation and Validity of Trust toward Leaders Instrument

Content validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what should be measured (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). This method is carried out to prove the item is relevant and represents the variables studied. The method used in determining the content validity of the instrument items is to submit for review by experts. The panel of experts was asked to evaluate and examine the items in terms of content and the objectives to be measured.

The original questionnaire was adapted and translated to suit the local environment. Some of the words in the original version were also changed to new words after obtaining consent from experts in language translation. The items in the questionnaire were translated from English to Malay language using back to back translation. This translation is done with the professional help of three language teachers. They have experience in the field of language teaching for more than 15 years. They have helped the researcher in examining and reviewing the questionnaire in terms of content, the language used, and any deficiencies identified have been corrected. Items are translated into Malay language then translated back into English. Next, the items translated into English language were translated once again into the Malay language to test the accuracy of the translation. All comments and advice from the experts in translation have been taken into account in the study.

In addition, the views and suggestions asserting the validity of the content are often referred to and reviewed by an expert or panel with expertise in the areas studied (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). Content validity of the questionnaire used in this study was done by five people who have expert knowledge and experience in management, administration, and educational leadership. Expert evaluators for the questionnaire consisted of a panel of lecturers from Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. This included a teacher from the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. They were asked to respond to items on a Scale 1 (Strongly Inappropriate) to 6 (Very Suitable) by suitability and accuracy of items in the questionnaire with reference to the description of the dimensions of the measurement tool.

Dimensions Determination and Validity on Instrument of Trust toward Leaders through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Construct validity of the constructs in this instrument was carried out through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) through principal component analysis. This analysis was conducted to identify and prioritize a large number of items to the contructs under a certain variable from the sample (Tabachinck & Fidell, 2013). This method can reduce a lot of variables to a limited number of dimensions, but still refer to the same characteristics (Osborne & Costello, 2009) for use in further analysis.

To carry out the EFA, researchers need to ensure that the items have the anti-image correlation ≥ .5 are acceptable. Next, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity must be significant (p < .05) to measure the correlation between items or variables. High adequacy sample test Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) at ≥ .5 is used in determining the adequacy of the sample. In addition, the eigenvalues should be greater than 1. Items with the factor loading greater than or equal to .5 only are to be maintained. Meanwhile, the percentage change in the variance is greater than 8% is acceptable. Accordingly, the number of factors based on the suitability of the items and the construction of the factors is based on the theory and previous studies.

Research Sample

The population of this study involved the polytechnic lecturers of Category 1. Referring to the Service Circular (Pekeliling Perkhidmatan) Number 33 of 2007, lecturers of Category 1 refers to the lecturers involved in the teaching task. A total of 251 people who worked at the conventional polytechnics at the states of Penang and Sarawak were randomly selected to participate in the study. This means that the data set represents 251 lecturers' perception on the leaders who are Head of Program/Head of Course based on their evaluation. There are four conventional polytechnics which have been selected to take part in this study namely Sebarang Perai Polytechnic (Politeknik Seberang Perai, PSP), Balik Pulau

Polytechnic (Politeknik Balik Pulau, PBU), Kuching Sarawak Polytechnic (Politeknik Kuching Sarawak, PKS), and Mukah Sarawak Polytechnic (Politeknik Mukah Sarawak, PMS).

Permission and Procedures

The permission to conduct the study from the Center for Research and Development of Polytechnic (Pusat Penyelidikan dan Pembangunan Politeknik), Department of Polytechnic Education (Jabatan Pengajian Politeknik) had been obtained on 3rd April 2014. Further, the permission of the PSP, PBU, PKS, and PMS had been applied and obtained. The researcher gave a briefing to the respondents before they answered the questionnaires. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary; all responses given were confidential and only used for this research purpose.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Demographic distribution of respondents

In the aspect of demographic distribution, a total of four items were presented as gender, age, highest academic qualifications and teaching experience. A total of 251 respondents consisting of 104 (41.4%) of male respondents and 147 (58.6%) female respondents participated in this research. This is reflective of the general teaching population in polytechnics.

In the demographic of age, the respondents were divided into three categories. The results show that the majority of respondents were those aged less than 34 years (164 people or 65.3%). Moreover, the findings also showed that the majority of respondents had teaching experience less than twelve years (207 people or 82.5%).

In term of highest academic qualification, the study found out that most of the respondents (162 persons or 64.5%) have a bachelor degree. This is reflective of the percentage of highest academic qualification in bachelor degree against the percentage of lecturers holding diploma, master, and doctoral degree in polytechnics.

