



## SUBORDINATE'S TRUST IN THE SUPERVISOR AND ITS IMPACT ON ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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### Abstract

This study tested a model of trust-in-supervisor that included propensity to trust and supervisor attributes (i.e., ability, benevolence, and integrity) as antecedents, and affective organizational commitment and helping intention as criterion outcomes. A field survey using a structured questionnaire was used to gather data from 255 white-collar employees from diverse occupations and organizations. Path analysis results showed that supervisor ability, benevolence, and integrity as well as employees' propensity to trust were positively associated with trust-in-supervisor. Trust-in-supervisor, in turn, predicted employees' affective organizational commitment but did not have any influence on their willingness to help co-workers. Implications of the findings and suggestions for future research are discussed.

**Keywords:** Trust-in-supervisor, propensity to trust, affective commitment, helping intention.

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### INTRODUCTION

Trust is believed by many to be a crucial ingredient of organizational effectiveness, and its role in the workplace is increasingly attracting the attention of organizational scholars. Researchers have found this variable to be predictive of important employee reactions (e.g., Brockner, Siegel, Daly, Tyler, & Martin, 1997), behaviors (e.g., Korsgaard, Brodt, & Whitener, 2002; Robinson, 1996),

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and performance (e.g., Dirks, 2000), as well as to play a moderating role in various organizational processes (e.g., Dirks, 1999; Simons & Peterson, 2000).

Although trust is a multilevel phenomenon that can be examined at the personal, organizational, inter-organizational, and international levels (Das & Teng, 2001), the present study focuses on personal trust within organizations. In an organization, a prevalent form of relationship is that between a subordinate and a supervisor, and trust plays a critical role in such hierarchical, dyadic relationships because of employees' dependency on and vulnerability to their supervisor (Wei, 2003). Therefore, it is important to examine how the trust employees have for their supervisor is formed, and what the effects of such trust are on employees' attitudes and behaviors.

To address the above issue, we examined in this study both antecedents and consequences of trust-in-supervisor using a sample of Pakistani employees. Specifically, we used the conceptual framework of Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) and other relevant research to develop and test a model of trust-in-supervisor that included trustor attribute (i.e., propensity to trust) and trustee attributes (i.e., ability, benevolence, and integrity) as antecedents, and both attitudinal (i.e., the affective form of organizational commitment) and behavioral variables (i.e., the helping form of organizational spontaneity) as criterion outcomes. We know of no previous study that has examined such a model in the Pakistani context. To date, much of the research on interpersonal trust within organizations has been conducted in western settings. Therefore, it is important to expand such research in a different cultural setting. It is hoped that findings from such research will add to the empirical base of research findings on the antecedents and consequences of trust, a critical construct in management.

## **CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES**

### **Trust Defined**

Over the years, several organizational scholars have attempted to provide a suitable definition of trust. Although there is, to date, no universally accepted definition of this construct, many scholars agree that positive expectations and a willingness to be vulnerable are critical components of trust (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). For example, Rotter (1967, p. 651) defined trust as:

... an expectancy held by an individual or a group that the word, promise, verbal or written statement of another individual or group can be relied upon.

Mayer et al. (1995, p. 712) defined trust as:

... the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectations that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party.

More recently, this construct has been defined as a psychological state comprising the intention to be vulnerable based upon positive expectations about the intentions or behavior of another (Rousseau *et al.*, 1998, p. 395); an expectation that one can rely on another person's words and actions and that the person has good intentions toward oneself (Dirks, 2000, p. 1004); and a subjective state of positive expectations regarding another person's goodwill in a risky situation (Das & Teng, 2001, p. 256).

In this study, because the interpersonal trust relationship involves an employee and his or her immediate supervisor, we view trust-in-supervisor as employees' willingness to be vulnerable based on expectations that the intentions, words, or actions of their supervisor can be relied upon. This definition is in line with the generally held view that expectations and vulnerability are essential components of trust.

### **Antecedents of Trust-in-Supervisor**

According to Mayer et al. (1995), a trustor will be willing to be vulnerable to a trustee based on the trustor's (a) tendency to trust people in general, and (b) perception that the trustee is trustworthy, that is will act competently, benevolently, and with integrity in situations relevant to the trustor. Accordingly, the antecedents predicted to influence trust that are specified in the model in this study include both trustor and trustee attributes. The trustor attribute forwarded as a potential predictor is propensity to trust, and the trustee attributes category comprises three factors that relate to the trustworthiness of the trustee.

