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CHAPTER 16

EMERGING THEMES, IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

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INTRODUCTION

The conclusion summarizes the key findings presented within each section of the book. identifying the emerging patterns and themes across the conceptual contributions and empirical studies. These are considered in relation to our two initial questions, First, is there a universally applicable model of trust and trust development [*etic*], or do people from varying cultures understand and enact trust differently [*emic*]? And second, how can Party A from Culture #1 develop a trust relationship with Party B from Culture #2? We then highlight the implications of these patterns and themes for practitioners, and point to directions for future research.

We began this book with three vignettes that we believe highlight both the complexity and ordinariness of cross-cultural trust building in today's globalised business world. In the first vignette, we considered an Iranian businesswoman who is negotiating on behalf of her firm with male representatives from a German alliance partner; we particularly focused on the cultural implications for trust both within her own firm and between her firm and the German alliance partner. In the second vignette, we charted the trust relationship between a Dutch and an Irish employee representative, both engineers, working in and representing employees in Holland and England respectively, for an Anglo-Dutch firm during a period of considerable change, which culminated in the firm being bought by an Indian company. In contrast, in the third vignette, we reported production problems and the lack of trust between a French workforce and German contract technicians rectifying errors made in the company's German factory. We used these three vignettes to illustrate the importance of trust in securing sustainable working relationships in situations that are ambiguous and uncertain, and in a world where people from different and unfamiliar cultures are increasingly being asked to work together and manage their strategic business relationships. In each vignette, the cultures that individuals belonged to influenced the formation of trust cues within a relationship, and served as filters for cues encountered from other cultures, sometimes resulting in confusion, misunderstanding and miscommunication.

The vignettes highlighted the multiplicity of ways that cultures may group together. Schneider and Barsoux (2003) refer to these as 'cultural spheres' to which individuals invariably belong, and which extend beyond their national cultural sphere. Using Chao and Moon's (2005) metaphor of a mosaic, these spheres were portrayed as a series of 'tiles' operating both within and across organizations, each one representing a specific unique cultural identity of a person, such as nationality, ethnicity, religion, sector/industry, organization or profession. The existence and interaction of such 'spheres' or 'tiles', we argued, highlighted two essential questions with regard to the nature of culture and trust. *Question 1* is whether there is a universally applicable model of trust and trust development [*etic*], or do people from varying cultures understand and enact trust differently [*emic*]? *Question 2* is how can Party A from Culture #1 develop a trust relationship with Party B from Culture #2, given strong differences in intercultural interaction? Adapting Lewicki and Bunker's (1996) staged model, we presented our analysis as a five stage model of trust development across cultural boundaries (Figure 1.3). This model represents the ways that the parties from different cultural spheres, and with different cultural tiles, might proceed through five key elements or stages: context, opening stance, early encounters, breakthrough or breakdown, and consequences. Adopting the theoretical proposition that trust is fundamentally interpersonal but is shaped by latent and overt influences at multiple group, organizational and national levels, some of which are also cultural, the subsequent chapters presented their various interpretations of the trust-building and trust repair processes across very different 'cultural spheres'. In Part I of this book, we considered the conceptual challenges of researching trust across different cultural spheres. Drawing upon both empirical studies and conceptual projects, the remaining chapters which appeared in Parts II and III provided an 'emic' or integrated 'emic'/'etic' view of trust, either between organization relationships (Part II) or within organization relationships (Part III). In this concluding chapter, we return to these two questions and, in our final discussion, we draw implications for practice and potential future research agendas.

THE CONCEPTUAL CHALLENGE OF RESEARCHING TRUST ACROSS CULTURES

Following the Introduction, the three remaining chapters in Part I offered distinctive insights into the challenges of researching trust across cultures. We consider these in relation firstly to the universal applicability of trust and trust development across cultures, and second, to the development of trust within relationships.

