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Trust Within the Workplace: A Review of Two Waves of Research and a Glimpse of the Third

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Abstract

Over the past quarter century, trust has emerged as a core concept in organizational psychology and organizational behavior. We review the body of research amassed over that period using a field evolutionary lens and identify two "waves" that have shaped and progressed the field in specific and important ways: Wave 1, establishing foundational building blocks; Wave 2, questioning assumptions and examining alternatives. For each wave, we identify what has been learned and identify key questions that still need to be addressed. We also suggest researchers will need to evolve the fundamental questions asked in order to maintain the momentum of the literature into the next quarter century, and we speculate about what these might look like. Finally, as a result of recent organizational developments and societal disruptions, we anticipate the emergence of a third wave, aimed at examining their implications for trust in the workplace.

INTRODUCTION

Trust is essential for initiating, maintaining, repairing, and elevating social relationships at work. It permeates the full range of workplace relationships, including those between leaders/followers, mentors/mentees, job applicants/interviewers, newcomers/incumbents, team members, and negotiators (De Jong et al. 2016, Dirks & Ferrin 2002, Ghosh 2014, Klotz et al. 2013, Kong et al. 2014, Schaubroeck et al. 2013). Trust is of central importance to numerous literatures within organizational psychology and organizational behavior (OP/OB), including leadership, justice, psychological contracts, perceived organizational support, psychological ownership, voice, and teams (Chamberlin et al. 2017, Colquitt et al. 2013, Costa et al. 2018, Hoch et al. 2018, Kurtessis et al. 2017, Martin et al. 2016, Zhang et al. 2021a, Zhao et al. 2007). Beyond its value in these areas, the importance of trust as a topic in its own right has led to a surge of research interest into organizational trust over the past decades, resulting in hundreds of empirical studies, numerous special issues (e.g., Dirks et al. 2009, McEvily et al. 2003), edited volumes (e.g., Bachmann & Zaheer 2006), literature reviews (e.g., Fulmer & Gelfand 2012), meta-analyses (e.g., De Jong et al. 2016), and even a specialized journal (*Journal of Trust Research*) and international conference devoted to the topic (First International Network on Trust).

Although early explorations into this topic date back to the 1960s and 1970s (e.g., Deutsch 1960, Rotter 1967, Zand 1972), the field of organizational trust research did not really take off until a quarter century ago with the publication of several influential pieces including Mayer et al. (1995), McAllister (1995), an edited volume by Kramer & Tyler (1996), and a special issue in the *Academy of Management Review* by Rousseau et al. (1998).[1] Following that time, trust research grew exponentially, creating a vast, rich body of knowledge and turning trust into one of the most influential constructs within OP/OB (Newman et al. 2016). At this quarter century mark, we consider the state of knowledge, as well as future possibilities for the literature. We review the literature from a field evolutionary perspective, identifying different "waves" that have shaped and progressed the field in specific and important ways (see **Figure 1**).

The waves metaphor provides a means of organizing the literature and allows readers to understand this field of research in unique and novel ways. First, the metaphor reveals the distinct sets of problems and questions scholars have focused on across different waves (e.g., Wave 1: establishing foundational building blocks; Wave 2: questioning assumptions and examining alternatives). Second, it highlights distinct forces that provided the energy for each wave (e.g., Wave 1 and 3: some originating from outside of the field of research; Wave 2: originating from within the field). Third, it demonstrates their chronological order, showing that different waves emerged at different points in time while also recognizing periods of co-occurrence across waves. Finally, it indicates a progression through different stages, starting with the swelling stage in which the wave builds and important initial progress is made, the crest stage in which the wave gains momentum and initial insights are further consolidated and expanded, and finally the breaker stage in which the wave washes out, with progress still being made but contributions becoming increasingly incremental. Using this metaphor, we suggest that, as Wave 1 breaks down, researchers need to evolve the fundamental questions asked (by riding Wave 2 and anticipating Wave 3) in order to maintain the momentum, impact, and relevance of the literature into the next quarter century, and we speculate about what these might look like. Overall, our review thus serves as a lighthouse that helps readers navigate the waves of trust research and points them toward new destinations worth exploring.

[1] Berg et al. (1995) published their influential article in behavioral economics and introduced the "trust game" in the same year, reflecting the explosion of research in related areas.

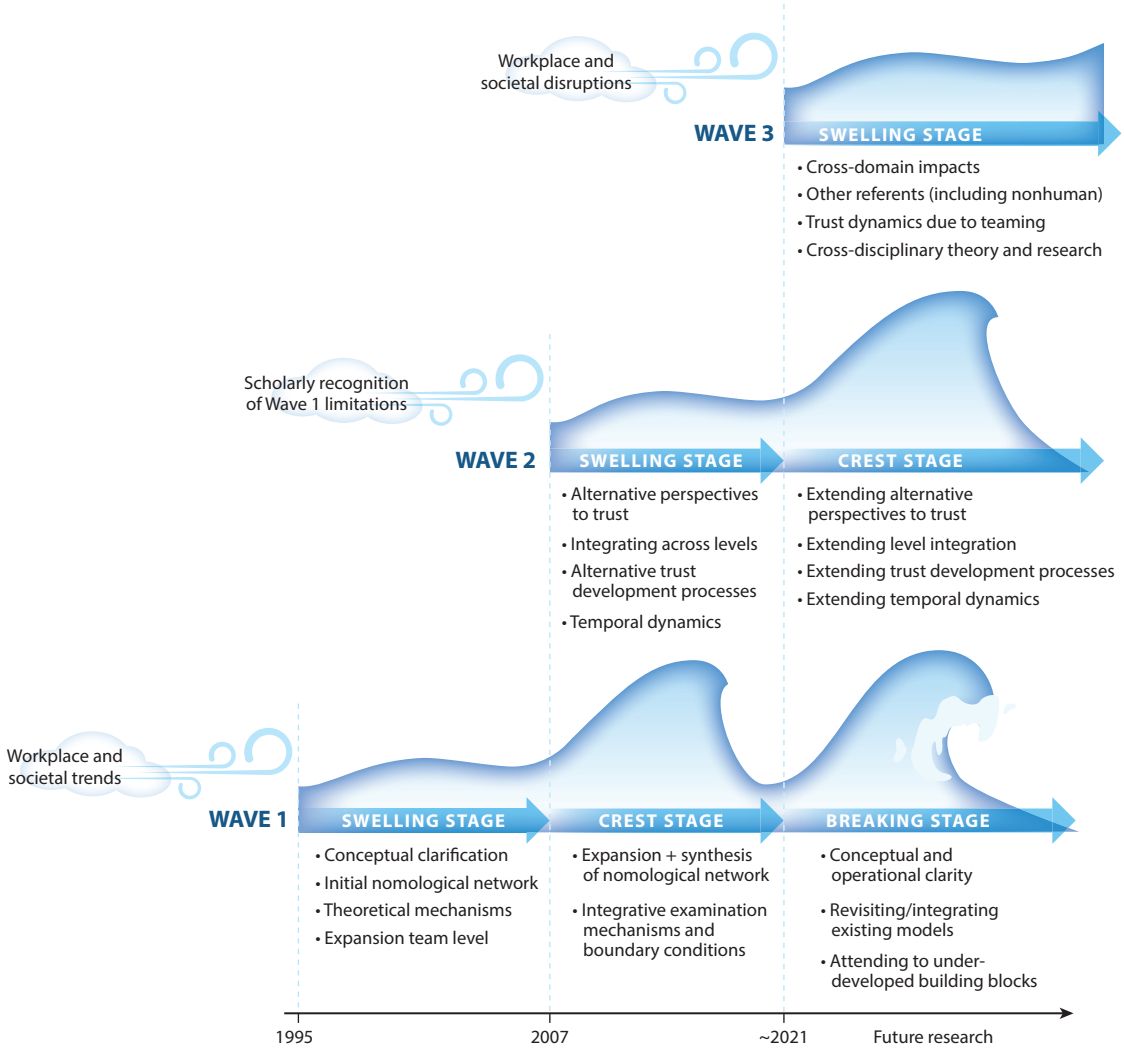

Figure 1

Three waves of research on trust in the workplace (1995–present).

Given the large volume of studies published in the past 25 years, our review is necessarily selective. Consistent with the main focus of trust research within the OP/OB literature, our review focuses on trust as a psychological state, trust within organizational or work settings, and trust manifesting at the individual and team level. We included articles that either shaped the development and trajectory of the field in unique and/or enduring ways, or were particularly illustrative of key points based on our subjective experience and understanding of the field. Synthesizing a quarter century of research while keeping the review manageable inevitably involved a trade-off between breadth and depth. As such, we opted to provide scant treatment of several areas within trust research that were recently reviewed elsewhere, such as research on trust repair (Lewicki & Brinsfield 2017). Finally, although we believe classifying the research into discrete waves and stages is useful in helping readers understand how trust research evolved, we

acknowledge that this necessarily oversimplifies the more complex reality of how changes occurred and trends emerged in this field.