### **Propensity to trust**

Propensity to trust is a dispositional variable that concerns a person's general willingness to trust others (Mayer *et al.*, 1995). To the extent that a person is inherently trusting, the psychological barrier that has to be overcome to trust is lowered, and he or she is likely to trust in situations in which most people would not do so. In contrast, a person who is predisposed not to trust is unlikely to

trust even under circumstances in which most people would do so. Therefore, propensity to trust will likely affect one's level of trust in others.

There is some empirical support for the above assertion. For example, a construct validation study that assessed trust between boundary role persons found trusting personality to be positively related to willingness to engage in trusting behavior (e.g., Currall & Judge, 1995), and a study of global virtual teams found a team member's propensity to trust foreign students to predict perceived team trustworthiness (Jarvenpaa, Knoll, & Leidner, 1998). Therefore, we believe that, in a similar vein, employees' general inclination to trust others will influence their level of trust in their supervisor. Accordingly, we propose:

H1: The higher subordinates' propensity to trust, the higher their trust in their supervisor.

### ***Trustee attributes***

According to Mayer et al. (1995), three characteristics of a person have a major influence on whether or not that person will be trusted: ability, benevolence, and integrity. *Ability* or competence is that group of skills and competencies that enable one to have influence within some specific domain (Mayer et al., 1995). A number of scholars have argued that for employees to trust their managers they must perceive that their managers have the ability to make a difference for them in a positive way (Butler, 1991; Conger, 1990; Davis, Schoorman, Mayer, & Tan, 2000). When managers are believed to be incompetent, employee expectations of a capable and trustworthy role model are unmet, leading to perceptions of employee cynicism (Andersson, 1996).

### ***Benevolence***

Benevolence is the extent to which a trustor perceives that the trustee intends to do good to him or her in their relationship (Davis et al., 2000). Logically, if employees believe that their supervisor has their interests at heart and cares about their well being, they would be willing to place their trust in the supervisor.

Finally, in order for employees to rely on their supervisor, they must be able to count on the supervisor to behave not only competently and benevolently but also with integrity. *Integrity* is loyalty to one's rational convictions in action, and it forms the foundation of a trusting relationship between leaders and followers (Locke, 2000). It is typically conceived as employees' perceptions of their managers' pattern of word-deed alignment (Simons, 2002; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, &

Werner, 1998). Factors such as adherence to sound principles and having a strong sense of justice also affect the degree to which a person is judged to have integrity (Mayer *et al.*, 1995) and leaders can gain trust by being principled, honest, consistent, and fair (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). Because supervisors who possess these attributes are unlikely to engage in opportunistic behaviors, employees will be less likely to feel the need to monitor the actions of their supervisors.

There is some research evidence to support the theoretical arguments for the relationship between trustee attributes and trust forwarded above. For example, one study found competence, consistency, fairness, and integrity to influence subordinates' judgments of an authority's trustworthiness (e.g., Butler, 1991), and another study found ability, benevolence, and integrity to fully mediate the relationship between perceptions of an appraisal system and trust for top management (e.g., Mayer & Davis, 1999). More recently, the attributes of ability, benevolence, and integrity were shown to be positively associated with trust for (a) a company's top management team and plant managers (Mayer & Gavin, 2005).

Therefore, on the basis of the theoretical arguments and past findings discussed, we propose:

H2: The higher the perceived ability of a supervisor, the higher a subordinate's trust in the supervisor.

H3: The higher the perceived benevolence of a supervisor, the higher a subordinate's trust in the supervisor.

H4: The higher the perceived integrity of a supervisor, the higher a subordinate's trust in the supervisor.

## **Outcomes of Trust-in-Supervisor**

### ***Affective organizational commitment***

Being supervised by someone that one does not trust can be psychologically distressing, and this distress is likely to affect one's job attitudes (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). One such attitude is affective organizational commitment.

According to Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of commitment and (Removed), prior research indicated that there are three "mind sets" which can characterize an employee's commitment to the organization:

- *Affective Commitment*: AC is defined as the employee's positive emotional attachment to the organization. An employee who is affectively committed strongly identifies with the goals of the organization and desires to remain

a part of the organization. This employee commits to the organization because he/she "wants to". In developing this concept, Meyer and Allen drew largely on Mowday, Porter, and Steers's (1982) concept of commitment, which in turn drew on earlier work by Kanter (1968).

