A Review of Researches on the Influence of Feeling Trusted on Employees' Work Performance

Heng Li*, Hailing Lu

School of Economics and Management, Nanjing University of Science and Technology, Nanjing, China

*Corresponding author: liheng046@163.com

Keywords: feeling trusted, work performance, social exchange theory, resource conservation theory

Abstract: In recent years, trust-related research has been well-known by scholars, and feeling trusted is an important part of trust-related fields. Trust and feeling trusted are reflected in the different perspectives of the relationship between leaders and employees. However, research on feeling trusted is relatively inadequate. Previous studies have mentioned that feeling trusted has a positive effect on employee performance, but with the deepening of research, scholars have proposed that the impact of feeling trusted on employee performance exists as a double-edged sword. Through the establishment of different mechanisms, from different perspectives such as appropriateness theory, social exchange theory, and resource conservation theory, we have found that feeling trusted has positive and negative effects on job performance. This article summarizes the impact of perceived trust on performance through a review of previous studies, and proposes possible future research directions.

1. Introduction

In recent years, trust research has been extensive, and trust is very important for all employees in an organization. In a diversified organizational structure, if the trustee does not have a long-term cooperative relationship, correspondingly, in management research, trust-related topics have also been paid more and more attention. Trust is an important part of workplace relationships. Feeling trusted and trust are two related but not the same concepts [1]. Employees’ perception of being trusted by leaders in an organization is a subjective consideration of the leaders’ willingness to take risks in their actions. And the leader's trust in employees is to point out the leader's willingness to take risks for the employees' behavior from an objective perspective. Therefore, it is necessary to fully understand the mechanism and root causes of perceived trust in employee performance.

2. Overview of feeling trusted

2.1. Concept of feeling trusted

In the workplace, employees’ perception of being trusted by the leader refers to the employee’s perception of the extent to which the leader is willing to take risks for his own behavior, representing the employee’s subjective feelings, and having an important impact on the employee’s work. For example, employees perceive that their superiors have given him a very important task, which is directly related to the future development of the enterprise, which is a perception of trust. Since only the superior really knows whether he really trusts a subordinate, any superior trust information learned from the subordinate's perspective should be regarded as "feeling trusted" [2].

At present, the research on feeling trusted is still in the preliminary stage. Existing studies have found that subordinates’ feeling trusted not only improves their subordinate’s organizational self-esteem and work performance, but also improves organizational responsibility norms and organizational performance. At present, a small number of scholars have raised questions about this. For example, Wang verifies that being trusted can increase employee loyalty to leaders by improving employee satisfaction with leaders from the perspective of social exchange theory [3].
2.2. Dimensions and measurement of feeling trusted

Trust, as behavioral intention, is often characterized from two aspects: Reliance, which refers to the willingness to rely on the skills, knowledge and abilities of others; the other is disclosure or open meeting (Disclosure), which refers to the willingness to share sensitivity with others. Information, this information disclosure often contains a lot of sensitive information in work and private life. A higher level of trust in subordinates is often accompanied by higher levels of dependence and information disclosure. Therefore, employees’ feeling trusted can also be obtained from two aspects: one is the superior’s perception of dependence on their subordinates, and the other is the superior’s perception of their subordinates' information disclosure.

The current research on feeling trusted is still immature, and the scales used include the 10-item trust measurement scale of Gillespie. This scale has been proven effective by many studies and has good psychological measurement characteristics. In the study, feeling trusted was measured based on the reliance of superiors on subordinates (Reliance) and the disclosure of information from superiors to subordinates (Disclosure). The high dependence of supervisors on their subordinates is that they are willing to let them do and work. Related decisions; at the same time, information disclosure is usually closely related to personal information disclosure, likes, and high-quality relationships. In addition, Chen et al. adopted a perceptual trust-based scale in the Experimental Research Center. For example, "Your boss asks you to be important to him/her." Play a role at work", "Your boss relies on your judgment on work-related issues and believes that it is not necessary to supervise your work", etc.

3. Overview of work performance

3.1. Concept of work performance

Work performance research has long been a hot spot in academic circles, but the definition of performance concept has not been unified yet. Bernarding stated that the so-called performance refers to the performance. It has been a hundred years since the inception of performance research. However, the core issue is controversial. Is performance a result or behavior? This question is the key factor in defining job performance.

Work performance inquiry has always been a key part of human resource management research. Work performance is a pertinent perception of work completion. However, due to the differences in various types of information of the research objects in the empirical process, there are also certain differences in corporate organizational structures, salary standards, and management regulations. Therefore, there are also obvious corporate performance indicators.

3.2. Dimensions and measurement of work performance

Common job performance includes task performance, peripheral performance, and adaptive performance. All of these have greatly enriched the scope of work performance research, and can effectively fit the rapidly changing organizational environment, and can provide important assistance to the achievement of organizational goals in a true sense. Similarly, it can also ensure that organizational behavior research and human resource management research obtain new analytical approaches.

Contextual performance is a behavioral performance that "does not directly point to production or service activities" but constitutes the social and psychological environment of the organization. Contextual performance using the scale of Van (1996), including two dimensions. Among them, there are 7 questions in the interpersonal promotion dimension, such as "When a colleague succeeds, the subordinate will say yes"; the work dedication dimension has a total of 8 questions, such as "In order to complete the work on time, the subordinate will work overtime".

Adaptive performance is a new concept proposed in response to the needs of rapid changes in the organization.
4. Overview of the influence of feeling trusted on work performance

The behavior of employees depends not only on how much they trust management, but also how much they feel trusted by management—these are two different concepts. Therefore, some studies have made up for the theoretical black box of perceived trust on job performance by examining whether and how employees’ perception of their degree of trust affects organizational performance.

Perceived as the other side of trust, can and when will it have an impact on employee performance? Through research, some scholars have opened the black box of perceived trust in work performance. Salamon et al. [4] believe that when employees believe that they are trusted by management, they may be more responsible for their work and pay more attention to the realization of organizational goals. At the same time, higher responsibilities will improve job performance.

Bayer [5] proposed that perception of trust has different effects on employees, which can bring reputation to employees, and can also bring pressure, which in turn affects employees’ emotional exhaustion and ultimately affects work performance. When an individual perceives being trusted by the leader, it means the leader’s recognition of his abilities and the improvement of his status; but at the same time, his own tasks and responsibilities may be greater, which will bring pressure to employees and ultimately affect their work performance.

5. Conclusion

Studies have shown that employees’ feeling trusted ultimately has different effects on performance by influencing employees’ behavioral responses. Different from the impact of trust on employees, employees’ feeling trusted starts from a psychological perspective that is more biased towards the employees themselves, and can more directly and effectively derive the effect of trust on individual attitudes and behaviors. At present, the research on feeling trusted is still in its infancy, and there are not many researches on perception and behavior of employees. Therefore, future research can start from feeling trusted, and explore the impact of employees' subjective feeling trusted on their attitudes, behaviors, and even social status.

References