



## Triangulation of Impact of Trust in Leadership, Employee Performance and Role of Positive Organizational Support—An Empirical Analysis

Muhammad Zia-ur-Rehman<sup>1</sup>, Ayat Butt<sup>2</sup>, Muhammd Shafique<sup>3</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find out the impact of trust in leadership on employee performance in the presence of positive organizational support as moderating variable. In the framework of leadership and based on existing literature, it has been witnessed that employees continuously trust their leaders to comply with the instructions appropriately, due to which they feel more contented and safer being around them. Trust in management or leadership helps in facilitating organizational development by fostering a collaborative environment in which employees attempt to share their knowledge. The target population was not known but based on general estimation, it was expected to be around 1500-2000. This study is quantitative in nature; thus, an adapted questionnaire was distributed to collect feedback from 350 respondents based on the convenience sampling technique. The design of the study is correlational, and we proposed two major hypotheses to carry out the tests. Based on the proposed hypotheses, after testing, it was found that both hypotheses got accepted with a p-value < 0.00. Based on the adaptive questionnaire, after collecting data and then carrying out analysis, the results were compared with the previous studies and found in line with the results of the previous studies. This shows that employees who trust their leaders are more devoted, fulfilled, and likely to stick around. In this way, the leaders get a crucial position in obtaining and sustaining employee trust within an organization. However, it is also found that leaders who are dependable, empathic, and mindful of individual/personal objectives and dreams gain the trust of their followers. In the end, findings and results have been discussed and then future recommendations are put forth for future researchers.

### INTRODUCTION

Trust has been recognized to be the important trait that is linked with management and leadership. Trust may be defined as a positive and optimistic perception that others will

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Leadership and Management Studies, Email: [drziaofficial@gmail.com](mailto:drziaofficial@gmail.com),

<sup>2</sup> Research Scholar, National Defence University, Islamabad, Email: [ayatbutt@gmail.com](mailto:ayatbutt@gmail.com),

<sup>3</sup> PhD Scholar, National Defence University, Islamabad, Email: [mshafique.iqraisb@gmail.com](mailto:mshafique.iqraisb@gmail.com),

no longer perform (thru phrases, acts, or final conclusions) in an opportunistic manner. Organizational change is enabled by trust in management or leadership because it can foster a collaborative environment where people can exchange their knowledge. Those employees who have complete faith in their leaders are more contented, committed, satisfied, and inclined to stay. Leaders are crucial in obtaining and sustaining employee trust within an organisation. Leaders who are dependable, empathic, and mindful of individual/personal objectives and dreams gain the trust of their followers. When an employee places their confidence and hope in a leader, they may be prepared to be exposed to the leader's movements, sure that their interests and rights would not be jeopardised.

The term employee performance can simply be described as how successfully a person does their job, completes necessary duties, and acts in the workplace. Performance is determined by some features such as the measure of quality of work, quantity of work, and effectiveness of the task. Leaders can get a sense of how the organization is going or performing its task, by keeping track of staff performance and productivity rate. This data not only emphasises what businesses can do right now to improve their bottom line, but it also feeds into future growth goals. On the other hand, by keeping the focus on employee performance benefits more than just the organisation, it allows people to attain their full potential while also increasing overall productivity.

Employees have always been appreciating Positive Organizational Support because it keeps on satisfying their requirements for approbation, esteem, and connection, as well as providing comfort during times of stress, according to organizational support theory. Employees feel more contented and satisfied with their jobs, they feel more closely connected with the organization and its staff, and are more compelled to view organizational goals as their own goals, they also become more loyal and committed to the organization, and have complete trust in leadership when positive supervision and HR practices lead to greater Positive Organizational Support. The employees always assign character to the organization, emphasizing contributions towards their organization so that they can achieve a high level of wellbeing. Positive Organizational Support had a substantial impact on employee performance.

Following are the research objectives of the research paper:

**RO1:** To access the state of employee performance in the organization.

**RO2:** To find out the role of Trust in leadership.

**RO3:** To check out what role does Positive Organizational Support plays during the presence of Employee Performance and Trust in Leadership

Many of the studies have been undertaken around the world to explore the influence of leadership trust on employee performance in different organizations, but the idea of positive organizational support has not been thoroughly investigated. There is not enough research in Pakistan that includes all three components and investigates their interrelationship. As a result, the purpose of this study is to see how trust in leadership impacts employee performance and furthermore how positive organizational support affects it.