Universal applicability

Our first question is whether there is a universally applicable model of trust and trust development [*etic*] or do people from varying cultural identities understand and enact trust differently [*emic*]. Addressing this issue, Ferrin and Gillespie proposed that whilst there is strong, consistent evidence that trust differs between national-societal cultures, there is also evidence that trust is universal across cultures. In other words, there are both culturally-specific and universally-applicable determinants and consequences of trust. Through the lens of their review of the predominately quantitative empirical research evidence on the effects of national-societal culture on interpersonal trust, Ferrin and Gillespie noted that countries differ in their average level of generalized trust. This difference was consistently associated with “macro” factors such as national wealth, income equality, education, ‘good’ government, strong formal institutions, and ethnic homogeneity, all of which are largely demographic and geographic rather than associative cultural tiles. Arguing that it is unclear from the studies conducted to date whether the influence of in-group bias on trust is culturally-specific or holds equally across national-societal cultures, they concluded that there is mixed support for the role of cultural distance and similarity of societal background as clear and unambiguous determinants of trust. While past research suggests that the trustworthiness characteristics of ability, benevolence and integrity are universally applicable, there are also culturally-specific unique manifestations and interpretations of these characteristics in at least some countries. Furthermore, there are additional, emic aspects of trustworthiness (such as thriftiness, respect for authority, organizational commitment) that appear to be more important in some countries than in others.

In chapter 3, Reinhard Bachman’s contribution stresses the importance of cultural context as it relates to Question 1: the cultural specificity-universalistic debate. Bachman calls for a conceptualization of trust that is less universalistic and more context-sensitive, placing emphasis on the emic component. Using examples comparing Germany and the UK, he cites national differences in their systems and orientations (geographic tiles), arguing that the resultant strong forms of individual power in each are not conducive to trust building. In contrast to the predominantly quantitative studies (reviewed by Ferrin and Gillespie in Chapter 2), Bachmann advocates using a mixed-methods design to build upon broader generalizations, and focuses on using Repertory Grids as an appropriate way of understanding such contexts more fully. Focusing on the potential of Repertory Grids to build country-collective mind maps, he illustrates how these maps could provide the depth of understanding needed to understand and compare trust between cultures. Bachman argues that universalistic concepts are useful for initial trust orientation, but that they lose explanatory capability when applied to real world situations. Consequently, there is a need for a more differentiated understanding of how and why trust differs across cultures, combining both quantitative and qualitative research designs, so as to remain academically rigorous without losing practical usefulness.

Context, and the relational nature of trust, provided the focus for Wright and Enhart's chapter (4), which, like Bachman's chapter, also considers the wider utility of trust research in the world of practice. In this theoretical contribution, Wright and Enhart proposed that because trust is dynamic rather than fixed or stable, it should be framed as a social construction. Like Gillespie and Ferrin, Wright and Enhart identify limitations in the current academic literature which, they believe, reflects the limitations of trust researchers, rather than the realities of trust itself. They argue that while most researchers recognize that trust is relational and contextual, many researchers conceptualize and approach it in a universalist way, thereby ignoring the need to include contextual and relational aspects in their models. Provocatively, they argue that most existing research on cultural differences or similarities has limited use for practitioners. In drawing a link between trust development and the sense-making literature, they propose that trust should be treated as a verb, as this allows it to be represented as a dynamic process. Going further than either Ferrin and Gillespie or Bachmann in relation to Question 1, they argue that trust is always shaped by contexts, histories and other actants, which need to be studied (an aspect addressed, for example, by Yousfi in Chapter 9). Culture (and its component tiles) is but one of several consideration that influence human organizing. Actors are always in the process of trusting, and trust is created through narrative, a social process of interaction and conversation. As illustrated later in by Kassis-Henderson (Chapter 14), language is not neutral; power is always present in an encounter involving more than one person.

Developing trust relationships

Turning to Question2 (how can Party A from Culture #1 develop a trust relationship with Party B from Culture #2), Ferrin and Gillespie's chapter offered a useful overview of existing research. They noted that the few studies which have examined the mediating role of trust across cultural contexts, do provide preliminary supporting evidence that trust universally mediates certain relationships, such as between leaders and followers (an aspect addressed by Hope-Hailey and colleagues in Chapter 13) and supervisors and subordinates (addressed by Wasti and Tan in Chapter 12). However, they also noted that trust's mediating role in other empirical relationships, such as between leadership and subordinate citizenship behavior, appeared to be culturally and context specific, highlighting the need for further research. In reviewing the predominantly quantitative body of research on this topic, they stressed how the use of country as a proxy variable for national culture could create difficulties as well as highlighting the difficulties inherent in isolating the effect of cultural variables. They question the impact of structural factors within academia on research design, and suggest that it is probable that the research literature overstates the true effects of culture on trust. They argue that these structural factors encourage the design, conduct, and publication of research on cross-cultural differences, while discouraging the design, conduct, and publication of research on cross-

cultural universals. The predominance of quantitative studies identified in their review also supports, albeit to a certain extent obliquely, the calls for alternative methods and methodologies in researching trust across cultures by both Bachman in Chapter 3 and Wright and Enhart in Chapter 4.