Table 1
Background of the Respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	104	41.4
	Female	147	58.6
Age	< 34 years	164	65.3
	34-42 years	79	31.5
	>42 years	8	3.2
Highest academic qualification	Diploma	6	2.4
	Bachelor	162	64.5
	Master	83	33.1
Teaching experience	<12 years	207	82.5
	12-23 years	39	15.5
	>23 years	5	2.0

Content Validity of the Analytical Results

Initial findings from discussion with the content validity panels recommend items to bring confusion to be corrected. Corrections were made particularly in terms of language and terminology to make items more easily understood. In addition, all the items from the original questionnaire which has a double-barreled, long sentence and clutter have been revised and re-written based on comments and suggestions from the experts who participated in content validity aspects. Example of the original items that "We would both feel a sense of loss if one of us was transferred and we could no longer work together" has been modified and translated into two different items, namely: "PC/CC and I would feel lost if one of us moves." and "PC/CC and I would feel lost if we no longer work together". All the dimensions have shown a good psychometric behavior and consistency.

The next phase is the result of analysis of five experts involved shows the coefficients of all the items is between 62.2 percent and 100.0 percent, while the overall validity coefficient is 83.2 percent as shown in Table 2. After item modification on the recommendations of the experts, a total of 19 items have been provided for this questionnaire.

Table 2
Expert Evaluations Against Content Validity of Instrument

Expert	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Expert 4	Expert 5	Cummulative Score
Percent (%)	62.2	76.7	93.8	100.0	83.3	83.2

The Level of Trust towards Leaders in Educational Organizations

In determining the level of trust in leaders among the followers in the educational organization, mean scores between 0.0 and 3.0 are considered as low, 3.1 to 5.0 as moderate, with mean score above 5.0 considered as high. Analysis found that the dimension of affective-based trust in the leader on a mean score as high as 5.15 which is on the high level. Dimension of cognitive-based trust had the mean score of 5.49, on a high level as well.

Table 3

Mean Score, Standard Deviation, The Practice Level of Trust in the Polytechnics' Leaders (N=251)

Dimension	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Level
Affective-based Trust	5.15	1.081	High
Cognitive-based Trust	5.49	0.912	High

Factor Analysis Results

Determining factor analysis varimax rotation through principal component extraction limited to two factors had been implemented. Loading factor exceeding 0.30 is considered to be suitable for the selected criteria and is accepted as an instrument item as done by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, dan Tatham (2010). The result for the analytical determination from Table 4 found two factors emerged. The two factors that appeared to be significant in this study obtained the eigenvalues of at least 1.4. Results also show that two factors have emerged and explained 73.1 percent of the overall variance. The correlation matrix indicators, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test (.949) dan Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($\chi 2$ = 5132.932, df =171, p < .05) and antimej correlation (All items r > .05) obtained are significant, thus multicollinearity or singularity effect did not happen. KMO test showed that the value is .949 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant with p =.00 thus proving that the number of samples used in the factor analysis is adequate and categorized at good level (Hair et al., 2010; Ramlee, Jamal, & Hariri, 2011). These results also confirmed the suitability of the sampling for performing factor analysis.

Table 4

Factor Analysis Result for Trust in Leaders Questionnaire (N=247)

Num.	Item Details	Factor 1	Factor 2
	Factor 1: Affective-based Trust		
D13	Based on the records of PC/CC, I see no reason to doubt its willingness to work.	.824	

D18	People are more concerned about the performance of the PC/CC if they knew the background.	.777	
D14	I can rely on the PC/CC for not to complicate any work done with negligence.	.752	
D16	Most people, though not close with the PC/CC, they believe him/her to be a colleague.	.750	
D19	People will monitor the performance of my PC/CC if they knew the background.	.700	
	Factor 2: Cognitive-based Trust		
D4	I know the PC/CC wants to listen to my problems at work.		.830
D2	I can share my feelings with the PC/CC.		.828
D5	PC/CC and I would feel lost if one of us moves.		.806
D3	I can speak freely to the PC/CC about the difficulties I encounter in the workplace.		.794
D6	PC/CC and I would feel lost if we no longer work together.		.791
Eigenvalues		12.5	1.4
Percent on variance explained		65.6	7.5
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin = .949			
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi Square = 5132.932, df = 171, Sig = .000			
% Total variance = 73.1%			
Cronbach's alpha		.898	.932
Cronbach's alpha value for 13 items is .935			

Note. PC = Program Coordinator, CC = Course Coordinator

Based on Table 4, the first factor consisted of five items such as D13, D18, D14, D16, and D19 were explained 65.6 percent of the variance in the construct labeled "Affective-based Trust" with the eigenvalues 12.5. All these items have obtained the loading item .824, .777, .752, .750, and .700. The second factor contains five items namely "Cognitive-based Trust" with D4, D2, D5, D3, and D6 also explained 7.5 percent of the variance change with eigenvalues 1.4. Under the second factor, all the items have earned the loading items of .830, .828, .806, .794, and .791.