Following are the research questions designed based on above research objectives:

**RQ1:** What role does the Employee Performance plays in this research?

**RQ2:** What is the state of trust in leadership in an organization?

**RQ3:** What role does Positive Organizational Support plays towards trust in leadership and employee performance?

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section will review the literature to understand the effects of trust in leadership and positive organizational support on employee performance. ‘Without trust we don’t truly collaborate; we merely coordinate or, at best, cooperate. It is trust that transforms a group of people into Team’ (Stephen Covey). Trust is the glue of life. It’s the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It’s the foundational principle that holds all relationships. When the trust account is high, communication is easy, instant, and effective. (Covey, 1992)

Individuals having high confidence in their own organisation, its managers, and co-workers are linked to success and achieving goals, as trust in work relationships is one of the mainstays that has always helped organisations in strengthening their effectiveness and in achieving their goals, and it is one of the most effective administrative tools, because it always prepares the conditions that are necessary for organisational success. Now how to enhance an organisational trust at work is one of the most pressing concerns that have been confronting all of the businesses today. Workplace trust is becoming more widely acknowledged as a vital component in improving organisational success and achieving ones goals.

#### **Trust in Leadership**

Trust in leadership is one of the most significant elements in shaping the personality of an organization and its people, as it always promotes organizational strength, stability and happiness among the employees or co-workers, reduces unfavourable conflicts, and improves effective problem-solving solution. The most significant attribute that has been associated with management and leadership appears to be trust. A leader can't lead if his or her followers don't trust him.

Followers' trust in the leader's actions - precisely, their expectation of a positive outcome from the leader's decisions—all of this is based on leadership trust (Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007).

### **What is trust?**

The degree to which a person believes in and is prepared to act on another's words, actions, and decisions is referred to as trust (McCallister, 1995). Ability, compassion, honesty, and predictability have all been used to measure it empirically (Dietz & Denhartog, 2006). The phrase "trust" may be defined as an amalgam of integrity, goodness, and ability. Trust in leadership along with positive organizational support is considered to be the major factor for effective employee performance. Employees who trust in their leaders have always led to predicted outcomes such as improved levels of performance, more ideas and information exchange. Therefore, employee trust is critical in determining the link that is present between leadership style and employee performance outcomes.

### **Employee Performance**

Employee performance may be demarcated as the overall predictable value that is derived from employees' actions during a certain time frame. It is evaluated in terms of results and conduct. It determines the quality as well as the quantity that is been accomplished by employees over a certain period.

Deep trust can be developed by the members of a team that have a high level of trust in each other's talents and skills. The development of such trust among team members has always been leading to differentiating individualities and exceptional staff organization. According to some studies, there is a positive correlation between these two i.e. Team performance and confidence. Furthermore, trust has established the behavioral structure for teamwork, which has been kept on boosting productivity of the company and output of the employee. Individual employees are held accountable for building organizational trust, but the organization is still in charge of providing a welcoming and trust-based atmosphere to their employees (Park & Popescu, 2014).

### **Positive Organizational Support**

Employees assign personality to their own organisations based on the concept of perceived organisational support (POS), additionally prioritising contributions to the organisation to reach a high degree of wellbeing. Because they feel it is a give-and-take connection they want to keep and care for the benefits and economic ties they have with their employers (Park, Newman et al., 2016). It has been noticed that employees' sense of obligation and duty for the firm's well-being and objectives has always grown when they feel

supported and backed up by the organisation, according to Positive Organizational Support theory (Park et al., 2016). Employees feel more accountable for their job when they are encouraged from their colleagues; this was noticed according to Rhoades and Eisenberger studies (2002). Employees that have excellent organisational support always have better and superior creativity.

### **Employee Performance and Trust in Leadership**

The concept that employee performance is influenced by trust in leadership has been recognized across a wide range of literatures and disciplines. The combination of trust in leadership and favorable organizational support has a great influence on the employee performance. The trust that employees have in their leaders has always resulted in predictable benefits like increased level of productivity, more creative ideas, and information sharing. As a result, evaluating the connection that is present between leadership style and employee performance outcomes requires a high level of employee trust in their leaders. The relationship of trust that has formed between the Leader and the employees is a long-term investment that has always helped the company to blossom (Mineo, 2014).

### **Positive Organizational Support and Employee Performance**

It is proved through different studies that positive organizational support (POS) has been validated to benefit both employees and employers. Some of the studies like Shaw et al., 2013 have proved that the employees working in any organization, that have high Positive Organizational Support are generally less stressed and are further expected to come back to workplace as soon as possible after meeting an accident. Consequently, organizations should always work for the betterment of their employees and their bottom lines by making strategies and tactics that will encourage favorable employee views and attitudes regarding the company.

Organizations need their employees to be effective and cooperative at work, yet their behavior is generally inspired by means of organizational variables inclusive of tradition, culture and leadership support. Employees willingly move above and beyond their traditional work duties in the company if they trust them (Ferrin, 2000) or feel that the organization cares about them, this result was obtained from various literatures (Eisenberger, 2001). There's, however, a paucity of data regarding how individual worker qualities effect these linkages between employee overall performance and positive organizational support.