- *Continuance Commitment*: The individual commits to the organization because he/she perceives high costs of losing organizational membership (cf. Becker's 1960 "side bet theory"), which include economic costs (such as pension accruals) and social costs (friendship ties with co-workers) that would be incurred. The employee remains a member of the organization because he/she "has to".
- *Normative Commitment*: The individual commits to and remains with an organization because of feelings of obligation. These feelings may derive from many sources. For example, the organization may have invested resources in training an employee who then feels a 'moral' obligation to put forth effort on the job and stay with the organization to 'repay the debt.' It may also reflect an internalized norm, developed before the person joins the organization through family or other socialization processes, that one should be loyal to one's organization. The employee stays with the organization because he/she "ought to".

Affective organizational commitment reflects one's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in one's organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). It is unlikely that employees would feel a sense of attachment, identification, and involvement toward their organization if the most salient representative of their organization – their supervisor – were believed to be untrustworthy. There is some empirical evidence for this assertion. For example, Podsakoff, Mackenzie, and Bommer (1996), in a study of transformational leadership behaviors, found trust to be significantly related to organizational commitment among employees across a wide variety of different industries and job levels. Some researchers have also found trust to be a significant predictor of organizational commitment among public-sector employees (e.g., Albrecht & Travaglione, 2003; Connell, Ferres, & Travaglione, 2003; Nyhan, 1999, 2000). Therefore, we propose:

H5: The more subordinates trust their supervisor, the higher their level of affective organizational commitment will be.

### ***Helping intention***

Helping intention refers to one's intent to help coworkers voluntarily with work-related problems. Helping a coworker is a form of organizational spontaneity

(cf. George & Brief, 1992) and is similar to the altruism dimension of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (cf. Organ, 1988).

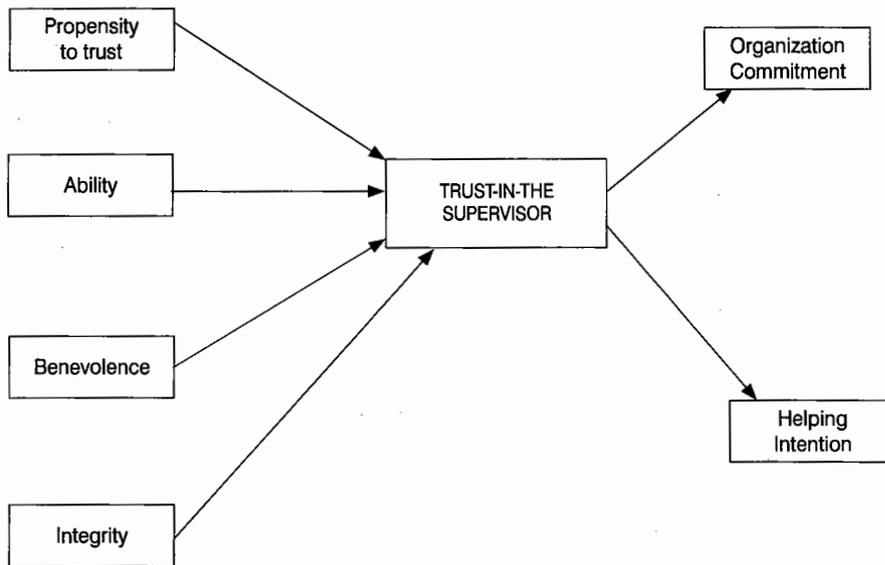
When employees expend effort to help their coworkers, they will need to rely on their supervisor to detect their extra-role contributions. If employees perceive that their supervisor cannot be trusted, they are likely to reduce their vulnerability by focusing only on performance behaviors that can be objectively measured. But if employees trust their supervisor, they are likely to be more willing to help co-workers because they expect that their supervisor will not take advantage of them but will, instead, recognize and reward them in some way for their altruistic contributions and sacrifices (Davis *et al.*, 2000).

Past studies have demonstrated that trust enhances people's willingness to engage in spontaneous sociability such as cooperative, altruistic, and extra-role behaviors (see Kramer, 1999, for a review). For example, Pillai, Schriesheim and Williams (1999) found transformational leadership to have an indirect influence on OCB through trust; Korsgaard *et al.* (2002) found managerial trustworthy behavior to be positively related to helping coworker behavior; and Aryee, Budhwar, and Chen (2002) found trust-in-supervisor to predict individually – directed citizenship behaviors. Finally, a recent meta – analytic study of trust in leadership found trust in direct leader to be correlated with OCB altruism (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Therefore, we propose:

H6: The more subordinates trust their supervisor, the higher their intention to help coworkers will be.