WAVE 1: ESTABLISHING THE FUNDAMENTAL BUILDING BLOCKS

Prior to Wave 1, research on trust was predominantly the domain of other social science disciplines (e.g., psychology, economics, sociology), with meanings ranging from an individual trait, to rational choice, to a property of a social system (Kramer 1999). This situation changed in the mid-1990s as influential papers firmly established the importance of trust as a phenomenon of interest within the field of management, conceptualizing it as an aspect of social relationships between specific parties (Mayer et al. 1995, McAllister 1995, Rousseau et al. 1998). These contributions kicked off the initial (swelling) stage of Wave 1, which provided the field with fundamental building blocks, including conceptual clarifications on trust (the "What" from Whetten's 1989 theoretical building blocks), an initial mapping of its nomological network (the "How"), and a theoretical foundation specifying the mechanisms through which it operates (the "Why"). The year 2007 represented an important landmark in the development of the field, as Mayer et al.'s (1995) influential article received the Article of the Decade Award from the *Academy of Management Review* and their model was both meta-analytically validated and narratively consolidated (Burke et al. 2007, Colquitt et al. 2007). These steps served as clear testimonies to the importance of not just the article but also the field as a whole. They also signaled the growing maturation of the field and marked a transition into the crest stage, in which scholars further consolidated and extended the building blocks developed in the initial stage by dramatically expanding the nomological network (the "How") using meta-analytic approaches, and by more systematically investigating the theoretical mechanisms (the "Why") and boundary conditions (the "When") underlying this network.

Construct Clarification

One important contribution of Wave 1 was that it provided much-needed conceptual clarity by introducing clearly articulated definitions of trust, which were subsequently widely adopted by trust scholars. In their seminal article, Mayer et al. (1995) defined trust as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions 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" (p. 712). Similarly, Rousseau et al. (1998) defined trust as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (p. 395). These definitions highlight several key elements. First, trust involves two (or more) specific parties that assume the role of the trustor—the party extending the trust—and the trustee—the party being trusted. Second, trust is a state as opposed to a trait, meaning that it is dynamic and fluctuates (sometimes quite rapidly) over time. Third, trust is psychological in nature, which means that it inherently resides within individuals. Fourth, trust is given its meaning by considering conditions of uncertainty about and dependence on future actions (and intentions) by others. The latter suggest that, at its core, trust is a psychological mechanism that allows individuals to suspend uncertainty about others' actions, thereby making knowledge of another's trustworthiness momentarily certain, thereby enabling trustors to make a leap of faith toward positive expectations beyond that which good reasons alone would warrant (Möllering 2001).

Besides defining the construct, a second conceptual clarification introduced in this stage pertained to the dimensionality of trust. McAllister (1995) provided one of the most well-known conceptualizations, the distinction between cognition-based and affect-based trust. Cognition-based trust typically was posed as an evidence-driven process in which individuals use cues or

direct information to judge the reliability, character, and ability of the other party. In relationships characterized by affect-based trust, individuals have genuine care and concern for others, which tends to be reciprocated. They engage in exchanges in which that is the core foundation for the relationship, and the emotional ties become the basis for trust. Thus, these two types of trust have different content and operate slightly different processes. Contrary to McAllister, Mayer et al. (1995) conceptualized trust itself as unidimensional but emphasized the multidimensionality of perceived trustworthiness instead. They distinguished between ability (trustee is perceived to have the skills or characteristics sufficient to perform well in a specific domain), benevolence (extent to which a trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor aside from an egocentric profit motive), and integrity (trustee is perceived to adhere to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable). Although both Mayer et al.'s and McAllister's conceptualizations were (and still are) highly successful in their own right in terms of scholarly adoption, they are not easy to reconcile in terms of the dimensionality of trust and recognition of trustworthiness as distinct from trust. As a result, they emerged and continued to coexist as distinct and disconnected paradigms, with scholars adopting one approach or the other. The literature also mentions other concepts, such as trust being distinct from distrust (Lewicki et al. 1998) and trust taking on different forms across stages of a relationship (Lewicki & Bunker 1996). Although frequently discussed, to date, they have failed to gain traction due to scholarly disagreement and a lack of robust empirical support.

A third conceptual clarification is the distinction between different referents of trust and levels of analysis. Referents of trust represent a further specification of the trustee. A common approach is to distinguish between referents based on their level within the organizational hierarchy, ranging from coworkers, to direct supervisors, and top management (Colquitt et al. 2007).[2] The rationale for this specification is that trustees at different hierarchical levels are associated with different dependencies and risks for the trustor (e.g., help from coworkers, performance appraisals from supervisors, strategic direction of top management). The organization as a whole has also been identified as a referent of trust (e.g., LaVelle et al. 2007). Levels of analysis, however, represent a further specification of the trustor. Given the increased prevalence of teams in organizations at the time, scholars started to distinguish between trust at the individual level and trust at the group or team level. In doing so, they largely assumed that applying the notion of trust to the team level was straightforward and could be understood as analogous to its individual-level counterpart, representing shared perceptions of trust among team members (Langfred 2004, Simons & Peterson 2000). This somewhat simplistic notion was called into question, however, in Wave 2 (see the section titled Alternative Perspectives to Trust: Beyond Trustor-Centric Models). In distinguishing between referents and levels of analysis, it is important to ensure that these are clearly specified and not conflated in conceptualizing trust. For instance, although team trust in the team leader captures trust at the team level of analysis with respect to an individual referent, the leader's trust in that same team captures trust at the individual level with respect to a group/team referent.

Finally, scholars developed measurement scales (e.g., Mayer & Davis 1999, McAllister 1995, Robinson & Rousseau 1994). This was critical to the growth of the literature because it enabled empirical research to examine trust more systematically and consistently.

Mapping the Nomological Network

Wave 1 witnessed remarkable progress in identifying and understanding the nomological network of trust, in terms of both antecedents and consequences. A key contribution in this respect was the

[2]Others, however, have distinguished trustees based on levels of analysis [e.g., individuals, groups, organizations (Fulmer & Gelfand 2012)].

introduction of the most influential model of trust to date by Mayer et al. (1995) (hereafter referred to as the MDS model). The MDS model proposed a set of key relationships with antecedents and consequences that explain the way trust develops and operates in organizational settings. On the antecedents side, trust was proposed to be primarily a function of the perceived trustworthiness of the trustee (i.e., ability, benevolence, integrity) and the trustor's general propensity to trust. On the consequences side, it proposed that trust contributes to positive organizational outcomes by increasing the trustor's willingness to engage in risk-taking in the relationship and that this is moderated by perceived risk. The key strengths of the model is not only its parsimony but also its generalizability in that, although varying in strength, the key relationships were proposed to hold across development stages of organizational relationships and across levels of analysis. In addition, subsequent meta-analytical validation of the model underpinned it with robust empirical evidence (Colquitt et al. 2007). Owing to these qualities, the model served as the basis for numerous studies on trust well into the crest of Wave 1, resulting in a coherent body of work. Further extensions of the model were proposed by the original authors (Schoorman et al. 2007), several of which were picked up by scholars in Wave 2.

As trust was increasingly being incorporated into the broader OP/OB literature as a key mechanism transmitting the impact of other independent variables of interest to workplace outcomes, a wider array of trust antecedents beyond those specified by the MDS model were identified and initially synthesized. Representing this idea, Dirks & Ferrin (2002) proposed that trust is the core mechanism of effective leadership. Their paper provided the first meta-analysis of the antecedents to trust in leaders, which included transformational and transactional leadership, justice behaviors, participative decision-making, perceived organizational support, and unmet expectations and the important work outcomes of trust in leaders such as task performance, citizenship behaviors, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. This meta-analysis, together with Colquitt et al.'s (2007), helped legitimize the field and justify devoting further scholarly resources to this topic.

Throughout the crest stage, both trust research and other areas of research within OP/OB continued to flourish, thereby expanding the nomological network considerably and leading to a pressing need to further organize and synthesize the rapidly growing body of evidence. Responses to this need came in the form of narrative reviews (e.g., Fulmer & Gelfand 2012) and meta-analyses. Because the latter represent disjointed rather than concerted efforts, due to meta-analyses focusing on other OP/OB topics besides trust, we have compiled and summarized extant meta-analytic evidence in **Tables 1** and **2** to help understand the current state of knowledge across the literature.

Several key insights emerge from **Table 1**. First, it identifies more than 40 different antecedents for which there is a strong base of evidence. This is an impressive number and substantially more than we had expected to find. Second, among the different antecedent categories, trustee characteristics and behaviors—and in particular justice and leadership—were most extensively examined and elaborated on, showing relatively large effect sizes and supporting the notion that trust is at the core of effective leadership. In contrast, trustor characteristics, dyadic characteristics, and contextual factors received considerably less attention. This represents a missed opportunity, as robust evidence on these factors could yield actionable insights that could enhance the field's impact on practice. Third, the table reveals that the majority of the evidence is based on leader referents and pertains to individual-level trust. This raises questions about the generalizability of current findings across referents and levels. Fourth, it is also worth noting that aside from trustworthiness (ability, benevolence, integrity) and trust propensity, none of the listed antecedent variables have thus far been integrated into the MDS model. Doing so would be an important step for consolidating and advancing the literature.

