

## Effect of Tenure on Trust of Employees

Dr. Shilpi Aggarwal<sup>1\*</sup>

### ABSTRACT

Trust is a vague and intangible notion, but its value in today's economy is decidedly real and concrete. The concept of trust has got significant importance and has emerged as a prominent area of research in modern business because of its linkage to individual outcomes such as higher job satisfaction, productivity and higher commitment. The factors have been studied in terms of their impact on improving the trust in an organization. Employee tenure is one such factor and refers to the length of time that an individual has worked for the organization. Different studies have identified varying relationship between Trust and Tenue. To further on this line of inquiry, this paper has analyzed this relationship on a sample of 193 employees with age ranging from 22-54 in a private manufacturing company. The analysis found an inverted-U relationship between Trust and Tenure. In the sample considered in this research, Trust initially showed an increase with experience but then declined afterwards.

**Keywords:** *Trust and Work experience*

In psychology, trust means that the person who is trusted will do what is expected. It starts at the family and grows to others. According to the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson development of basic trust is the first state psychosocial development occurring, or failing, during the first two years of life. In an organization, trust is normally a two-way street i.e. employee's trust on employer and employer's trust is employees (Mishra 1996). Interpersonal trust refers to the 'the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the action 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 other party (Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, 1995). Interpersonal trust does not happen in a social vacuum.

Trust enables cooperative behavior, reduces conflict, and decreases transaction costs at work (Rousseau et al., 1998). Trust is the expectation that the person is both competent and reliable and will keep your best interest in mind (BARBER, 1983). Trust is also a "behavior that reflects a reliance on a partner and involves vulnerability on the part of the trustor" (Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992). Trust enables trustors to assume risk with another party when trustors believe and expect, but cannot guarantee, that favorable outcomes will take place.

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer in Dept. of Psychology Govt. College, Faridabad

\*Corresponding Author

Received: December 20, 2023; Revision Received: December 27, 2023; Accepted: December 31, 2023

## Effect of Tenure on Trust of Employees

Trust is both emotional and logical act. Emotionally, it is where you expose your vulnerabilities to people, but believe they will not take advantage of your openness. Logically, it is where you have assessed the probabilities of gain and loss, calculating expected utility based on hard performance data, and concluded that the person in question will behave in a predictable manner. In practice, trust is a bit of both. I trust you because I have experienced your trustworthiness and because I have faith in human nature. We feel trust. Emotions associated with trust include companionship, friendship, love, agreement, relaxation, comfort.

Trust is integral to the idea of social influence: it is easier to influence or persuade someone who is trusting. The notion of trust is increasingly adopted to predict acceptance of behaviors by others, institutions (e.g. government agencies) and objects such as machines. However, once again perception of honesty, competence and value similarity (slightly similar to benevolence) are essential. There are three different forms of trust, i.e. Predictability, Dependability and Faith. Trust is being vulnerable to someone even when they are trustworthy; Trustworthiness is the characteristics or behaviors of one person that inspire positive expectations in another person, and trust propensity being able to rely on people. Once trust is lost, by obvious violation of one of these three determinants, it is very hard to regain. Thus, there is clear asymmetry in the building versus destruction of trust. Hence being and acting trustworthy should be considered the only sure way to maintain a trust level.

In addition to the social influence, in organizational settings, trust may have a positive influence on the behaviors, perceptions, and performances of a person. Trust has a circular relationship with organizational justice perceptions such that perceived justice leads to trust which, in turn, promotes future perceptions of justice. People may work together and achieve success through trust while working on projects that rely on each individual's contribution. Conversely, where trust is absent, projects can fail, especially if this lack of trust has not been identified and addressed. Identifying and dealing with cases where information providers, information users, and those responsible for processing information do not trust one another can result in the removal of a risk factor for a project. According to Searle et al. (2012), unlike interpersonal trust, the referent for organizational trust is not always clear. Some propose that it is trust in management at various levels of the organization (Child & Rodrigues, 2004); alternatively, Giddens (1990) defined organizational trust as reliability and faith in abstract organization-espoused principles, and Carnevale (1995) suggested that it is faith that the organization will be fair, competent and non-threatening.