The following figure provides a summary of the hypothesized relationships examined in our study. We include in our model a link between affective organizational commitment and helping intention, although we do not formally test for this relationship because a number of past studies have demonstrated a significant relationship between organizational commitment and OCB (see LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002, for a review). Moreover, we expect the trustee attributes to be correlated among one another; therefore, these links had to be modeled to obtain a reasonable fit to the data. However, given that these relationships are not of substantive interest in this study as well as the lack of theory with regard to causal priority, we did not formulate any formal hypotheses for these relationships but simply allowed the variables involved to co vary among one another.

FIGURE  
Proposed Model



## METHOD

### Sample and Procedure

We surveyed white-collar employees enrolled in different organizations of Islamabad, capital of Pakistan. Instructions on the survey questionnaire introduced the general purpose of the study, conveyed the anonymity of the study, and stressed the confidentiality of the study results. A total of 258 participants returned their completed questionnaires, but only data from 255 respondents (205 men, 50 women) were analyzed after dropping three multivariate outliers. This sample of respondents represented a wide range of functional backgrounds and occupations. The mean age of this sample was 32.40 years ( $SD = 7.20$ ), the mean organizational tenure was 5.99 years ( $SD = 6.29$ ), and the mean years of total work experience was 9.09 ( $SD = 6.93$ ). About 43% of the respondents were married; 95% held an undergraduate or a more advanced degree.

## Measures

We used a combination of scales used in previous research and items developed specifically for this study. Unless stated otherwise, participants responded to all questionnaire items for the major measures of the study using Likert scales anchored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). We averaged ratings on items for each measure to form an overall score for the measure. The higher the score on a measure, the higher the level of the variable being measured.

To assess trustee trustworthiness, we used Mayer and Davis's (1999) scale (reworded slightly to reflect a focus on one's immediate boss rather than on top management in general), which comprises items tapping employees' perception of their supervisor's ability (6 items), benevolence (5 items), and integrity (6 items). Sample items are "My boss has much knowledge about the work that needs to be done" (ability); "My boss would not knowingly do anything to hurt me" (benevolence); and "Sound principles seem to guide the behavior of my boss" (integrity). The reliability (Cronbach alpha) was 0.91 for the ability scale, 0.86 for the benevolence scale, and 0.85 for the integrity scale. We measured propensity to trust with the item "Most people can be trusted" and trust-in-supervisor with three items that assessed the extent to which employees agree or disagree that they could rely on or trust their immediate supervisor (e.g., "I find it difficult to trust my boss"; and "In general, I trust my boss"). The reliability (Cronbach alpha) of the trust-in-supervisor scale was 0.84.

With regard to the outcomes of trust-in-supervisor, we measured affective organizational commitment using a modified version of the affective commitment subscale developed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993). The original measure comprised six items, but we used only five items because one of the items had a relatively weak loading on the intended factor in the confirmatory factor analysis conducted by Meyer *et al.* (1993). A sample item is "I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization." The reliability (Cronbach alpha) of this scale was 0.82. We measured helping intention by using the four altruism items of the OCB Intention Scale reported in Williams and Wong (1999). An exemplar item is "A colleague seems to be having some work problems. Your workload is rather heavy. How likely are you to volunteer your help?" Responses for this scale were made using Likert-type scales anchored from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely). The reliability (Cronbach alpha) of this 4-item scale was 0.60.

## **Data Analysis**

### ***Preliminary analysis***

We checked the data for violations of assumptions of multivariate analysis and deleted three multivariate outlier cases (identified through Mahalanobis distance using a criterion of  $p < 0.001$ , cf. Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989) from the original data set of 158 cases, leaving 155 cases for analysis. After deletion of these outliers, no other significant problems were evident; an examination of residual plots and standard skewness and kurtosis values indicated no violation of the assumption of normality, linearity, or heteroscedasticity. A regression analysis of all the variables in our model yielded variance inflation factor values ranging from 1.11 to 3.76 – all below the allowable threshold of 10 – indicating that multicollinearity is unlikely to be problematic (cf. Kleinbaum, Kupper, & Muller, 1988).

