

16th Congress of the European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology

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Proposal of Symposium:

Trust among members and organizational representatives in organizations

Coordinators: Esther Gracia and José Ramos (IDOCAL, University of Valencia, Spain).

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State of the art: In recent years, research on organizational trust had increased quickly, expanding their study on different antecedents and consequences, including various organizational levels. For instance, contributions on trust in previous EAWOP Congresses focused on outcomes, its relationship with HRM or the process of re-building trust. Research found trust consistently related with positive attitudes and organizational outcomes.

Contributions: This symposium aims to deeply examine some emergent issues in trust literature. First, **reciprocity and mutuality in trust** are considered relevant in research, although additional construct clarification is needed. Second, **processes that are involved in trust development could be different depending on the nature of the relationship** (among co-workers, or among workers and their supervisors). From this starting point, reciprocity, mutuality and congruence of trust are conceptually distinguished. Moreover, fairness is considered as antecedent of mutual trust among workers and their managers. In addition, reciprocal trust (managers' trust on subordinates and workers' confidence on their manager) is expected as mediator of service quality-burnout relationship. Then, trust of workers' representatives on managerial board along bargaining is studied as predictor of negotiation strategies. Finally, the role of organizational trust on processes of HRM organizational change is studied through qualitative data.

Implications: Using different methodological approaches (conceptual contribution, quantitative and qualitative data), this Symposium aims to distinguish the role that fairness could play in determining mutual trust among workers and their supervisors. Moreover, it aims to analyse the role that mutuality in trust among workers and supervisors play in predicting burnout, and how trust in company representatives influence the bargaining strategies. Finally, the importance of organizational trust in processes of organizational change is studied.

Expected audience: 30-60 persons

Contribution 1:

“Mutuality, Reciprocity and Congruence of Trust in organizational context”

PhD Tuija Seppälä (University of Helsinki, Finland).

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State of the art: Trust is suggested to enhance organizational performance by facilitating individuals' and groups' performance within organizations. However, a party's trust in another party may cause just harms if the trustee behaves opportunistically and she or he does not fulfill the positive expectations of the trustor. Thus, it has been suggested by different authors that trust need to be mutual, reciprocal or congruent in order to bring the desired outcomes. How these seemingly overlapping concepts are related to each other and how they are different is unclear in the literature on organizational trust. ***Contributions/Implications:*** This presentation shows how these concepts have been used in the literature and it makes suggestions for how these concepts should be used in the future so that higher coherence can be achieved within the trust literature.

Contribution 2:

“Mutual Trust between managers and their service oriented workers in non-profit organizations: What does it reinforce it?”

Esther Gracia, José Ramos, Vicente Martínez-Tur, Carolina Moliner, Agustín Molina, Inés Kuster y Natalia Vila (IDOCAL, Universitat de València, Spain).

Purpose: This study focuses in the study of antecedents of mutual trust, as a combination of managers and their group members' perceptions of trust. Specifically, this study proposes that managers' fairness perceived by the group of subordinates and group subordinates' competences perceived by managers are main antecedents for the development of mutual trust perceived by both stakeholders. **Design/Methodology:** This is a field study. 753 service-oriented workers and their managers from 97 non-profit organizations oriented to provide service to persons with intellectual disabilities. Cross-sectional data was analyzed in an organizational level. **Results:** Results of hierarchical multiple regressions showed a positive significant relationship between the interaction of managers' fairness with group member's competence and mutual trust. **Limitations:** The need of testing this model with longitudinal data in order to test causality and results should be taken with caution because this study focused on a kind of non-profit organizations. **Research/Practical Implications:** When managers perceive that their group members are competent and group members perceive that managers treat them with respect and dignity, mutual trust arises. **Originality/Value:** This study moves forward in the knowledge of mutual trust, understood as a mutual perception wherein each party trusts the other. Few researchers have taken into consideration both sides of the relationship (Brower, Lester, Korsgaard & Dineen, 2009) and they have mainly focused on analyzing the consequences of mutual trust (e.g. Brower et al. 2009; Smith & Barclay, 1997).

Contribution 3:

“Reciprocity of Trust in the Supervisor–Work-unit Relationship”

Vicente Martínez-Tur, Agustín Molina, Esther Gracia, Carolina Moliner, Enrique Bigné, Luisa Andreu & Oto Luque (IDOCAL, Universitat de València, Spain).