TRUST ACROSS DIFFERENT ‘CULTURAL SPHERES’: INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES

Building on the exploration of the conceptual and theoretical issues relating to researching trust across different cultures, Part II presented five chapters -four empirical and one theoretical- each considering aspects of trust across differing inter-organizational cultural spheres. These explored the professional (associative) cultural tiles of consultants and of auditors and, for both, their respective clients; national (demographic) cultural tiles in German-Ukraine and French-Lebanese business relationships; a range of demographic and associative cultural tiles in the contexts of cooperation between micro entrepreneurs in Nigeria and Ghana; and, conflict resolution in multiple cross cultural contexts from a theoretical perspective.

Universal applicability

In relation to Question 1, the chapters in Part II offered further insights regarding how certain aspects of trustworthiness can have different foci in different cultures, and how the competing demands of different cultural tiles can, in some cases, result in conflict. They also highlight how the applicability of the trustworthiness characteristics of ability, benevolence and integrity (Mayer et al., 1995) varies across cultures. Considering conflict resolution in a cross-cultural context from a theoretical perspective, Kramer (Chapter 7) focuses on dyadic negotiations between representatives of different cultural groups, arguing that, overall, the effectiveness of the negotiation process was affected by the level of trust between negotiators and that trust was difficult to achieve when individuals represented different cultural groups. He identified two principal barriers to trust: psychological and social. Psychological barriers are rooted in in-group bias, are the result of out-group distrust, and are sustained even in the face of evidence to the contrary. Trust-destroying evidence is weighed more heavily than evidence to the contrary. Social barriers relate to the roles played by third parties, such that third party disclosure amplifies distrust to a greater extent than it increases trust.

Differences between work cultures and, in particular the competing demands of different cultural spheres and their influence upon trust, were the subject matter of chapters by Avakian and colleagues' (5) and by Dibben and Rose (6). Avakian and colleagues considered

interorganizational trust and interpersonal trust in the context of client and consultant relationships, suggesting that trust was embedded in the alignment of cultural spheres, and that this alignment helped to reduce uncertainty. In chapter 5 they argued (as did Ferrin and Gillespie, in relation to national cultures in Chapter 2) that, whilst there might be universalist principles of trust, these were manifested and interpreted within culturally specific contexts. They offered as an example the case of consultants who had to reconcile the application of corporate cultural values of their own organization with clients' expectations, driven by the overwhelming need to build a positive relationship with clients while upholding their own organization's culture. Similarly, in their chapter on the auditing profession, Dibben and Rose argued that the competing demands of the different cultural spheres (organizational, professional, client and public cultural tiles) inhabited by individual auditors created complex implications for individuals' trustworthiness, and resulted in different trust (and distrust) requirements and criteria for different contexts. Their research showed how different cultural tiles assume greater or lesser importance depending on the auditor's varying roles, but that within the auditing profession, the organization tile strengthened in its prominence relative to the profession as an individual's career develops in that profession.

Differences between national cultures and their implications for trust provided the focus of the remaining chapters in Part II. In Chapter 8, Möllering and Stache explored the challenge of dealing with cultural differences between Germany and the Ukraine, within a context of institutional instability and uncertainty. They argued that overcoming barriers requires a genuine interest in understanding the other party, questioning one's own assumptions, and searching for common aims and rules for initial interactions that produce positive mutual experiences through which a trustful relationship can grow. Within business relationships often characterized by dependence and power differences, trust across cultures emerged during interaction when people started to look beyond cultural differences and to work on setting up common rules for their specific relationship. Those rules could then contribute to a reflexive trust building process by making each other's behavior better understandable and less uncertain.

National cultural differences and the importance of demographic cultural tiles were also highlighted by Yousfi in Chapter 9. Yousfi explored the nature of trust in French-Lebanese contractual relationships, where relative differences in the importance of the ability and benevolence dimensions between the two national cultures resulted in different manifestations and interpretations of 'good cooperation', and, in turn, of trustworthy behavior. These differences hindered the resolution of difficulties, as both parties interpreted the contract and its enactment differently; thus, while the trustworthiness characteristics of ability, benevolence and integrity may be universally manifest, the way in which they are likely to be interpreted and acted upon is quite sensitive to differences in cultural context.