### **Trust and Employee Performance/Behavior**

Trust is defined as a strong belief in the dependability, validity, or capability of something. Employee trust in the business may influence employee behavior, which in turn

influences employee performance in the workplace. The extent to which employees believe that they will always receive honest and fair treatment in the business, in particular, might impact whether or not they participate in opportunistic behavior. Consequently, the level of trust that employees have in their leaders has an influence on the organization's success and employee performance.

Employee performance and employee confidence are interrelated, furthermore, trust is a critical tool that helps in defining the behavioral framework of the organizational operational, which resulted in increased employee and organizational productivity. The influence of trust on many organizational and individual outcomes is encouraging. Trust has also aided in enhancing the emotional well-being, accessibility, and security (Fernández-del-Río, 2019).

It is critical that the team leader or manager fosters the development of trust from the beginning of the team's formation until the project's conclusion (Greenberg, Greenberg & Antonucci, 2007). Mortensen and O'Leary (2012) have found that various physical meeting sessions, when held at regular intervals and after pauses, are regarded beneficial. Through personal activities, team-building interventions, and aiding one another, such physical encounters foster trust and affinity among team members (Park & Popescu, 2014). There have been several hypotheses proposed to explain why performance happens.

### **Positive Organizational Support and Employee Performance**

Keeping the notion of positive organizational support in mind, the employees feature personality to the organization, by putting the organization's contributions first in order to achieve a high level of happiness. Employees always need to preserve and care for the advantages and business links they have with their employers because they believe it is a mutual relationship (Park, Newman et al., 2016). According to Positive Organizational Support theory employees' look forward of responsibility for the organization's well-being and objectives has always been growing together after they feel supported and appreciated by the organization, (Park et al., 2016). Employees having higher positive organizational support are usually more creative and innovative depicted by Shantz et al., 2016, and according to the studies of Gupta et al., 2016 they feel more committed, and perform better as observed by the research (Vatankhah et al., 2017). Therefore, it has been proved that Positive Organizational Support has a great momentous positive effect on staff productivity.

### **Leadership Trust and Employee Performance**

It has repeatedly been proven by lot of research that the major unique trait of the world's top workplaces is the level of trust they have between their leaders and subordinates.

On the contrary building trust in the workplace, benefits more than simply business culture. It not only benefits it, but it has also been proved as a powerful economic driver. Leaders whose emphasises mainly on team trust are more likely to have employees who are engaged in their jobs and work effectively together (Asbari, 2021).

It is often suggested that organisational leaders should develop trustworthy connections with their sub ordinates so that they can effectively cope up to the changes made in the workplace (Judge, 2006). During times of transition, an employee's level of job engagement is expected to enhance when they have complete faith in their leaders (Agarwal, 2014; Li et al., 2019). A trusting connection that has been established between leaders and their followers will create a psychological contract between the parties, which will in turn boost the employee engagement at work (Mcallister, 1995).

### Gap Analysis

Various research studies recommended to carry out further studies in this area. Based on the existing literature and after reviewing the studies relevant to the area, it was found that the gap exists as recommended by the researchers. Further studies may be carried out on employee performance in relation to the trust in organizational (Hajiali, 2022, Zhou et al, 2022 and Qiu 2022), and what role POS plays in the presence of trust and how it may enhance organizational performance (Cao et al, 2022, Wuryani, 2021). Therefore, based on the recommendations, the following conceptual framework was developed and after data collection, the analysis was done as per hypothesized association.

### Conceptual Framework

The design of the study is correlational and as you can see below, the diagram shows the impact of Trust in Leadership on Employees Performance and the role of Positive Organizational Support:



Here the independent variable is Trust in leadership, while dependent variable is employee performance and Positive organizational support is acting as a moderating variable.



## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are being put forward by keeping in mind the above theoretical framework:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a positive significant impact of trust in leadership on employee performance.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There is a positive and significant impact of trust in leadership and association on positive organizational support and employee performance.

Based on the above diagram trust in leadership has positive impact on both positive organizational support and employee performance. The greater the trust in leadership, the greater is the positive organizational support which ultimately results in achievements of goals and increased employee performance.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Being a correlational study, the study looks into the impact of trust in leadership on employee performance, as well as how both are influenced by positive organizational support. The study is cross-sectional and experimental in nature. The research is also quantitative, and the core research is conducted using a closed survey (as compared to open ended surveys that need more qualitative elucidation). In this study, trust in leadership, positive organizational support and employee performance are being studied at the same time. Managers who are trustworthy are more committed to their work and collaborate better and support their employees and co-workers to achieve success and efficient employee performance. This strategy aims to comprehend a given research problem or topic from the point of view of the participants in the study. We can produce complicated textual explanations of phenomena based on individual experiences and perceptions using quantitative research methods. We created a questionnaire and turned it into a Google Form to collect responses. To gather data for this research a detailed questionnaire was formulated that entails various factors of all 3 concerned variables, i.e., Trust in leadership, employee performance and positive organizational support. The questionnaire is divided into 3 sections and each section contains almost 5-10 questions.