To determine whether or not the conclusions of this study could have been influenced by the presence of common method variance (which may arise from collecting the self-report measures of both dependent and independent variables from the same respondent in the same survey) and to adjust for such contamination, we conducted method variance-marker-variable analysis using the procedures Lindell and Whitney (2001) suggested. Following Lindell and Whitney's suggestion to use a marker variable that must be theoretically unrelated to at least one of the other variables, we used continuance commitment as the marker variable (assessed using the three highest loading items of Meyer's *et al.*, (1993) continuance commitment scale; Cronbach alpha = 0.83). Continuance commitment refers to the extent to which employees remain with the organization out of necessity (e.g., lack of alternative employment opportunities) and should, therefore, have no relationship with trust-in-supervisor and its antecedents. The marker-variable analysis indicated that all the predictor-criterion correlations remained statistically significant even after controlling for common method variance. Therefore, common method variance is unlikely to seriously bias the results of the study.

### ***Path analysis***

We tested the study hypotheses using the EQS statistical program (Bentler, 1995) with maximum likelihood estimation procedures and the covariance matrix as input for the analysis. We used an observed variable, path analytic framework because of the modest sample size. Seventeen parameter estimates were tested, yielding a sample size to estimated parameter ratio of about 9, thus meeting the

recommended threshold ratio of 5 (Bentler, 1995). We assessed overall model fit by examining the comparative fit index (CFI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA). One can conclude that there is a relatively good fit between the observed data and hypothesized model when the model has estimates of CFI more than 0.95, GFI more than 0.90, and RMSEA less than 0.05 (cf. Hu & Bentler, 1998; McDonald & Ho, 2002). To test the individual hypotheses, we examined the internal structure of the model by looking at the magnitude and direction of the path coefficients for the standardized solution and determined the significance of each path coefficient by using the ratio of the unstandardized regression coefficient to its standard error (a ratio analogous to the *z* test).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics, inter-correlations, and alpha reliabilities of the study variables. With the exception of helping intention, all scales had alpha reliabilities greater than the suggested threshold of 0.80 for basic research (cf. Nunnally, 1978). Results of the path analysis indicated a good fit between the data and the hypothesized model (CFI = 0.99, GFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.02). An examination of the standardized path coefficients (shown in Figure 2) indicated that all the paths in the tested model were significant and in the predicted direction, except for the path between trust-in-supervisor and helping intention.

Specifically, the coefficient for the path between propensity to trust and trust-in-supervisor was positive and significant ( $b = 0.09, p < 0.05$ ) providing support for H1, which stated that the higher subordinates' propensity to trust, the higher their trust in their supervisor. Coefficients for the paths between supervisor ability and trust-in-supervisor ( $b = 0.31, p < 0.001$ ), supervisor benevolence and trust-in-supervisor ( $b = 0.25, p < 0.001$ ), and supervisor integrity and trust-in-supervisor ( $b = 0.42, p < 0.001$ ) were also positive and significant, providing support for H2 to H4. In the case of the outcomes of trust-in-supervisor, the coefficient for the path between trust-in-supervisor and affective commitment was positive and significant ( $b = 0.26, p < 0.001$ ). Therefore, H5, which predicted that the more subordinates trust their supervisor, the higher their level of affective commitment will be, was supported. The path from trust-in-supervisor to helping intention, however, did not reach significance ( $b = -0.03, ns$ ); therefore, H6 was not supported. In sum, the results indicated that both trustor and trustee attributes predicted trust-in-supervisor, which, in turn, predicted affective organizational commitment.

TABLE 1

**Descriptive statistics, scale reliabilities and correlations of study variables**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Propensity to trust	0.15	(0.91)						
2. Supervisor ability								
3. Supervisor benevolence	0.12	0.51***	(0.86)					
4. Supervisor integrity	0.13	0.66***	0.68***	(0.85)				
5. Trust -in-supervisor	0.22**	0.71***	0.70***	0.80***	(0.84)			
6. Affective commitment	0.13	0.24**	0.25**	0.30***	0.26**	(0.82)		
7. Helping intention	0.01	-0.03	0.05	-0.01	0.02	0.16*	(0.60)	
8. Marker variable (CC)	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.09	0.09	0.46***	0.13	(0.83)
Mean	2.67	3.45	3.18	3.20	3.36	3.13	3.70	3.22
Standard Deviation	0.91	0.77	0.71	0.70	0.88	0.79	0.52	0.94

Note. Alpha reliabilities are shown in parentheses on the diagonal. CC = continuance commitment  
 \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

**Discussion of Findings and Implications**

We tested six hypotheses derived from a conceptual model of trust-in-supervisor and found support for all our hypotheses except one. As expected, our findings are in line with previous theoretical work suggesting that whether or not employees trust their supervisor depends partly on the individual attributes of both parties of the dyadic relationship. With regard to employee attribute, we found employees' propensity to trust people in general to affect their level of trust for their supervisor. With regard to supervisor attributes, we found supervisor ability, benevolence, and integrity to affect employees' trust.