Developing trust relationships

The chapters in Part II also provided insights into how different parties from different cultures with different expectations might develop trust relationships, taking into account the range, relative dominance and interactions across cultural tiles. Kramer (Chapter 7) highlighted how, in dyadic negotiations, trust is difficult to achieve when individuals represent different cultural groups. He argued that trust between different cultures can be built through signaling one's own trustworthiness and willingness to cooperate, and trying to encourage cooperative behavior in the other party. Creating positive personal bonds can build trust, as can creating appropriate institutional structures which create mechanisms for resolving questions of interpretation and concerns about compliance that allow an initial agreement to be reached (often representing associative cultural tiles, compare with Lyon and Porter, Chapter 10).

Avakian and colleagues (Chapter 5) and Dibben and Rose (Chapter 6) both focused on trust development in situations where there is likely to be cultural conflict. For Avakian and colleagues, consultants have to both uphold the associative culture tile of their parent firm, whilst also meeting the different cultural needs and expectations of the client. This often results in an internal role conflict for the consultant, resulting in interpretive tension. Like Yousfi (Chapter 9) and Kassis Henderson (Chapter 14), these authors argue that risk and interdependence are partly embedded in cultural values and artifacts. Different cultural expectations regarding trust across professional and organizational cultural tiles can work against trust development, and result in conflict as different culturally-derived criteria are applied. In Dibben and Rose's chapter, the conflict was between professional and organizational cultural tiles. They argued that an auditor's level of trust/distrust determined whether or not she or he could switch from a professional cultural tile of skepticism to an organizational culture tile of client-friendly values. Consequently, such cultural tiles appear to form a powerful source from which those involved can craft their understanding and expectations of a given context. In the client-consultant context, cultural tiles become aligned through sharing areas of agreement as to how the service will be deployed. Formal decision making, reporting and informal discussions also appear important in supporting trust development.

Exploring inter-organizational trust across national cultures, Möllering and Stache (Chapter 8) and Lyon and Porter (Chapter 10) both considered trust building in contexts where there were few institutional safeguards. Möllering and Stache noted that while trusted reliable institutions could be a foundation for trust when actors have no prior history of interaction, in the Ukraine, where there is a deep distrust of the state, the reverse was true. Associative tiles such as

informal personal relationships and reciprocity were more trusted and replaced institutional safeguards. In contrast, German managers were more used to relying on established institutional mechanisms. Möllering and Stache argued that where there is the potential for differences in institutional trust to cause insurmountable obstacles, the success of cross-cultural business relationships will depend significantly on active trust and personalized development activities which are undertaken from a position of openness to the other culture and a willingness to deal reflexively with cultural differences. The building of cooperation and trust among micro entrepreneurs in Nigeria and Ghana also happened without formalized institutional safeguards. Here Lyon and Porter demonstrated that, as formal agreements could not be enforced by a legal system, more informal personalized trust relationships were important as a means of reducing uncertainty. Individuals drew on personalized trust based upon information about the other party's prior behavior and character, gained through three systems: their own interactions; associative tiles derived from parallel institutional forms such as trader associations, chieftaincy systems and community leadership; and their own ability to apply sanctions. In such contexts they argued that associative cultural tiles embodying norms of reciprocity were critical, overriding potentially divisive demographic cultural tiles such as ethnicity.

TRUST ACROSS DIFFERENT 'CULTURAL SPHERES': INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES

Part III of this volume contains the remaining five substantive chapters, each of which empirically explored issues relating to trust dynamics across intra-organizational spheres and focusing, in particular, upon demographic cultural tiles. In the first contribution (Chapter 11), Smith and Schwegler provided a bridge between inter- and intra-organizational studies by comparing and contrasting American and German Non-Governmental Organizations' (NGOs) cultural preferences in trust building criteria and processes in the context of building partnerships and alliances. Wasti and Tan provided another alternative 'bridge', contrasting dyadic trust between subordinates and supervisors in Turkey and in China (Chapter 12), and again, offering insights regarding the universal applicability of models of trust and trust development. The trust relationship between line managers and subordinates was also examined within the context of major changes in nine UK-based organizations by Hope Hailey and colleagues (Chapter 13), providing insights regarding trust differences and demographic cultural tiles relating to employment grade, age and length of service. Subsequent chapters focused upon different aspects of intra-organizational trust, highlighting the implications of language in relation to trust building (Kassis Henderson, Chapter 14) and how Chief Executives enhance their legitimacy to build and maintain trust, drawing on data from a large European family firm (Mari, Chapter 15).