Table 1 Meta-analytic evidence regarding relationships between trust and antecedents[a]

Variable	Article	Referent	r	ρ	*k* (*N*)
Trustor characteristics and behaviors					
Propensity to trust	Colquitt et al. 2007 (JAP)	Multiple	0.20	0.27	10 (1,514)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.16	0.21	7 (1,113)
Prosocial (versus pro-self) motive	Lu et al. 2017 (JTR)	Partner	0.45	0.52	3 (256)
Positive affect	Lu et al. 2017 (JTR)	Partner	0.35	0.39	14 (2,341)
Negative affect	Lu et al. 2017 (JTR)	Partner	−0.28	−0.32	9 (1,537)
Trustee characteristics and behaviors					
Transformational leadership	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.64	0.67	59 (279,182)
	Ng 2017 (LQ)	Leader	NA	0.67	26 (9,491)
		Organization	NA	0.64	3 (503)
	Hoch et al. 2018 (JOM)	Leader	0.56	0.65	23 (7,048)
	Lee et al. 2018 (JOB)	Leader	0.67	0.75	23 (6,138)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.72	0.79	13 (5,657)
Transactional leadership	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.63	0.65	18 (268,148)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.59	0.67	9 (3,624)
Paternalistic leadership: benevolence	Hiller et al. 2019 (LQ)	Leader	0.60	0.68	13 (4,775)
	Bedi 2020 (ApplPsych)	Leader	NA	0.80	8 (2,260)
	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.67	0.77	5 (1,793)
Paternalistic leadership: moral	Hiller et al. 2019 (LQ)	Leader	0.52	0.60	10 (3,944)
	Bedi 2020 (ApplPsych)	Leader	NA	0.78	7 (2,124)
	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.64	0.74	5 (1,793)
Paternalistic leadership: authoritarianism	Hiller et al. 2019 (LQ)	Leader	−0.23	−0.27	15 (5,106)
	Bedi 2020 (ApplPsych)	Leader	NA	−0.37	8 (2,364)
	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	−0.41	−0.49	5 (1,793)
Servant leadership	Kiker et al. 2019 (JMI)	Multiple	0.64	NA	14 (3,074)
	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.56	0.64	13 (3,100)
	Lee et al. 2020 (JOOP)	Leader	0.57	0.67	12 (2,884)
	Hoch et al. 2018 (JOM)	Leader	0.63	0.71	7 (1,886)
	Zhang et al. 2021b (APJM)	Leader	0.77	NA	6 (1,266)
Authentic leadership	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.56	0.64	20 (4,530)
	Banks et al. 2018 (LQ)	Leader	0.57	0.65	12 (3,210)
	Hoch et al. 2018 (JOM)	Leader	0.64	0.69	6 (929)
Ethical leadership	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.58	0.65	19 (4,883)
	Hoch et al. 2018 (JOM)	Leader	0.58	0.66	18 (4,105)
	Ng & Feldman 2015 (JAP)	Leader	0.67	0.77	11 (2,766)
Contingent reward	Podsakoff et al. 2006 (OBHDP)	Leader	0.59	0.67	12 (4,192)
Noncontingent punishment	Podsakoff et al. 2006 (OBHDP)	Leader	−0.34	−0.42	8 (2,381)
Contingent punishment	Podsakoff et al. 2006 (OBHDP)	Leader	0.28	0.33	2 (1,106)
Empowering leadership	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.56	0.63	13 (3,699)
	Lee et al. 2018 (JOB)	Leader	0.58	0.66	10 (2,547)
	Kim et al. 2018 (JLOS)	Leader	0.57	0.65	5 (1,225)
Abusive leadership	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	−0.42	−0.48	8 (3,058)

(*Continued*)

Table 1 (*Continued*)

Variable	Article	Referent	r	ρ	*k* (*N*)
Destructive leadership	Mackey et al. 2021 (JBR)	Leader	−0.46	−0.51	11 (3,560)
Participative decision-making	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.46	0.52	7 (1,273)
Procedural justice	Rupp et al. 2014 (OBHDP)	Leader	0.51	NA	31 (8,127)
	Colquitt et al. 2013 (JAP)	Leader	0.56	0.65	31 (7,877)
		Organization	0.54	0.63	22 (5,898)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.61	0.68	30 (5,972)
	Cohen-Charash & Spector 2001 (OBHDP)	Leader	0.65	NA	9 (1,914)
Interactional justice	Rupp et al. 2014 (OBHDP)	Leader	0.55	NA	24 (5,370)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.65	0.71	9 (2,161)
Informational justice	Colquitt et al. 2013 (JAP)	Leader	0.54	0.65	9 (2,000)
		Organization	0.45	0.55	5 (1,730)
Interpersonal justice	Colquitt et al. 2013 (JAP)	Leader	0.51	0.59	8 (3,588)
		Organization	0.49	0.60	7 (1,967)
Distributive justice	Rupp et al. 2014 (OBHDP)	Leader	0.40	NA	28 (6,474)
	Colquitt et al. 2013 (JAP)	Leader	0.40	0.45	26 (7,085)
		Organization	0.47	0.54	20 (6,409)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.50	0.58	15 (3,562)
	Cohen-Charash & Spector 2001 (OBHDP)	Leader	0.55	NA	8 (1,849)
Perceived ability	Colquitt et al. 2007 (JAP)	Multiple	0.55	0.67	18 (3,885)
Perceived benevolence	Colquitt et al. 2007 (JAP)	Multiple	0.52	0.63	20 (3,326)
Perceived integrity	Colquitt et al. 2007 (JAP)	Multiple	0.53	0.62	35 (7,284)
Behavioral integrity	Simons et al. 2015 (JBE)	Leader	0.69	0.78	22 (12,307)
Mentoring support	Ghosh 2014 (JVB)	Mentee	NA	0.59	5 (752)
Leader prototypicality	Steffens et al. 2020 (OPR)	Leader	0.53	NA	19 (NA)
Psychological contract breach/unmet expectations	Bal et al. 2008 (JVB)	NA	−0.52	−0.61	15 (4,800)
	Zhao et al. 2007 (PPsych)	Leader	−0.53	−0.65	9 (1,536)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	−0.40	−0.43	5 (1,391)
Negative emotion expressed	Sharma et al. 2020 (HP)	Partner	−0.42	NA	7 (726)
Leader humor expression	Kong et al. 2019 (OPR)	Leader	0.25	0.28	8 (1,534)
Dyad factors					
Small talk	Lu et al. 2017 (JTR)	Partner	0.23	0.26	4 (602)
Pre-negotiation relationship	Lu et al. 2017 (JTR)	Partner	0.30	0.35	7 (1,068)
Length of relationship	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	−0.01	−0.01	5 (1,255)
Context and organizational characteristics					
Perceived organizational support	Kurtessis et al. 2017 (JOM)	Management	0.64	0.74	13 (4,813)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.69	0.76	6 (847)
Employee perceived CSR	Zhao et al. 2021 (JOM)	Organization	0.51	0.60	8 (4,960)
Job insecurity	Jiang & Lavaysse 2018 (JOM)	Organization	−0.45	−0.56	10 (3,482)
		Management	−0.39	−0.45	31 (10,787)
	Sverke et al. 2002 (JOHP)	NA	−0.40	−0.50	8 (2,994)

(*Continued*)

Table 1 (*Continued*)

Variable	Article	Referent	r	ρ	*k* (*N*)
Communication medium (FTF versus CMC)	Lu et al. 2017 (JTR)	Partner	0.46	0.57	3 (316)
National culture (looseness versus tightness)	Lu et al. 2017 (JTR)	Partner	0.26	0.32	4 (791)
Past team performance	De Jong et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.11	0.12	12 (824)
		Leader	0.36	0.38	2 (103)

Abbreviations: APJM, *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*; ApplPsych, *Applied Psychology*; CMC, computer-mediated communication; CSR, corporate social responsibility; EJWOP, *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*; FTF, face-to-face; HP, *Human Performance*; JAP, *Journal of Applied Psychology*; JBE, *Journal of Business Ethics*; JBR, *Journal of Business Research*; JLOS, *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*; JMI, *Journal of Managerial Issues*; JVB, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*; OBHDP, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*; JOHP, *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*; JOM, *Journal of Management*; JOOP, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*; JTR, *Journal of Trust Research*; LQ, *The Leadership Quarterly*; NA, not available; OPR, *Organizational Psychology Review*; PPsych, *Personnel Psychology*; r, sample-size-weighted mean correlation; ρ, sample-size-weighted mean correlation corrected for reliability; *k*, number of independent studies; *N*, cumulative sample size.

[a]Some studies report on multiple referents of trust, but only the overall estimates across referents are reported here. Unless indicated by the term "team," all estimates pertain to the individual level of analysis.