Purpose: This paper extends previous research on trust by testing the reciprocity of trust in the supervisor-work-unit relationship, rather than the relationship between the supervisor and each individual subordinate. Additionally, we test an antecedent (supervisor’s perception of the service quality delivered by the work-unit) and an outcome (employees’ collective burnout) to this reciprocal model of trust. **Design/Methodology:** We test a structural equation model with data aggregated to the work-unit level of analysis. The sample was composed by 85 work-units, representing 85 supervisors and 689 subordinates. **Results:** As expected, work-units delivering high service quality were positively and significantly related to the trust the group as whole received from the supervisor. In turn, our results suggest that a shared perception of the trust that the work-unit has on the supervisor reciprocates the trust they received. Finally, work-units that trust their supervisor showed less collective burnout. **Limitations:** Despite having different informants, the main limitation of the study is due to its cross-sectional nature. **Research/Practical Implications:** Researchers and practitioners may focus not only on each individual relationship the supervisor has with their subordinates, but also on the aggregate – shared perceptions of the work-unit. Additionally, this study provides evidence of the importance of service quality as an antecedent and collective burnout as an outcome to this reciprocal model of trust. **Originality/Value:** This paper extends the reciprocity of trust in the supervisor-subordinate relationship to the next level: the supervisor-work-unit liaison. We do so by considering two informants (supervisors and subordinates), and while adding an antecedent and outcome to the model.

Contribution 4:

“Trust and Competitive Industrial Relations: A cross-national study in Spain and Denmark”

Lourdes Munduate (University of Seville, Spain), Patricia Elgoibar (University of Leuven, Belgium and University of Seville, Spain), Francisco Medina (University of Seville, Spain), Soren Viemose (Kalovig Center, Denmark) & Martin Euwema (University of Leuven, Belgium)

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Purpose: The European Union is facing one of its deepest crises due to the financial and economic turbulence. Social partners, both in profit and non-profit organizations, have to deal with high impact challenges in response to the rapid, and for many dramatic, changes in the environment. In this hostile economic, social and labour environment, management sometimes takes unpopular decisions, putting worker representatives in a place with limited impact on decisions. Thus, trust that employees and their representatives have in management is deteriorating, leading worker representative in some cases to approach conflicts in a competitive pattern. Europe can't evidently be analysed as a homogeneous entity but should instead be recognised as comprising a diversity of traditions and national cultures. And so, Spain and Denmark are considered to be societies with different industrial relation traditions within Europe. In this study we firstly explore how trust in the management is perceived by worker representatives and employees in each one of these countries. Secondly, we explore the relation between trust in the management and competitive conflict behaviour. Finally, we explore the moderating effect of power distance on the relation between trust and competitive behaviour. **Design:** The hypotheses are tested on a sample of 719 representatives in Spain and 474 representatives in Denmark. **Results:** As expected, trust in management is higher in Denmark than it is in Spain, and trust is related to using a competitive approach to conflict. However, this relation varies within the two studied countries. **Implications/ value:** In this paper, we explore how industrial relation traditions and trade union philosophy could explain these results.

Contribution 5:

“Moving towards the future: The impact of Organizational Structure and Organizational Trust in the processes of HRM Organizational Change”

Ana Teresa Ferreira, José Keating and Isabel Silva (Psychology School, Minho's University, Portugal)

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Purpose: Recent research stresses the need to increase the focus on the Human Resource Management (HRM) processes (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004), and how we can reduce the negative impact of this modifications for workers. Building on Social Exchange Theory and the work by Whitener (1997), we hypothesized that organizational trust (OT) could be an intentional result of HRM interventions, as a facilitator in change processes, in order to diminish the risk perception by the workers and promote adjustment. As far as we know, no research has explored the role of structure and OT in modifications of HRM. **Design/Methodology:** To explore these ideas, we conducted 10 interviews to managers, from four organizations with comparable structures during major HRM modifications. **Results:** Our results suggest that mechanistic structures, in spite of their central concern with the standardization of interactions, do not rule out concerns with the development of OT. In organizations where the HRM top manager was in a clear power position, organization-wide trust was an important criterion for monitoring change episodes. **Limitations:** It remains to be tested how much our results generalize to organizations with this or other type of structure and power of the HRM function. **Research/Practical Implications:** These results imply that the active development of OT acted as a damping factor in change, reducing the risk perception to employees towards adjustment. **Originality/Value:** To our knowledge, the research is the first to study the impact of structure and power in the active development of OT as a solution towards adaptation.