Universal applicability

The chapters in Part III supported earlier assertions that, whilst there are universally applicable trust concepts, the ways in which these concepts are manifest and interpreted is often very culturally-specific. For example, using Doney et al.'s (1998) five routes for trust development, Smith and Schwegler (Chapter 11) found that although these routes could be distinguished in both American and German NGOs, in practice they were often combined and sequenced differently. In the United States, level 1 assessments (intentionality) were based on core values of a prospective partner organization. Subsequently, these American NGOs moved to level 2 assessments of their capabilities and competence, followed by an assessment of their track record (transference). In contrast, in German NGOs, while routes for levels 1 and 2 were still distinguishable, intentionality and capability were intertwined. As suggested earlier by Möllering and Stache (Chapter 8), German organizations preferred to utilize formal mechanisms, such as a code of conduct, against which to assess potential partners. Subsequently, they progressed to the next level (predictability), where they focused more on common history and previous shared experience than the American NGOs. These findings again support the earlier assertion that a universal model of trust needs to be sensitive to different cultural contexts.

Further support of the need for sensitivity to different cultural contexts was provided by Wasti and Tan (Chapter 12), comparing Turkish and Chinese organizations. They show that while the ability, benevolence and integrity dimensions of trustworthiness identified by Mayer et al. (1995), are readily identifiable in intra-organizational contexts, their relative importance can differ between national cultures, and particularly in comparison to Western cultures. Within each organization, they identified differences in the way these dimensions were communicated, and specifically highlighted how, unlike in Western organizations, boundaries between professional and non-work associative cultural tiles were often artificial. Consequently, while ability, benevolence and integrity could still be distinguished, the way in which they were manifest differed among cultural groups. They argued that dyadic trust (subordinates trust in supervisor) in collectivist high-context cultures places a much greater emphasis on relational and affective components than is suggested in the predominantly North American trust literature. Benevolence, for example, was found to be manifested more broadly, deeply and at an earlier stage of trust development, and encompassed behaviors such as magnanimity and concern for both the professional and personal welfare of the subordinate. Consequently, as with inter-organizational studies (for example Yousfi, Chapter 9), while universal models of trust development and characteristics of trust could be applied at a broad level, these appeared to be moderated by culturally-specific manifestations and interpretations of these characteristics, again supporting calls for a more differentiated understanding.

Developing trust relationships

The chapters in Part III also provided further insights regarding how parties from different cultures within organizations might develop trust relationships. Hope-Hailey and colleagues (Chapter 13) found that trust during organizational change was associated with demographic cultural tiles relating to job grading, age, and length of service. In particular, levels of trust within organizations varied between the distal (more distant) senior managers and the proximal (closer) line managers. They termed this the ‘employer-manager trust gap’. Trust in the employer also declined in relation to length of service; as a result, in the context of organizational change, employees could not be treated as one homogenous group. Sub-cultures aside, trust in line managers was found to be the strongest predictor of trust in employers, highlighting the important role that line managers play in trust relationships.

Mari (Chapter 15) also found differences between organizational sub-cultures in the development of mutual trust amongst those working in family firms. Trust levels were often rooted in norms of behavior shared by members of the family, and membership in one of three interacting associative cultural tiles: family, business and ownership. Within these subgroups, the legitimacy of family-firm chief executives rested on the use of formal control (corporate organization structures) and informal control (norms of behavior). As the firm grew and changed, these norms of behavior were found to no longer be shared, and visions for the future began to differ among the subgroups, resulting in increased conflict. Based on this finding, Mari argued that for trust to be built in a family-firm, context, formalities of fair processes, formal organization structure and disciplined decision-making criteria were needed. This formalization, she argued, would help the Chief Executive to gain or maintain legitimacy and continue to be seen as trustworthy.

Finally, with regard to our consideration of how different parties from different cultures can develop trust relationships, Kassis Henderson’s chapter (14) argued that while research has shown that the development of trust and relationships is closely linked to language issues, the issue of language and its relation to trust has not really been explored. Moreover, she challenged the assumption that using a commonly-shared working language (usually English) removes barriers to trust creation. Rather, she argued that the use of a shared working language can create an illusion of a shared cultural identity, which ultimately can be a source of problems. People who speak the same language expect to share similar interpretations of discourse; yet International English differs from that spoken by native monolingual English speakers. Consequently, language as a cultural tile could provide misleading cues for initial

trust resulting in, for example, native language speakers not being trusted by non-native language speakers.