As shown in **Table 2**, meta-analytic efforts during the crest stage clearly extended beyond traditional workplace outcomes, yielding robust evidence for more than 30 different outcomes (again, far more than expected). It identified a considerable array of additional individual-level outcomes, including change-oriented behaviors (e.g., voice, creativity, and innovative behaviors) and workplace attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions). Complementing this level of analysis, meta-analytic evidence also expanded to outcomes of trust at the dyadic (Kong et al. 2014) and the team level (see the section titled Expansion to Team Level of Analysis). These expansions not only resulted in more balanced meta-analytic evidence across levels of analysis but also across trust referents, with team and dyadic examinations focusing more on lateral trust, while individual-level syntheses broadened their focus from leader referents to the organization as a whole. Overall, the evidence base across consequences, referents, and levels considerably enhanced scholarly confidence in the multitude of ways in which trust is important in the workplace. It underscored the overall conclusion that trusting others on whom one is dependent in an organization yields many positive benefits for oneself and groups. This conclusion is interesting in that, although trusting others puts the trustor at risk, that risk-taking tends to yield important payoffs across a range of relationships and outcomes.

Finally, although the terms "antecedents" and "outcomes" were used in the two preceding paragraphs, many of the primary studies on which these meta-analyses have drawn were cross-sectional in nature. As such, it is prudent to exercise caution in making strong causal inferences from these meta-analytic findings. Future meta-analyses of panel studies or controlled experiments (e.g., Nohe et al. 2015, Byron et al. 2010) would be helpful in providing more clarity about causality and causal directionality.

Identifying Key Theoretical Mechanisms

As trust has been incorporated in many different OP/OB research areas that have their own theoretical frameworks, the theoretical landscape of trust is characterized by considerable pluralism, featuring a rich variety of theories whose applicability depends on the proposed causal role of trust and its relation to other proposed variables (Costa et al. 2018, Fulmer & Gelfand 2012).

Table 2 Meta-analytic evidence regarding relationships between trust and outcomes and correlates[a]

Variable	Article	Referent	r	ρ	*k* (*N*)
Performance and behavioral outcomes					
Team performance	Feitosa et al. 2020 (JOB)	Teammates	0.29	0.33	118 (7,738)
	De Jong et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.24	0.30	100 (6,748)
		Team leader	0.34	0.41	13 (1,004)
	Breuer et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.22	0.27	54 (3,506)
Individual performance	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.26	0.30	53 (12,237)
	Colquitt et al. 2007 (JAP)	Multiple	0.26	0.33	27 (4,882)
	Ng 2015 (JVB)	Organization	NA	0.10	8 (1,671)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.16	0.17	21 (5,686)
Trustor's outcome	Kong et al. 2014 (AMJ)	Counterpart	0.09	0.10	8 (1,186)
Joint (dyadic) outcome	Kong et al. 2014 (AMJ)	Counterpart	0.22	0.26	20 (2,327)
Organizational citizenship behavior	Legood et al. 2020 (EJWOP)	Leader	0.30	0.34	39 (10,615)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.19	0.22	12 (3,923)
	Colquitt et al. 2007 (JAP)	Multiple	0.22	0.27	19 (4,050)
	Zhao et al. 2021 (JOM)	Organization	0.34	0.40	9 (5,363)
Counterproductive work behavior	Colquitt et al. 2007 (JAP)	Multiple	−0.26	−0.33	10 (2,088)
Team learning	Breuer et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.44	0.55	3 (239)
Team knowledge sharing	Breuer et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.46	0.53	4 (286)
Risk-taking behaviors	Colquitt et al. 2007 (JAP)	Multiple	0.34	0.42	13 (1,384)
Integrative behaviors	Kong et al. 2014 (AMJ)	Counterpart	0.26	0.32	14 (2,194)
Distributive behaviors	Kong et al. 2014 (AMJ)	Counterpart	−0.25	−0.30	14 (1,984)
Team citizenship behavior	Breuer et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.25	0.27	3 (266)
Voice behavior	Chamberlin et al. 2017 (PPsych)	Leader	0.13	0.15	8 (4,896)
Creativity	Lee et al. 2018 (JOB)	Leader	0.37	0.41	4 (988)
Innovative behavior	Ng 2017 (LQ)	Leader	NA	0.22	3 (530)
		Organization	NA	0.02	3 (643)
Actual turnover	Ng 2015 (JVB)	Organization	−0.10	NA	4 (6,410)
Attitudinal outcomes					
Job satisfaction	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.51	0.65	34 (10,631)
	Zhao et al. 2021 (JOM)	Organization	0.49	0.58	17 (6,570)
Outcome satisfaction	Kong et al. 2014 (AMJ)	Counterpart	0.38	0.48	12 (1,438)
Team satisfaction	Breuer et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.48	0.69	9 (415)
Organizational commitment	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.49	0.59	40 (9,676)
	Zhao et al. 2021 (JOM)	Organization	0.46	0.57	16 (24,689)
Team commitment	Breuer et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.40	0.60	3 (220)
Decision commitment	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.24	0.26	5 (1,453)
Organizational cynicism	Chiaburu et al. 2013 (JVB)	Organization	−0.53	−0.63	6 (1,063)
Organizational identification	Ng 2015 (JVB)	Organization	0.41	NA	14 (3,183)
	Zhao et al. 2021 (JOM)	Organization	0.49	0.56	6 (6,497)
Job involvement	Ng 2015 (JVB)	Organization	0.44	NA	7 (2,657)
Thriving	Kleine et al. 2019 (JOB)	Multiple	0.40	0.46	9 (2,784)

(*Continued*)

Table 2 (*Continued*)

Variable	Article	Referent	r	ρ	*k* (*N*)
Perceived organizational politics	Atinc et al. 2010 (JMI)	NA	−0.55	−0.64	7 (1,987)
Turnover intention	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	−0.40	−0.47	17 (3,297)
	Zhao et al. 2021 (JOM)	Organization	−0.39	−0.47	9 (2,789)
Team cohesion	Breuer et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.59	0.75	5 (149)
Team effort	Breuer et al. 2016 (JAP)	Teammates	0.30	0.30	3 (182)
Psychological empowerment	Lee et al. 2018 (JOB)	Leader	0.39	0.45	6 (1,279)
Psychological ownership	Zhang et al. 2021a (JOM)	Multiple	0.37	0.42	8 (1,750)
Belief in information	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.35	NA	7 (1,065)
Psychological safety	Frazier et al. 2017 (PPsych)	Leader	0.32	0.39	6 (1,280)
Correlates					
Satisfaction with leader	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Leader	0.73	0.85	13 (3,302)
Leader-member exchange	Dulebohn et al. 2012 (JOM)	Leader	0.62	0.73	18 (4,918)
	Dirks & Ferrin 2002 (JAP)	Multiple	0.69	0.77	8 (1,183)
	Martin et al. 2016 (PPsych)	Leader	0.55	0.65	8 (1,217)

Abbreviations: AMJ, *Academy of Management Journal*; EJWOP, *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*; JAP, *Journal of Applied Psychology*; JMI, *Journal of Managerial Issues*; JOB, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*; JOM, *Journal of Management*; JVB, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*; LQ, *The Leadership Quarterly*; NA, not available; PPsych, *Personnel Psychology*; r, sample-sized-weighted mean correlation; ρ, sample-sized-weighted mean correlation corrected for reliability; *k*, number of independent studies; *N*, cumulative sample size.

[a]Some studies report on multiple referents of trust, but only the overall estimates across referents are reported here. Unless indicated by the term "team" or "dyadic," all estimates pertain to the individual level of analysis.

Nonetheless, social exchange theory and attribution theory emerged as most dominant in the initial stage of Wave 1.

Social exchange relationships involve reciprocal acts of help and exchanges of resources over time, without a formal contract (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005). These relationships often rely upon and engender trust. Trust arises through the reciprocity process, which in turn benefits both parties. In that sense, trust follows the model of exchange described by Clark & Mills (1979). Close work relationships that involve affective trust may allow for a communal relations model in which individuals share without expectation of repayment. Trust is argued to be a mediator of many relationships within organizational behavior, such as the relationship between justice and citizenship behavior, following the principles of social exchange (Konovsky & Pugh 1994). Social exchange has been used as a meta-theory to explain the relationships between trust and a wide variety of constructs.

Attribution theory attempts to understand individuals' causal explanations for events and occurrences and individuals' perceptions and judgments of others. Trust development involves this attribution process. For example, an individual may develop beliefs about another person's trustworthiness based on whether the person's behavior is judged to be caused by internal versus situational factors (Korsgaard et al. 2002). Various forms of attribution theory have been studied (see Ferrin & Dirks 2003 for a test of several). Attribution theory has been particularly important in the study of trust repair. The process begins when an individual engages in an action that violates an expectation of the other party. The offended party follows processes described by attribution theory to judge whether the behavior was a function of the situation or the person (Tomlinson & Mayer 2009). If the latter, the violated party may determine whether it was due to the competence

or integrity of the party, as these involve different implicit beliefs. Specifically, individuals tend to see integrity violations as intentional and believe integrity is a fixed (unchangeable) attribute, whereas competence violations may be seen as unintentional and correctable (Kim et al. 2004). To repair trust, the trustee may try to demonstrate that the action was situational (Kim et al. 2006). They may also seek to demonstrate that the action resulted from an error of competence rather than integrity and demonstrate that they have "repented" or addressed the flaw. These biases about integrity and competence have implications for research in other areas of trust.