There are many factors influence the development of trust. For example, as you may already know from experience, some people tend to be more trusting than others – there are consistent individual differences in this respect. Trust is closely related to one of the Big-five personality dimensions, i.e. Agreeableness. The other important factor affecting trust that is evaluated in this research is the employee experience. The dependency of Trust on tenure has been confirmed by the meta-analysis done by Cotton and Tuttle (1986), who found out that 15 out of 22 studies in their research concluded a negative relationship between trust and tenure. An employee trust level at day-1 of the job is much different from his trust in the colleagues and employer once he settles and consider him part of the organization. Over the year, depending on organization dynamics and culture, his trust may both be positively or negatively impacted. For example, an organization full of politics may see its employees trust taking a hit as he moves up in the hierarchy. Pearce and Klein (2017)

## Effect of Tenure on Trust of Employees

studied how the secret policy enforcement undermines long tenured employees' trust in their organizations. To validate this relationship in Indian workplace context, the following objective was considered in the present study.

To study the differences in Trust of the subjects having different length of work experience.

### *Hypothesis*

Trust has positive correlation with length of work experience, i.e. higher tenured employees are expected to display more Trust.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Tool Used*

**Trust scale:** Trust scale was developed by Rempal, Holmes & Zanna (1985). This test is designed to assess the trust with in close interpersonal relationship. It consists of seventeen items, which measure three dimensions predictability (P), dependability (D), faith(F). Predictability emphasizes the consistency and stability of a partner's specific behaviors based on past experience, dependability concentrates on the dispositional qualities of the partner which warrant confidence in the face of risk and potential hurt, and faith centers on feeling of confidence in the relationship and the responsiveness and caring expected from the partner in the face of an uncertain future. The total trust measure is the sum of the 3 subscale totals. A 7 point scale has been used for scoring. indicate the extent to which you agree, or disagree with the statements as they relate to someone with whom you have a close interpersonal relationship. The overall Cronbach Alpha was .81, with sub scale reliability of .80, .72 and .70 for the faith, dependability and predictability subscales, respectively.

### *Sample*

A convenient and available sample of about 193 employees was taken from a company in Haryana. The age range of subjects was 22-54 years. Employees were distributed in three groups according to their working experience (6 months to 1 year, 2 years to 2.6 months, 4 years and above) in the same company. 64 employees were available in 1<sup>st</sup> group with age rang 22-31 years, 63 employees in 2<sup>nd</sup> group with age range 25-49 years and 66 employees were available in 3<sup>rd</sup> group in the age range of 50-54 out of 193 employees in total.

### *Procedure*

To conduct the study, permission from the MD of 'Aggarwal Food Pvt. Limited' based in Bhiwadi, Rajasthan was taken. They are the manufacturers of Indian Snacks and have total of 300 employees in different units and departments such as procurement, production, packaging, store, maintenance, finishing, cleansing, dispatch and marketing. All the subjects of the study were approached personally. Rapport was established with subjects & they were assured about the confidentiality of the results. Participants were given the standard set of instructions and were requested to fill in personal details. The scale was administered individually. Participants were requested to answer frankly and honestly as the information provided by them to be kept confidential and would only to be used for study purpose. After completion of administration, the subjects were duly thanked for their cooperation. After the data collection was over all tests or questionnaire was scored as per the scoring procedure prescribed by their authors. The obtained data were subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS software and one way ANOVA technique was applied to the data.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

*Table 1: Mean values of trust along with standard deviation of scores obtained by employees of three groups*

Groups Variable	Group-1(6 months to 1 year)	Group-2(1 year to 2year 6 moths)	Group-3(4year and above)
Trust	15.71 ± 4.51	17.33 ± 4.25	12.07 ± 3.44

Mean score of employees of 2nd group is (17.33) is greater than mean score of 1st group (15.71) and 3rd group (12.07). These results suggest that Trust follows an inverted-U relationship with the tenure. Employee shows an increase in trust during initial years after joining an organization, but it then declines afterwards. The result contradict our hypothesis that trust show increase linearly with length of experience. The decline in trust with higher tenure is inline with the findings of Pearce and Klein (2017) however, this study found the linear negative relationship between trust and tenure while our analysis is showing a non-linear pattern.