In addition, the reliability of Cronbach's alpha for the first factor "Affective-based Trust" is .899 while the reliability of Cronbach's alpha for the second factor "Cognitive-based Trust" is about .932. The analysis also found that the reliability of the overall Cronbach's Alpha for the nineteen items in these two factors identified is .935. Through factor analysis, nine items were dropped from the instrument of trust in the leaders such as D1, D7, D8, D9, D10, D11, D12, D15, and D17.

To confirm the existence of two distinct factors is independent, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was carried out. Table 5 shows the matrix for the correlation coefficient for the Pearson Product Moment between the factors. The correlation coefficients (r) for both factors are at .686 which is less than .700, showing that the two factors are independent (Pallant, 2011). Thus, these findings confirmed the existence of these two factors.

Table 5
Matrix for the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Between the Factors

Factor	Affective-based Trust	Cognitive-based Trust
Affective-based Trust	1	.686
Cognitive-based Trust	.686	1

* Significant at the level .01 (2-tailed)

Results of Reliability Analysis on Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's alpha approach is one of the good approaches for internal consistency to test the item reliability (Gay et al., 2009). Cronbach's alpha can be accepted as a good measurement if the value is at least .6 or .7 and better if approaching .9 (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). The reliability of the findings of this study for the entire 19 items was .969. The nine items that measure affective-based trust subscale acquired the high Cronbach's alpha .954. In addition, ten items that measure cognitive-based trust subscale had a coefficient of .953. It could be argued that these items into Malay translation were shown to have reliability and validity convincing in the studies by McAllister (1995). Therefore, all the coefficients are appropriate for the purpose of testing the reliability for exploratory research (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

DISCUSSION, RESEARCH IMPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to identify the level of trust in leaders in educational organizations in Malaysia and describes the psychometric properties of the modified instrument for trust in leaders according to the situation and the culture of the educational organizations in Malaysia. This study utilizes the basic theory and statistics to identify the ten items on the trust in leaders. The proposed questionnaire containing nineteen items was analyzed by experts on the content validity and exploratory factor analysis. Factor analysis for the ten items was the creation of two main factors again. These factors are "Affective-based trust" and "Cognitive-based Trust" as suggested in the model of

McAllister (1995). The analysis also shows the correlation between the factors' correlation is less than .70 which proves both factors are distinct.

The findings of this study also viewed the dimensions of the trust in the leaders produce good reliability to measure the perception of trust in leaders among the polytechnic lecturers. The overall reliability is .935 while reliability for both dimensions were .899 and .932 respectively. Therefore, these items can be used in exploratory studies.

In terms of instruments, it is considered still in the exploration stage since the instrument for trust in leaders should be more comprehensive in the Malaysian educational organizations, particularly polytechnic organizations. Thus, it is hoped that this instrument will be modified in terms of psychometrics in the future.

The findings also show that the level of trust in the aspect of cognitive and affective toward the leaders is high among the lecturers. This study indirectly proves the environment climate in the educational organization is good in the context of trust especially related to teaching and learning. The implications of these findings could be tapped in that the workers have hope and confidence in the leader. As leaders, their responsibility is to create the trust among the followers in the organization. Among the recommendations for leaders to build trust and positive interpersonal climate are ensure the staff feel valued, support the opportunity to work in a collaborative team, always look for ways to improve the communication channels among lecturers, give priority to building good relations between lecturers and instill commitment and avoid "isolation".

In conclusion, the element of trust in the leader should not be underestimated. Education organizations need to work very efficiently and highly depend on the trust element to be established within the organization. Responsible leaders foster trust among employees. This is because employees need to be inspired to produce in excess of the maximum productivity. This will bring a significant impact to organizational performance and effectiveness. Indirectly, trust in the leader also will reduce bureaucracy and is seen as a factor contributing to an open and positive work environment.

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