Beyond social exchange and attribution theories, a range of other theories were proposed to explain various impacts on and of trust. For instance, cognitive resource theory offers an alternative account for why trust impacts performance (Mayer & Gavin 2005), and social identity theory, signaling theory, and uncertainty reduction theory offer alternative explanations for why antecedents impact trust (Chen et al. 2004, Jung et al. 2009, Kernan & Hanges 2002). In the crest stage, researchers have provided better insight into how trust works by seeking more precision and including multiple potential mediating mechanisms. For example, Colquitt et al. (2012) found that trust served two roles in impacting performance: deepening exchanges and reducing uncertainty. Drawing on social exchange theory, Kong et al. (2014) found that trust in negotiation contexts enhanced negotiation outcomes by eliciting integrative trustor behaviors that promoted joint interests while deterring distributive behaviors that served trustors' self-interest. The integrative approach of these studies provided more precise insights into which theories and mechanisms help explain trust-outcome relationships and which do not. In stark contrast, however, few scholarly efforts were made to empirically assess the mechanisms associated with antecedents of trust.

Expansion to Team Level of Analysis

Much of the research in Wave 1—and indeed most of the studies discussed up to this point—focused on trust at the individual level of analysis. This changed, however, as articles published in the late 1990s and early 2000s started to examine trust at the team level (e.g., Dirks 1999, Simons & Peterson 2000). Interestingly, although team trust research did incorporate some elements from the individual-level trust literature, it followed its own distinct development trajectory.

With respect to the conceptualization of team trust, researchers built on the definitions proposed by Mayer et al. (1995) and Rousseau et al. (1998), but interest in collective trust among team members led to a unique focus on lateral trust among coworkers (teammates) as opposed to vertical trust in leaders. Furthermore, although scholars embraced McAllister's (1995) multi-dimensional trust conceptualization (e.g., Wilson et al. 2006), they barely utilized Mayer et al.'s (1995) distinction between dimensions of trustworthiness and trust. In terms of empirical measurement, scholars adapted individual-level trust measures to team contexts, but also introduced their own team-specific measures of trust (Jarvenpaa & Leidner 1999, Simons & Peterson 2000).

Research on team trust was equally influenced by models and insights from the teams literature (e.g., De Jong & Elfring 2010, Langfred 2007). As a consequence, the nomological network that emerged at the team level overlapped with that at the individual level, but also identified several unique variables, including team virtuality and team conflict (Jarvenpaa & Leidner 1999, Simons & Peterson 2000). Although it initially adopted a narrow focus on team performance as the key criterion of interest (contrary to individual-level studies), team trust research later expanded its range during the crest stage to include commonly studied outcomes such as citizenship behavior, commitment, knowledge sharing, and more (Breuer et al. 2016). At present, however, a meta-analytic synthesis of the antecedents of team trust is still lacking.

Paralleling individual-level trust research, during the crest stage of Wave 1, team trust scholars became increasingly interested in better understanding the mediating mechanisms (the "Why") underlying basic relationships and started to examine them more systematically. Contrary to

individual-level studies' focus on psychological mechanisms, team-level examinations focused more on behavioral mechanisms, such as teamwork behaviors, to explain why team trust promotes team outcomes (De Jong & Elfring 2010). This stage of Wave 1 also witnessed a massive increase of scholarly interest in identifying boundary conditions (the "When") to help resolve the inconsistent findings on the trust-performance relationship that had accumulated across primary studies during the swelling stage. To this end, scholars adopted meta-analytic approaches to identify critical contingency factors that would explain when the impacts of trust would be more or less pronounced (Breuer et al. 2016, De Jong et al. 2016, Feitosa et al. 2020). A variety of boundary conditions were identified, including characteristics of the team (e.g., structural dependencies such as skill differentiation and virtuality), team trust (e.g., the referent of team trust), team outcomes (e.g., measurement objectivity), and the research designs used in primary studies (e.g., cross-section versus lagged designs). Besides boundary conditions, these studies also showed that the positive main effect of trust was robust across trust and performance dimensions and held after controlling for past performance and team trust in the leader (De Jong et al. 2016). By resolving mixed findings from prior studies and providing robust evidence for the benefits of team trust, these studies further legitimized research in this area.

Practical Implications

Wave 1 produced numerous practical implications. The following list summarizes a select set of implications which have strong empirical support and which managers may find particularly useful.

1. By establishing trust of their employees, leaders will realize higher levels of performance, more positive attitudes (commitment, satisfaction, turnover intention) and positive behaviors (creativity, citizenship behavior) from employees.
2. Developing high overall levels of trust as well as stronger consensus in trust among team members will yield higher levels of team performance.
3. To earn the trust of others, individuals should engage in behaviors that demonstrate the three factors of trustworthiness: ability, benevolence, integrity.
4. Leaders can choose from a range of behavioral styles to establish trust. Examples include transformational, transactional, ethical, authentic, servant, and paternalistic leadership (moral, benevolence).
5. Practices and behaviors that demonstrate types of organizational justice (procedural, distributive, interactional, informational) are important for developing trust in organizations and leaders.
6. Organizations can engage in employee participation in decision-making, empowerment, demonstrating support, and honoring psychological contracts in order to develop employees' trust in them.
7. Face-to-face communication facilitates trust, compared to other modes of communication.

WAVE 2: QUESTIONING ASSUMPTIONS AND EXAMINING ALTERNATIVES

As noted above, research in the initial stage of Wave 1 laid an important foundation about the nature of trust, its nomological network, some commonly accepted theories, and ways of thinking about trust at higher levels. As scholars were consolidating the research paradigm, a new wave of research (Wave 2) started to form as scholars started questioning existing assumptions and pushing beyond basic models. Below, we elaborate on four of the most common dimensions on

which this occurred: (*a*) the perspective from which trust was examined, (*b*) integration across levels of analysis, (*c*) processes involved in trust development, and (*d*) the temporal dynamics of trust.

Alternative Perspectives to Trust: Beyond Trustor-Centric Models

Although early work recognized that social relationships involved both a trustor and a trustee, it largely only considered trust from a unilateral perspective, namely that of the trustor. For example, research in Wave 1 predominantly focused on how trusting others yielded benefits to the trustor. This is also clearly evident in Mayer et al. (1995), in that all the variables that make up the model—including perceptions of the trustee's trustworthiness, trust propensity, trust, risk perceptions, and risk-taking—are centered on the trustor.

Transitioning into the second wave, however, trust scholars begun to push beyond this idea by "reversing the lens" and examining trust from a trustee-centric perspective. One group of scholars started to examine the implications of being trusted, demonstrating that—consistent with social exchange theory—trusted individuals are the recipients of greater resources and opportunities, thereby enabling higher trustee (rather than trustor) performance (Brower et al. 2009, Dirks & Skarlicki 2009). Another group of researchers began to investigate the consequences and mediating mechanisms of felt trust—the trustee's subjective feeling of being trusted by others. Specifically, these scholars theorized and showed that felt trust has important psychological effects (e.g., increasing trustees' sense of responsibility, empowerment, and organization-based self-esteem) that subsequently translate into performance benefits for trustees (Deutsch-Salamon & Robinson 2008, Gill et al. 2019, Lau et al. 2014). Another study considered psychological costs associated with feeling trusted that lead to emotional exhaustion among trustees (Baer et al. 2015), thereby challenging the implicit assumption that felt trust is always beneficial in work relationships. Together, this trustee-centric work introduced new theoretical explanations—including conservation of resources and self-evaluation theory—which enriched the theoretical landscape and revealed the unique ways in which trust impacts trustees in ways distinct from trustors. The key insight is that being trusted and feeling trusted have important outcomes and that felt trust operates in ways largely distinct from trusting. A key question, however, is how the multitude of mediating mechanisms identified across these studies are related, whether they all operate in parallel, or whether some of them are redundant and their importance has been overstated. Future research should therefore seek to compare and integrate these theoretical perspectives.

In addition to trustee-centric perspectives, scholars also challenged the dominant perspective by adopting a multiparty perspective, allowing them to examine previously unconsidered questions and issues. Specifically, this perspective revealed that parties could differ in their levels of trust, and that this trust asymmetry (or dispersion) had important implications for conceptualizing trust as well as for understanding how trust operates and impacts outcomes at higher levels of analysis. Accordingly, scholars started to challenge the dominant assumption that team trust is characterized by shared perceptions among team members, pointing to growing evidence suggesting the presence of substantial within-team dispersion (De Jong & Dirks 2012). They also proposed new theoretical mechanisms, including impaired social exchange reciprocity, relational uncertainty, and reduced motivation, to help explain the detrimental impact of trust dispersion in teams (Carter & Mossholder 2015, De Jong & Dirks 2012, De Jong et al. 2021). Consistent with this theorizing, these studies found that team trust dispersion negatively impacted team performance, both directly and by mitigating the performance benefits of the overall magnitude of trust. Exploratory analyses of trust between teams and their leader furthermore revealed that the direction of asymmetry mattered, such that the performance detriments of trust asymmetry were

stronger when teams trusted their leader less than vice versa (Carter & Mossholder 2015). It also identified compositional, interactional, and structural determinants that promoted or prevented trust dispersion from manifesting in teams (De Jong et al. 2021).