*Table 2: Comparison among three groups of employees according their working experience on Total Trust.*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Between Groups</b>	940.441	2	470.221	28.081	.000
<b>Within Groups</b>	3181.559	190	16.745		
<b>Total</b>	4122.000	192			

To further validate whether the difference of trust level between three groups is statistically significant, Annova test was performed. As Table 2 shows the significance level is .000, implying that the difference in trust is significant. This finding supports earlier research by Tan and Lim (2009) and Gilbert and Tang’s (1998) who also reported a nonsignificant association between employee tenure and organizational trust.

*Table 3: Comparison among three groups of employees according their working experience.*

Group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
<b>Group-3</b> (4year and above)	66	12.0758	
<b>Group-1</b> (6 months to 1 year)	64		15.7188
<b>Group-2</b> (1 year to 2year 6 moths)	63		17.3333
Sig.		1.00	.068

As highlighted in Table 3, Group 3 and Group 1 are unequal on total trust and there is significant difference or variance between group 3 and group 1. Group 3 and Group 2 are unequal on total trust and there is significant difference or variance between group 3 and group 2. No significant difference was found between Group 1 and Group 2 on Trust. The results indicate that in first 2-3 years there was statistically significant increase in Trust but long tenured employees see their trust in the organization going down which is in line with the conclusion of Battaglio and Condrey (2009).

## Effect of Tenure on Trust of Employees

**Table 4: Mean values of trust's components along with standard deviation of scores obtained by employees of three groups.**

Groups Variable	Group-1(6 months to 1 year)	Group-2(1 year to 2year 6 moths)	Group-3(4year and above)
Dependability	5.37 ± 2.39	4.65 ± 2.76	3.96 ± 2.66
Predictability	2.42 ± 2.22	3.77 ± 2.98	1.66 ± 2.71
Faith	7.92 ± 2.75	8.90 ± 3.08	6.40 ± 2.88

To assess the relation of individual Trust dimensions – i.e. Dependability, Predictability and faith, similar mean-variance analysis was performed, and results are shown in Table 4. First on the dimension on dependability, Group 1, 2 and 3 mean scores were 5.37, 4.65 and 3.96 respectively. So Dependability declines linearly with experience. The mean score of three groups on the dimension on predictability was Group 1 - 2.42, Group 2 - 3.77 and Group 3 - 1.66. So similar to overall Trust score, predictability follows an inverted-U relation with experience. Finally, on Faith, the mean score of three groups were 7.92 for Group 1, 8.90 for Group 2 and 6.40 for Group 3, showing again a increase first and the decline pattern.

To confirm whether the Group difference on each of the Trust dimension are statistically significant, table 5,6 and 7 shows the significance of differences.

**Table 5: Comparison among three groups of employees on Dependability Dimension**

Group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
<b>Group-3</b> (4year and above)	66	3.9697	
<b>Group-2</b> (1 year to 2year 6 moths)	63	4.6508	4.6508
<b>Group-1</b> (6 months to 1 year)	64		5.3750
Sig.		.303	.260

Table 5 explores the significance of variation on Dependability dimension. Group 3 and Group 1 have significant difference. While Group 3 and Group 2 don't have significant difference. Likewise, Group 1 and Group 2 don't show significant differences between them. These findings indicates that dependability towards their partner decreases with an increase in length of work experience of employees. These findings are in contrast to our hypothesis.

**Table 6: Comparison among three groups of employees on Predictability Dimension**

Group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
<b>Group-3</b> (4year and above)	66	1.6667	
<b>Group-1</b> (6 months to 1 year)	64	2.4219	
<b>Group-2</b> (1 year to 2year 6 moths)	63		3.7778
Sig.		.243	1.000

Table 6 shows whether the difference in Predictability dimension are statistically significant between group. As per the finding, Group 3 and Group 1 have no significant difference. On the other hand, Group 2 and Group 1 show statistically significant differences. It indicates that employees having moderate work experience are more capable in predicting the

## Effect of Tenure on Trust of Employees

consistency and stability of specific behavior of their partners, in comparison to employees having very low work experience.

Group 2 and Group 3 have significant differences between them on Predictability dimension. It shows that employees having work experience of about 2½ years and above are less capable in predicting the consistency and stability of specific behavior of their partners, in comparison to employees having a work experience of about 1 ½ years to 2 ½ years. These results show that the predictability increases with increase in length of work experience initially but there is a rapid decrease in predictability, consistency and stability of specific behaviors of their partners in the employees having higher length of work experience.