Contrary to prediction, trust-in-supervisor did not significantly predict helping intention after affective commitment was taken into account. One possible explanation for the null result is that the relatively low reliability of the helping intention scale might have reduced the likelihood of detecting a relationship that actually exists. We, however, do not believe this to be the case given that affective commitment was significantly related to helping intention. A more plausible reason is that trust-in-supervisor does not directly influence employees' willingness to help their co-workers but does so indirectly by interacting with other variables. If, indeed, this is the case, it may be worthwhile to identify potential moderators

of the relationship between trust-in-supervisor and helping co-workers in future research. For example, whether or not employees may be willing to extend help to their co-workers may depend on the nature of the relationship employees develop with their co-workers. Some researchers have found the quality of working relationships and the amount of help employees have received from coworkers to predict helping behavior (e.g., Anderson & Williams, 1996; Deckop, Cirka, & Andersson, 2003).

This research has a number of implications for theory and practice in Pakistan. First, the findings of this study taken together suggest that trust models developed in a western context may be applied in a non-western context. Our study, however, represents only a preliminary step in exploring trust models in the Pakistani context. We hope others will continue this important line of inquiry in Pakistan and expand the present model by including other relevant variables.

Second, we believe our findings have important implications for managerial practice. Because the supervisor attributes of ability, benevolence, and integrity were found to be predictive of employees' trust in their supervisor, an obvious implication is the need for supervisors who wish to earn the trust of their subordinates to act competently, caringly, and with integrity and to make these behaviors evident. What can supervisors do to shape employee perceptions of their trustworthiness? Past studies, for example, have found managers who provide subordinates with performance guidance and support in solving problems to be trusted (e.g., Bijlsma & van de Bunt, 2003). The quality of the interpersonal treatment employees receive from managers has also been shown to be positively related to trust in managers (e.g., Aryee *et al.*, 2002; Y. T. Wong, C. S. Wong, & Ngo, 2002).

Our findings also suggest that employees who trust their supervisor relative to those who do not are more likely to feel a strong sense of identification with, attachment to, and involvement in their organization. Therefore, organizations that wish to have a more affectively committed workforce will need to take steps to enhance the trustworthiness of supervisors and assist them in managing trust relations with employees. What can organizations do to enhance the ability, benevolence, and integrity levels of supervisors? One way is through careful recruitment and selection of supervisory personnel by adopting selection procedures that can identify these attributes in job applicants for supervisory and managerial positions. For example, in addition to ability tests, organizations may want to include personality assessment that taps into attributes such as interpersonal skills, empathy, and integrity in their employee selection procedures. Another way is through training and development. This may entail including topics on trust in supervisory and management training programs and motivating supervisors to behave in a benevolent manner toward subordinates as well as to act with integrity at all times. Expectations regarding these behaviors should be tied to performance assessment and career advancement.

### **Study Limitations and Future Research**

Our study needs to be viewed in light of its limitations, one of which is that we used a cross-sectional design. Therefore, any causal inferences made are based solely on theoretical reasoning. Although the model we offer is plausible, other, alternative models may operate. For example, an argument for reversed causal directionality could be made for the association between each of the trustee attributes and trust-in-supervisor. Experimental or longitudinal research is needed in the future to address these issues.

In this study, we examined only four predictor variables and two outcome variables. Future research is needed to expand the number of variables examined for a more complete understanding of the causes and effects of trust-in supervisor. For example, researchers should identify and examine other variables – such as cynicism and neuroticism – for predicting trust-in-supervisor as well as explore the effects of trust-in-supervisor on other outcomes such as cooperation, knowledge sharing, innovation, and counterproductive workplace behavior.

To date there is little work exploring factors that might moderate the relationship between trust-in-supervisor and its correlates. Therefore, it may be worthwhile to begin identifying potential individual and situational moderators in this area of work. Possible dispositional moderators are agreeableness and Machiavellianism, and possible situational moderators are perceived organizational support and organizational politics. For example, the beneficial effects of trust-in-supervisor might be enhanced in the presence of perceived organizational support, but such trust is unlikely to generate desired employee attitudes and behaviors in a workplace that is politically charged.

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