Integrating Levels of Analysis: Beyond Mono-Level Models

Although early work clearly recognized trust as inherently multilevel in nature (Rousseau et al. 1998, Zaheer et al. 1998), most of the research in Wave 1 focused on trust one level at a time—individual or team—with research at each level progressing relatively independently of the other (Fulmer & Gelfand 2012). The mono-level approach allowed scholars to document how trust operates in a simplified form at each level before introducing the complexities of additional levels of analysis. Building on these insights, scholars in Wave 2 became increasingly interested in integrating levels of analysis (Fulmer & Dirks 2018). Scholarly efforts to integrate levels focused primarily on cross-level models of trust—i.e., examining the impact of variables at one level on variables and relationships at other levels (Rousseau 1985)—that manifested across three streams of research. One stream of trust research has focused primarily on integrating individual and team levels, examining direct and interactive effects of team-level trust on individual-level outcomes (e.g., Braun et al. 2013, Gong et al. 2013) as well as direct and interactive effects of team-level determinants on individual-level trust (Joshi et al. 2009, Schabram et al. 2018). This research has yielded a variety of findings that have contributed to connecting the nomological networks of trust across levels of analysis. Despite the diverse array of variables examined across studies, one high-level insight emerging from this stream of research is that team-level trust can be understood as an ambient contextual variable that impacts individual members, whereas individual-level trust can be understood as a psychological state that is impacted by the broader team-level context. Another important observation is that team trust can develop through distinct routes (Costa et al. 2018), including being directly impacted by antecedent factors at the team level (i.e., a mono-level effect) and emerging from trust residing at the level of individual team members (i.e., a bottom-up effect). Empirical insight into this dynamic process of emergence, however, is still lacking and represents a critical next step for advancing team trust research.

A second stream of research has attempted to integrate the individual and the societal level of analysis by examining the cross-level effects of societal-level culture with respect to individual-level trust. Supporting the notion of cross-cultural variation in trust, research found that in collectivist cultures, trustors relied less on factors signaling individual trustworthiness and more on contextual signals (Branzei et al. 2007), cognition- and affect-based trust was more highly correlated, and shared third-party ties were more important for trust development than in individualistic cultures (Chua et al. 2009). Moving from trust antecedents to consequences, research found that in collectivist cultures, both the link between follower trust in supervisors and LMX and that between supervisors' trust and trustworthy behavior toward subordinates were weaker than in individualistic cultures, arguably because of cross-cultural differences in exchange expectations (Dulebohn et al. 2012, Reiche et al. 2014). Some findings, however, suggest a lack of cultural variation in trust, failing to support scholars' prediction that collectivism weakens the relationships of trust with turnover intention and with servant leadership (Kiker et al. 2019, Costigan et al. 2011). Overall, results on national culture have been mixed, with some studies providing support for cross-cultural variation in trust while others do not.

Another stream of work in this domain involves trust and social networks. Recognizing that trust relationships do not exist in a vacuum, scholars increasingly adopted a social network approach to better understand the role of the social context in which trust relationships are embedded. Scholars theorized and found that third parties can impact dyadic trust between a trustor

and a trustee both directly via trust transferability and indirectly via network closure and structural equivalence (Ferrin et al. 2006). Network characteristics of third parties—such as network heterogeneity and nonoverlapping contacts—were also found to enhance managers' reputation for trustworthiness among their peers (Wong & Boh 2010). Zooming in on egocentric networks, other scholars examined how embeddedness in networks impacted trust between managers and the differences that existed based on culture (Chua et al. 2009). Shifting to outcomes of trust, research also revealed that having similar trust relationships with third parties generates positive outcomes for both individuals in a dyad (Gupta et al. 2016). The social network literature provides a rich body of work and ideas that can help explain how trust develops between individuals, or within groups (which can be conceptualized as a network of relations), and its impact on outcomes.

Alternative Processes Involved in Trust Development: Beyond Rational Models

Although most scholars agree that trust processes are not just cognitive and rational, but involve affective processes and "irrational leaps of faith" (Möllering 2001), both the MDS model and the research building on this model have largely focused on the cognitive processes involved in trust development (Schoorman et al. 2007), whereby trustors gather "data" about the trustee's trustworthiness and continuously recalibrate their trust based on the outcomes of their interactions with them. In a similar vein, other research on trust development has focused on the rational elements of trustors' attributions (e.g., Korsgaard et al. 2002). Some conceptual work was developed in Wave 1 around alternative processes to trust development (e.g., McKnight et al. 1998, Williams 2001), but empirical research was not conducted until later.

Research in the second wave explored how various cognitive biases or heuristics figure into the trust development process. For instance, scholars proposed a motivated attribution model of trust development, arguing that dependence on others can trigger individuals' motivation to make biased attributions of trustworthiness about them, which sets in motion a process of trusting (Weber et al. 2005). This is illustrative of the more general process of externally controlled trust motivation, whereby possession of resources by others induces feelings of dependency, which in turn motivates individuals to behave in a trusting manner (van der Werff et al. 2019). Others theorized and showed that trust development is in part a subconscious and automated process that begins prior to conscious assessments of trustworthiness and can be triggered by subliminal relational cues (Huang & Murnighan 2010). Other surface cues that individuals rely on as trust heuristics include social status and facial features of the trustee (Lount & Pettit 2012, Holtz 2015). Finally, extending the examination of heuristics to trust in organizational (as opposed to individual) referents, Baer et al. (2018b) recently found that newcomers entering an organization tend to rely on cues signaling situational normality and aesthetics to develop trust in their new organization.

Complementing this focus on heuristics as triggers of swift trust assessments, other studies examined the extent to which such assessments were, in fact, accurate and the factors that might contribute or detract from accuracy. These studies, among others, revealed that brief verbal interactions between parties increased trust accuracy, as they allowed trustors to engage in more perspective taking (Schilke & Huang 2018), and similarly, that relational transparency increases individuals' certainty about the accuracy of their trustworthiness assessments, as this transparency provides them with more accurate and complete information about others (Holtz et al. 2020). A different perspective in this area is the accuracy of one's felt trust (meta-accuracy). This research found that factors conventional theorizing would associate with increased accuracy, such as leaders' ability to read others, followers' ability to convey clear or distorted signals, and interactions that provide recalibration opportunities, were not predictive of the accuracy of leaders' assessment of whether they were trusted by their followers (Campagna et al. 2020). Instead, leaders tended

to rely on the cognitive heuristic of assuming trust reciprocity—i.e., that subordinates will likely reciprocate the leader's trust in them—in assessing whether they were trusted. The paper also showed several benefits of trust meta-accuracy.

Moving beyond purely cognitive factors, research has also increasingly considered how emotion or affect is integral to trust processes. Consistent with the emotions-as-information perspective, research revealed that individuals tend to rely on their own emotions as a source of information when developing trust in others, such that individuals' own positive emotions make them more trusting of others, whereas negative emotions make them less trusting (e.g., Dunn & Schweitzer 2005, Mislin et al. 2015). Extending beyond individuals' own emotions, researchers also found that trust is influenced by observing emotions expressed by others, including expressions of humor (Kong et al. 2019), as these provide individuals with information about others' character and motives (Campagna et al. 2016). Furthermore, verbal acknowledgment by others of individuals' emotions has been found to promote focal individuals' trust in others, with recognition of negative emotions having a stronger impact than recognition of positive emotions (Yu et al. 2021).

Overall, this research is significant because it has pushed boundaries beyond a largely rational, cognitive perspective to help capture the more complex reality of trust relationships at work. Trust is clearly shaped by a variety of heuristics and emotions of the parties involved in these relationships. They may help to explain the puzzle of why trust is sometimes very easy to develop and at other times nearly impossible to develop, maintain, or repair.

Temporal Dynamics: Beyond Static Models

Whereas early models and theories of trust recognized that trust is a dynamic construct that fluctuates over time, empirical research in Wave 1 tended to investigate trust statically—as a state at a single point in time—rather than as a dynamic process (Lewicki et al. 2006). Transitioning into Wave 2, researchers took up the challenge of understanding the temporal dynamics of trust. This work took on two forms. One form is represented by studies adopting a between-subjects design to examine the process of trust reciprocation, or "the iterative influence of one party's trust and trusting behavior on the other party's trust and trusting behavior" (Korsgaard et al. 2015, p. 50). Consistent with this notion, scholars have theorized and found party A's trust in party B at earlier time points predicted party B's trust in A at later time points (and vice versa), and that this positive relationship is mediated by cooperative behaviors by those parties as a result of their trust in the other (e.g., Ferrin et al. 2008). These findings were instrumental in empirically validating some of the early theories and models of trust.