**Table 7: Comparison among three groups of employees on Faith Dimension**

Group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
<b>Group-3</b> (4year and above)	66	6.4091	
<b>Group-1</b> (6 months to 1 year)	64		7.9219
<b>Group-2</b> (1 year to 2year 6 moths)	63		8.9048
Sig.		1.000	.137

Group 1 and Group 2 are equal on the Faith dimension and there is no significant difference or variance between group 1 and group 2. Group 3 and Group 2 are not equal on Faith dimension as the difference is statistically significant. It indicates that moderately experienced employees show more confidence in the relationship and caring expected from their partners when faced with uncertain future in company in comparison to highly experienced employees. The decline in Faith among higher tenured employees is in-line with the findings of Kiffin-Petersen and Cordery (2003) who reported  $r=-.18$  ( $p<.01$ ) between tenure and faith in management.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude these results, none of the three dimensions of trust have shown an increase with longer experience. So, the hypothesis that trust would increase as a result of length of experience has not been proven. It may be that trust or none of its components increased due to dynamics of the organization considered in this research. These results indicate that the employees initially must have tried to put some efforts to emotionally rely upon their peer group and the employer but may be the organizational climate was not congenial enough to develop any sense of dependability, predictability, and faith. The findings have strong practical relevant for the employers. Old employees are generally a source of guidance for new employees. If older employers don't trust the organization on what organizations will value and what employees can expect from their organizations. If employees with greater organizational tenure trust their organizations less, these employees are potentially spreading their low trust to their less experienced coworkers and so can further undermine others' organizational trust.

### REFERENCES

- Barber, Bernard. 1983. *The Logic and Limits of Trust*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press
- Battaglio, R. P., Jr., & Condrey, S. E. (2009). Reforming public management: Analyzing the impact of public service reform on organizational and managerial trust. *Journal of Public Administration Research*, 19, 689-707.
- Carnevale, D. G. (1995). *Trustworthy government: Leadership and management strategies for building trust and high performance*. Jossey-Bass
- Child, J. and Rodrigues, S. B. (2004), Repairing the Breach of Trust in Corporate Governance. *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, 12, 143–152.
- Cotton, J. L., & Tuttle, J. M. (1986). Employee turnover. *Academy of Management Review*, 11, 55-70
- Giddens, A. (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Kiffin-Petersen, S., & Cordery, J. (2003). Trust, individualism and job characteristics as predictors of employee preference for teamwork. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 14, 93-116
- Mayer, R. C., Davis, J., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995). *An integrative model of organizational trust*. *Academy of Management Review*, 20, 709–734.
- Mishra, A.K. (1996) Organizational Responses to Crisis: The Centrality of Trust. In: Kramer, R.M. and Tyler, T.R., E., Eds., *Trust in Organizations*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, 261-287.
- Moorman, C., Zaltman, G. and Deshpande, R. (1992) Relationship between Providers and Users of Market Research: They Dynamics of Trust within & Between Organizations. *Journal of marketing Research*, 29, 314-328
- Pearce, J. L., & Klein, K. (2017). Distinguished Scholars Invited Essay: Are Secret Proceedings Why Longer Tenured Employees Trust Their Organizations Least? *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 24(4), 437-449.
- Rempel, J. K., Holmes, J. G., & Zanna, M. P. (1985). Trust in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 49(1), 95–112
- Rousseau, D. M., S. B. Sitkin, R.S. Burt, and C. Camerer (1998). Not so different after all: A cross-discipline view of trust. *The Academy of Management Review* 23, 393-404.
- Searle, R., Den Hartog, D. N., Weibel, A., Gillespie, N., Six, F., Hatzakis, T., & Skinner, D. (2012). Trust in the employer: The role of high-involvement work practices and procedural justice in European organizations. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23, 1069-1092.

### **Acknowledgment**

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

**How to cite this article:** Aggarwal, S. (2023). Effect of Tenure on Trust of Employees. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(4), 3101-3107. DIP:18.01.294.20231104, DOI:10.25215/1104.294