DISCUSSION

Overall, our chapters have shown that while there appear to be universally applicable characteristics of trustworthiness such as ability, benevolence and integrity, these characteristics differ in their manifestation, relative importance and interpretation between cultural spheres, and are at least partially dependent upon which cultural tiles are dominant within a trust relationship. Trust relationships develop within specific contexts, and the cultural tiles are an integral part of those contexts. As a consequence, the way in which trust relationships develop and are maintained has both similarities and differences across cultures. We now turn to discussing the implications of these similarities and differences for practice and for future research.

Implications for practice

Reviewing the chapters, it is clear that in developing trust within and between organizations, cultural differences matter! Individuals belong to multiple cultural spheres which influence the development and maintenance of trust. These differences extend beyond the most obvious demographic 'tiles' such as ethnicity and nationality, to including both geographic and associative cultural tiles. Each tile represents a culture or subculture component to which an individual belongs, and which serve as a facet of the context in which trust develops. The relative importance of each tile varies across trust relationships, both within and between organizations. Whilst our staged model of trust development in Chapter 1 simply emphasized the importance of context in trust relationships, the chapters within this book have illuminated how richly all three categories of cultural tiles, and the cultural spheres they represent, can influence the opening stances of the parties involved, their early encounters, and the subsequent trust breakthrough or breakdown. Awareness, recognition of and sensitivity to the range of cultural tiles, the trust cues they embody, and an understanding of their relative importance within a specified situation, is therefore crucial for those who are involved in the development and subsequent maintenance of trust within and between organizations and cultures. These dynamics are of equal importance in situations where there has been a breakdown of trust and trust repair efforts are required.

The nature and relative importance of factors that support the development and maintenance of trust are likely to be related to the dominant cultural tiles within any intra or inter organizational

relationship. Where these differ between parties, and the resultant competing demands are not recognized or understood, there is likely to be conflict; as a consequence, trust will be more difficult to develop and maintain. In effect, the broad characteristics of trust are likely to be modified by culturally specific manifestations and interpretations. Whilst some cultures will place a greater emphasis on the relational and affective components of a relationship emphasizing the benevolence component of trust, others will emphasize ability and/or integrity components. Of equal importance, where formalized institutional safeguards are weak or do not exist, success of cross-cultural business relationships are likely to depend significantly on active personalized trust. In such situations, individuals will need to draw on personalized trust, information and the availability of other relevant and dominant, associative cultural tiles. When developing such relationships, it is important to remember that a common language does not necessarily equate to common cultural tiles or shared understanding.

The chapters in this volume highlight a need for research and findings on cross-cultural trust dynamics to be useful to practitioners, and to be made available to them in a form that is accessible and easy to digest. This assertion echoes comments made by others about how management research can be made more accessible to practitioners (c.f. Bartunek, 2007), and the need for management research to satisfy the dual criteria of theoretical and methodological rigor and, at the same time, practical relevance (Hodgkinson et al., 2001). Although we would argue that it may not be appropriate for all research to be of direct relevance to practitioners or have immediate utility, considerations about the cross-cultural nature of trust is immensely important for practitioners, and the chapters in this volume have shown how both the relational and contextual aspects are likely to be of immediate practical use. Consequently, it is also imperative to ensure that, where appropriate, future research incorporates a full discussion of practical implications. We now turn to explore those areas where future research should be a high priority.

Directions for future research

By specifically considering a cultural perspective on trust within and between organizations, our chapters have highlighted five interrelated directions for future research. These five directions are:

- establishing which dimensions of trust are culturally specific [emic] and which are universal [etic];
- examining of the role of cultural distance and similarity in societal background between parties who are developing or maintaining trust;
- explicitly considering the impact of contextual factors other than culture, to understand better how trust may be built and maintained;

- adopting a longitudinal, time-series perspective to exploring the relative importance of different cultural spheres in the development and maintenance of trust;

and:

- recognizing the relative advantages of both quantitative and qualitative methods for addressing trust dynamics, and, where appropriate, exploring the utility of mixed-methods research designs.