The more interesting and novel insights in Wave 2 came from studies adopting a within-subjects design to examine how trust levels develop and change within individuals or groups over time. This stream of research has provided a wealth of exciting new insights into the temporal dynamics of trust that could not have been uncovered using traditional "snapshot" designs. For instance, research showed that trust does not develop incrementally but rather in a nonlinear fashion, with rapid growth in the beginning of organizational relationships and growth leveling off as relationships matured, and that individuals differ in their trust development trajectory, with some showing more growth and others remaining relatively stable (van der Werff & Buckley 2017). In addition, it provided empirical insight into the presumptive-personal shift, the notion that presumptive sources of trust are more important in initial stages of a relationship, whereas personal sources gain in importance in later stages. These investigations yielded mixed results. Some studies found that trust propensity was only important for initial trust formation but did not impact trust development in subsequent stages (Jones & Shah 2016), that several contextual cues (e.g.,

supervisor outgroup membership, institutional logics) were especially important for trust development for organizational newcomers and employees whose supervisor was replaced (Lipponen et al. 2020, Smith et al. 2017), and that the importance of personal cues (e.g., trustee's trustworthiness characteristics) increased over time (Jones & Shah 2016). At the same time, studies also showed that the impact of personal cues was consistently strong from the initial stages onward and that the role of contextual cues increased in importance over time (van der Werff & Buckley 2017), and that trust propensity is not stable but fluctuates daily, predicting changes in trust even in ongoing work relationships (Baer et al. 2018a). Research also showed that initial trustworthiness perceptions can have a robust and long-term effect on subsequent attitudes and behaviors, even after a trust violation (Campagna et al. 2021).

These findings challenge the presumptive-personal shift proposed by scholars in Wave 1, suggesting that although the importance and impact of cues do indeed vary over time, they do not necessarily do so in ways that prior models predicted. Empirical research on trust dynamics has been important because it has tested and refined theories of trust, all which have a dynamic component. It is also important because it explores key concerns of managers—how to grow trust (preferably quickly) and how to recover it.

FUTURE RESEARCH ON WORKPLACE TRUST

This final section explores promising directions for future research, looking at the first two waves of research, and considering what the third wave might look like. A select set of future research recommendations are summarized in the following list, with details provided in the text:

1. Measure trust using newer measures that have corrected deficiencies found in older measures.
2. Integrate the Mayer et al. (1995) model and other antecedents into a single model to improve parsimony in literature.
3. Broaden the range of trust referents studied (e.g., coworkers, organizations), further meta-analytical syntheses of extant evidence, and increase examination of boundary conditions.
4. Integrate trustor and trustee perspectives on trust and examine patterns of trust dispersion.
5. Expand work on cross-level effects (e.g., societal-level culture) and expand on other level integration models (e.g., multilevel models of team trust emergence).
6. Further investigate the role of heuristics and emotions in trust, and particularly in trust repair.
7. Conduct additional research using within-subjects designs to better understand the speed with which trust develops and changes over time.
8. Investigate the impact of technology (including artificial intelligence) on trust levels, processes, and dynamics.
9. Investigate implications of changes in the home-work interface and temporal nature of work relationships on trust.
10. Examine the impact of other societal and global challenges (e.g., societal inequality, political divisions) on trust.
11. Integrate theory and methods from other disciplines.

Coasting in on the First Wave

The first wave of trust research has established a strong foundation of knowledge. Although scholars will continue to apply this knowledge in their future studies, the space for contributing to advance Wave 1 is clearly diminishing. There are nonetheless several important issues that can help

further strengthen its foundation, which we elaborate on below. We believe this wave is entering the breaker stage and will progressively lose momentum in terms of retaining scholarly interest and advancing the literature. We therefore call for addressing the below issues and then moving on to Waves 2 and 3.

Despite multiple clarification efforts, the trust literature continues to be riddled with conceptual ambiguities and operational deficiencies. As highlighted above, Mayer et al.'s (1995) and McAllister's (1995) conceptualizations are incommensurable with respect to their approach to the dimensionality of trust, resulting in a dual-paradigmatic state of the literature. In addition, several serious problems with McAllister's conceptualization and measures have been identified, including that the cognition-based trust measure actually taps into trustworthiness (Tomlinson et al. 2020), thereby confounding the two concepts, and that the affect-based trust measure does not actually measure affect, but rather the relationship (van Knippenberg 2018). Other measures developed in Wave 1 suffer from deficiencies as well, including labeling the measure as "trust" but actually capturing trustworthiness (e.g., Robinson & Rousseau 1994, Simons & Peterson 2000), confounding trusting and being trusted (e.g., Langfred 2004), mixing up different trustors [i.e., "I/we/other people trust person X" (McAllister 1995)], and capturing extraneous meaning beyond trust [e.g., "There's no 'team spirit' in my group" (Jarvenpaa & Leidner 1999)]. Unfortunately, many scholars continue to rely on these outdated and deficient measures, thereby perpetuating these issues. We therefore recommend that researchers stop using these measures, and instead rely on measures based on the MDS model (e.g., Mayer & Gavin 2005) and/or other more recently developed measures at the individual and team level (e.g., De Jong & Elfring 2010, Gillespie 2003).

A second area involves revisiting existing models of trust. Specifically, whereas the MDS model has held up well over time and across contexts, it is time to consider how to integrate the work that has emerged across the two waves into the model. The nomological network mapped out in Wave 1 is extensive (see **Tables 1** and **2**), but only a handful of the antecedents and consequences identified are explicitly included in the model. How can these be integrated in a parsimonious way? In terms of antecedents, extant research and models seem to suggest that trustworthiness is likely to remain one of the most proximal predictors of trust and that many of the non-MDS antecedents identified serve as more distal predictors, impacting trust both directly and indirectly via trustworthiness (Baer et al. 2015, Mayer & Davis 1999). So far, however, most of these distal predictors have been examined in a piecemeal fashion and independent of the MDS model predictors. Will they have incremental predictive validity beyond the MDS model predictors, and will earlier findings on the MDS model hold once all other factors have been accounted for? Furthermore, research in Wave 2 has provided a more nuanced understanding of different perspectives on trust, levels of analysis, heuristics and emotions, and the role of time—all of which have yet to be integrated in the model. Achieving such integration will not be easy and will involve unavoidable trade-offs between theoretical parsimony and sophistication.

A comparison between the individual and team level regarding their relative progress across theoretical building blocks reveals several underdeveloped areas. First, in order to better understand the generalizability of findings across trust referents, both levels need to broaden the range of referents (the "Who") beyond their current focus. Second, contrary to its consequences, meta-analytic evidence for the antecedents of team trust is still lacking, thus rendering empirical validation of its nomological network (the "How") incomplete. Such meta-analytic synthesis is urgently needed. Third, despite the massive increase in individual-level meta-analyses that included trust during the crest of Wave 1, surprisingly few attempts were made to identify and examine boundary conditions of trust (the "When") at this level of analysis. To enhance scholarly understanding of when the impacts of and on individual-level trust are likely to be more or less pronounced, more research into these boundary conditions is needed.

Surfing the Second Wave

Contrary to Wave 1, we expect Wave 2 to transition into the crest stage where it will continue to gain momentum and produce interesting and novel insights into the inherent complexities of trust. Signs of this transition are similar to the ones we saw for Wave 1, such as initial research syntheses providing legitimacy for investing more resources (e.g., Costa et al. 2018), concepts increasingly being incorporated into the broader OP/OB literature (e.g., Bush et al. 2020), and initial attempts to further extend Wave 2 insights (e.g., Baer et al. 2021). We hereby provide several suggestions on how scholars could further extend this wave along the four dimensions we previously identified.

First, research in Wave 2 witnessed a shift to a trustee-centric perspective but has largely examined it independent of the trustor-centric perspective. As such, it remains unclear whether impacts hold when accounting for both perspectives and the extent to which these constructs operate through unique or overlapping theoretical mechanisms. We call for more systematic integration of and comparisons between trustor and trustee perspectives. This focus on the trustor-trustee dyad could also be extended to include other parties residing outside the dyad, such as from a third-party perspective. For instance, scholars could examine the impact of a trustee's (dis)trusting behavior toward a trustor on third-party observers. With respect to multiparty perspectives, Wave 2 involved a shift from examining team trust as a shared group construct to examining it as a dispersion-based construct. Given its current focus on levels of dispersion, this line of research can logically extend to patterns of dispersion, such as polarized or skewed distributions of trust among team members (DeRue et al. 2010), or even more complex configurations using social network approaches (Roussin et al. 2016).

Second, regarding level integration, most of the research on trust has thus far focused primarily on cross-level effects of contextual factors residing at either the team level or the societal level (i.e., culture), but has largely ignored other levels, such as industry, occupation, and organization. As such, understanding could be enhanced by attending to these other levels of analysis as well (Joshi & Neely 2018). Furthermore, in examining the cross-level effects of culture, research has almost exclusively focused on a single dimension (i.e., individualism-collectivism), thereby providing a very narrow understanding of the intersection between trust and culture. As such, we echo Fulmer & Gelfand's (2012) call for expanding this line of research to other cultural dimensions.

Due to its focus on cross-level models of trust, Wave 2 research has largely ignored other well-known level integration models, such as composition and multilevel models (Rousseau 1985). More research into each of these alternative models is therefore needed to further advance our understanding of trust from a level-of-analysis perspective. One area in which more research is sorely needed for compositional models is team trust emergence, the dynamic process by which individual-level trust emerges to the team level. Although appropriate analysis techniques for examining this issue were previously lacking, these have recently become available (Lang et al. 2018). Emergence may also be examined using a social network perspective, documenting this as the growth of dyadic relationships within the group (Shah et al. 2020). We look forward to future research that provides important and novel insights into this fundamental bottom-up process. In addition, contrary to the current interest in dispersion composition models (e.g., team trust consensus), examinations of other composition models described in the multilevel literature (e.g., additive, direct consensus, referent-shift) have been limited (Feitosa et al. 2020). As such, further research into these models will help advance a comprehensive understanding of how trust manifests and operates at the group level.