Our first future research direction highlights to the need to explore further and establish which dimensions of trust are culturally specific [emic] and which are universal [etic], incorporating the manner in which individuals interpret and give prominence to the apparently-universal trustworthiness characteristics of ability, benevolence and integrity. Whilst the book's chapters have provided clear evidence that such cultural differences do influence trust development and maintenance, there is a need for more systematic work to explore how these trustworthiness elements operate and interact. Findings from such research could provide critical building blocks toward a universal theory of trust within and between cultures, expanding upon our staged model. Within such research, it is necessary to establish whether the influence of in-group bias on trust is culturally-specific, and to develop an understanding of the critical role of multi-level modes of cultural antecedents and their consequences. This work is likely to offer further insights on both institutional and structural solutions to barriers to trust. Research in spheres where national and organizational cultures intersect is likely to be one fruitful avenue. Similarly, the implications of interactions between professional and personal cultural spheres, such as in friendships and their associated boundary conditions, is likely to provide further insights as to those aspects of culture that moderate such relationships. These need to be considered at both individual and group levels.

The increasing interdependence of organizations across national, organizational and professional boundaries provides the broad context for our second future research direction. Organizations are increasingly asking people from different cultures to manage new relationships with new parties across cultures with which they are unfamiliar. This raises questions regarding the relative importance of distinctions about factors such as cultural distance and similarity in societal background between parties in the trust development and maintenance processes. In particular, there is a need to understand more fully the influence of cultural differences and similarities in relation to demographic, geographic and associative cultural tiles, their relative importance for particular trust relationships, and the conditions under which certain cultural tiles become more dominant relative to others. As part of this exploration, there will be a need to distinguish clearly between trust within and between different managerial

levels within organizations, including the employer-manager trust gap, as well as a consideration of how cultural distance affects trust between organizations. Building upon our staged model of trust research, such research could usefully incorporate the influence of each parties' cultural preconceptions within different cultural spheres, as represented within their cultural tiles.

Throughout the book, chapters have highlighted the importance of contextual factors other than culture in relation to the operation of trust. Other aspects that would benefit from explicit inclusion include the historical underpinnings of trust relationships, the role of organizational structures and the impact of language. With regard to the first, an understanding of how the past has influenced the present trust situation is likely to enable better understanding of how trust may be built. The stability and integrity of national structures, and organizations' and individuals' trust in them, appears likely to influence trust across national cultures. Similarly, organizational structures such as management boards, and formalities such as corporate governance rules, are also likely to influence trust, particularly where these differ between organizations. The impact of language-related factors on trust building is also worthy of further research -for example, exploring its impact in multi-lingual and in virtual teams.

The chapters have also highlighted the additional insights that may be realized by taking a longitudinal perspective. This perspective allows the exploration of the relative importance of different cultural spheres in the formation, development and maintenance of trust over time, while explicitly considering how dimensions of trustworthiness impact on process of achieving cooperation over time. This approach would specifically require the adoption of research designs and alternative methods that focus on longitudinal, rather than time-snapshot, data.

In undertaking this research, the chapters offer clear calls for invoking a broader range of data collection methods, and specifically highlight the importance of undertaking in-depth qualitative studies. Where survey research is used, it would benefit from looking explicitly at both cultural similarities and differences on trust. More important is to expand the use of qualitative research tools, and to realize the potential benefits of combining quantitative with qualitative methods. Many of the studies reported in this book have made use of qualitative methods, and offer compelling evidence on how these can offer additional explanatory capability and alternative insights to those provided by quantitative methods alone. Such qualitative methods could be used to better understand culturally-specific manifestations of trust antecedents, which could then be operationalized by subsequent development of scales and other more quantitative data collection rubrics.

Concluding comment

Writing over 70 years ago, Lewin (1945: 129) argued “There is nothing so practical as a good theory”. Within that article, he highlighted the high degree of complexity in the world, emphasizing the need for careful diagnosis to enable the application of theory. As the chapters in this book have clearly demonstrated, the relationship between trust and culture is indeed complex, and requires careful diagnosis and the development of theories that are applicable to organizations and the people within them. The chapters have also highlighted how both quantitative and qualitative research methods can support this development of good theory, each providing complimentary insights. There is now a need to undertake further research which incorporates culturally-specific dimensions, but which will allow for generalizable findings to further support moves towards the creation of a good universalistic, culturally-sensitive theory of trust development and maintenance.

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