With respect to multilevel models, given the volume of research produced at each level to date, and despite repeated calls for more research (e.g., Fulmer & Gelfand 2012), it is striking that the issue of homology (or functional isomorphism) across team and individual levels—i.e.,

whether relationships of trust with other variables are different or similar across these levels—has not received systematic attention as yet. Besides individual and team levels, we also observe a growing body of research on trust at higher levels, such as business units and organizations (e.g., Crossley et al. 2013, Menges et al. 2011), which further raise the question of trust homology. Given that the findings of such examinations could have important implications for theoretical parsimony and theory borrowing across levels, more research on this is desperately needed.

Third, in examining trust development processes, research in Wave 2 revealed the prevalence and importance of heuristics and emotions. A dominant assumption underlying this work seems to be that heuristics are primarily important when trustors have little information about the trustee and need to make a quick decision about their trustworthiness. We suspect that in reality, however, trust develops through a more complex integration of heuristics and direct experience that continues to function and interact across time. Integrating these different routes will be critical to a more comprehensive understanding of how trust is built and developed. Wave 2 also shifted the perspective on the role of emotions from being an inherent part of trust itself (McAllister 1995) to being an antecedent to, and thus conceptually distinct from, trust. Research on the latter has opened up many exciting opportunities for future study. One obvious area is the role of emotions during trust violations and repair efforts. A handful of studies have theorized about this (e.g., Tomlinson & Mayer 2009), but little or no empirical research has been done on this so far. Given that emotions and affective responses are likely to be omnipresent and particularly strong in such situations, future examinations of their role may provide key insights into the difficult problem of trust repair.

Fourth, Wave 2 has examined trust dynamics using either a between-subject or within-subject design. Given that between-subject designs have largely focused on dyads, a logical extension of this line of research would be to shift to triads, which allow for unique trust dynamics that cannot occur in dyads, such as indirect reciprocity, third-party trust transfer, coalition formation, and trickle effects (e.g., De Cremer et al. 2018). These between-subject approaches would provide novel insights as opposed to validating existing theories and models. Complementing such studies, within-subject designs could be employed to better understand issues such as the speed at which trust grows and declines across different points in time, and factors that may predict whether trust changes at different rates. This could include investigations into the dynamics associated with trust violation and repair, such as how quickly trust "bounces back" after a violation and the role of the timing of repair attempts. Another direction could be to integrate affect into studies of trust dynamics. Although much of the research on affect and trust has been static, emotions can fluctuate considerably even within the course of a day. Trust scholars should therefore take advantage of the theoretical progress made on workplace affect within the broader OP/OB literature (Ashkanasy & Dorris 2017) as well as of experience sampling methods that are sensitive enough to capture daily fluctuations in affect and trust (Gabriel et al. 2019). Finally, although between-subject designs tend to assume that trust develops gradually, we know that seemingly smooth trust development trajectories can be radically disrupted by a single, discrete event (Ballinger & Rockmann 2010). We therefore recommend that scholars adopt event-based approaches to advance our understanding of discontinuous trust dynamics.

Anticipating the Third Wave

The energy for Wave 1 came largely from workplace and societal trends that drove the need to understand trust, whereas the energy for Wave 2 came from within the field, as scholars increasingly recognized the limitations of the assumptions underlying Wave 1 and the need to problematize them and explore alternatives. As we look at the horizon from our lighthouse, we do not yet see

a third wave of trust research, but we do see significant shifts that make the emergence of a third wave a near certainty.

Societies and organizations across the globe have been undergoing fundamental and disruptive changes that have important implications for trust. We highlight several examples here. First, organizations are experiencing a dramatic change and intensification in workplace technologies. Virtuality is often believed to create challenges for developing and maintaining trust (Gilson et al. 2015), particularly when individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and value systems are involved (another workplace trend). Workplaces are also increasingly employing technology in the form of artificial intelligence (AI) and robots, and teaming them up with human employees (Glikson & Woolley 2020). How will these artificial team members change the nature and dynamics of trust in those teams? This also introduces AI as a referent of trust, along with those who design, introduce, and manage AI systems. Finally, technology and the meta-data it produces can be used to monitor and control employees in unprecedented ways, which has further implications for building and maintaining trust (Long & Sitkin 2018).

Second, the nature of workplaces and work relationships is undergoing fundamental change as well. Organizations have long relied upon clear boundaries, structures, and roles, but these are becoming increasingly fluid. Rather than coming to the office, individuals are increasingly working remotely and/or working from home—another ongoing trend that has been accelerated by the pandemic—which means that phenomena and events occurring within the home domain may impact trust within the workplace (and vice versa). Team boundaries have also become increasingly permeable, rendering team composition unstable (Ancona et al. 2021). With team members constantly changing, the level, nature, and dynamics of team trust are likely to change accordingly. We also witness the rise of "gig workers" who are not operating as part of a traditional organization. Working as independent contractors, these workers do not come to an office, do not work in teams, possibly do not even have a supervisor, and have limited opportunities to socialize and build trust with their colleagues. As a result, those (internal) parties may no longer represent meaningful referents of trust; instead, for many these employees the most relevant referent of trust may become the (external) customer. As such, these new organizational forms will have important implications in terms of shifts in referents of trust and the key factors driving trust (Gu et al. 2021).

Third, trust in institutions and leaders has been in crisis across the globe. In many countries, the levels of trust that people have in important institutions and their leaders (e.g., government, businesses, religious institutions, legal institutions, media) has dropped dramatically over the past decade [e.g., see Edelman Trust Barometer (**https://www.edelman.com/trust/**)]. What are the implications of the continued downward trajectory of this societal trust? How can trust be repaired given these chronic levels of suspicion and distrust? Fortunately, some examples of a rebound in trust exist, as several countries show an increase of trust in several institutions (Sibley et al. 2020). How can institutions maintain and capitalize on this sudden boost in trust in the post-pandemic era? Research needs to be translated into tools that leaders can use to address these challenges.

Beyond these selected examples, a variety of other societal trends present major challenges for trust, including growing inequality in society, increased ethnic/racial diversity in the workplace, large political divisions within and between nations, and the impact of climate change on societies, to name a few. Taken together, these factors present a clear need for trust research to both understand the changes that are occurring and to help address them. Trust researchers may address these challenges from within the literature by asking new questions, revising existing frameworks, and utilizing new methods. Ground-breaking contributions to address these challenges, however, will likely require scholars to venture into other literatures and seek out cross-disciplinary collaboration. For example, Glikson & Wooley's (2020) review of the emerging body of work on trust

and AI clearly shows the significant progress already made on this topic in other disciplines that trust scholars within OP/OB can take advantage of. Other literatures may allow the discovery and introduction of new theory that can provide radically new insights on trust, in the same way that social exchange and attribution theory were originally introduced from other disciplines as well. This integration may also identify new methodologies. For example, for the past quarter century, much of the trust research has relied on surveys, which have several known limitations including reliability, validity, and inability of use in certain settings. Measuring trust in new ways (e.g., big data applications), and analyzing these data with new methodologies, may allow new questions that yield new insights or overturn existing ones.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS AND CALLS FOR ACTION

Over the past quarter century, trust literature grew from a handful of studies into the thousands, producing important discoveries and insights. Ultimately it evolved to sustain vibrancy as a research domain in and of itself. (At early stages in the literature, many of us were uncertain of its staying power!) Given the current challenges related to trust in society and organizations, and the infusion of young scholars studying the topic around the globe, we expect that trust research will continue to grow into a third wave of research. We call for this new generation of researchers to think big, to identify the most important questions that the literature is not addressing, and to identify ways in which trust scholars need to think differently.

Our final point involves the ultimate purpose of trust research—to make organizations and teams function more smoothly, to make workplaces more humane, and to promote collaborative work to address important organizational challenges. Trust research has great importance and potential. Although scholarly work on trust has grown into two large waves of research, the degree to which it has provided practical, actionable insights for managers and organizations has not kept pace. Our call to action is for trust scholars to consider how we can ensure that our work has an impact on organizations and society. Achieving this ambition requires not only a substantive shift to address new societal and organizational challenges but also more rigorous research methods and robust evidence. These include (but are not limited to) meta-analyses—which have great potential for providing a robust foundation for evidence-based recommendations to practice (see **Tables 1** and **2**)—and field experimental designs—which ensure high internal validity but also practical applicability (see Ladegard & Gjerde 2014 for an example). The outcome of these efforts should be that trust development and maintenance will become a standard part of educational and training programs and courses intended to improve leadership skills, teamwork, organizational change processes, and conflict management. We hope that at the next quarter century review, trust will no longer be labeled "in crisis" across the globe but will be a strength that improves the welfare of people and organizations worldwide.

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