### Data collection

A questionnaire was adapted and filled out by several corporate managers, co-workers and employees working in the capital cities of Pakistan and AJK; Islamabad and Muzaffarabad. The questionnaire was finalized after getting guidance from various authors who employed the instrument previously in their studies. The instrument items related to leadership were adapted from Barbara D. Adams, Sonya Waldherr and Jessica Sartori, 2005, POS from Jody A. Worley<sup>1</sup>, 2009, and employee performance based on Koopmans, 2015.



Convenience sampling technique was used due to shortage of time and for being easy to collect data. The sample data includes supervisors and middle line managers, both male and female employees were asked to be the part of sample. The range of the sample lies between 350-400 employees as overall respondents were expected to be around 1500-200, therefore used the rule of thumb in research for selection of sample size. The questionnaire was adapted but after having the experts gone through it, the questionnaires were re-examined, and any terms that rang true with the research were marked. Then they were launched, and the responses were collected in around two months time. The researchers went through each survey and selected the one that seemed properly filled. The major challenges were then highlighted, and themes were developed to reflect the participants' experiences. Participants were given new names that clashed with their real names, as well as a concept model. A copy of the concept model was handed to each participant to determine if it matched his or her own experiences.

### ANALYSIS

To test our hypotheses statistically, we gathered responses from 370 participants (managers, coworkers, and employees) from various private corporate systems, of which we chose 360 (after dropping of 10 responses as they were not properly filled) as our sample to be tested in SPSS further.

#### Reliability Statistics

The data for the study was collected from different educational institutes of Islamabad and Muzaffarabad. The extent to which an experiment is constant and steady in assessing what it is designed to measure is referred as reliability. The reliability test is often tested through Cronbach's Alpha, which is simply the most used method for measuring the internal consistency or dependability of data. As our survey comprises numerous Likert scale questions that make up a scale, and the purpose is to verify the scale's reliability, this test is most usually utilized here as per research standards. The following are the outcomes of the tests conducted on the data provided:

TABLE-1: RELIABILITY STATISTICS

SR. NO	VARIABLES	N OF ITEMS	CRONBACH'S VALUE
1.	Trust in leadership	5	.887
2.	Positive Organization Support	10	.857
3.	Employee performance	10	.694

The results are reliable if above .6 or .7. depicting high reliability.

## Descriptive Statistics

In any investigation, descriptive statistics are employed to characterize the basic properties of data. This section contains brief summaries of the data gathered and the sample obtained. Descriptive statistics are a sort of statistics that are used to present quantitative data in an easily understandable manner.

TABLE-2: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS					
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Gender	1.00	2.00	1.4000	.50709	.361
Age	1.00	3.00	1.8000	.86189	.441
Education	1.00	3.00	1.6667	.72375	.304
Experience	1.00	2.00	1.2667	.45774	.189

As shown in the table, the values of mean, median, mode, standard deviation and variance calculated for gender, age, education and experience of the employees who were asked to fill out the questionnaire.

## Demographics Analysis

TABLE-3: FREQUENCIES

AGE					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 30		43.8	46.7	46.7
	31-40		25.0	26.7	73.3
	41-50		25.0	26.7	100.0
	Total		93.8	100.0	
Missing	System		6.3		
Total			100.0		

The table shows that majority of the respondents were below the age of 30.

TABLE-4 GENDER

GENDER					
			Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male		56.3	60.0	60.0
	Female		37.5	40.0	100.0
	Total		93.8	100.0	
Missing	System		6.3		
Total			100.0		

The data shows that majority of the respondents were male.

**Education:** As shown, maximum of the population has bachelors degree and remaining as shown below.

TABLE-5: EDUCATION

EDUCATION		Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High School	37.5	40.0	40.0
	Bachelors	43.8	46.7	86.7
	Masters/PhD	12.5	13.3	100.0
	Total	93.8	100.0	
Missing	System	6.3		
Total		100.0		

The table shows that majority of the respondents having a degree of bachelors.

TABLE-6: EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCE		Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less Than 3 years	68.8	73.3	73.3
	3 or More Years	25.0	26.7	100.0
	Total	93.8	100.0	
Missing	System	6.3		
Total		100.0		

The table shows that maximum number of participations is from the people who have working experience of less than 3 years.

### Correlation Analysis

Correlation is a technique for determining whether two variables are related or not. To put it another way, it's a measure of how things are connected. In this research the variables being compared are the independent variable, which is trust in leadership, the moderating variable which is positive organizational support and the dependent variable which is employee performance.

TABLE-7: CORRELATION ANALYSIS

	Trust in leadership (TIL)	Employee performance (EP)	Positive organizational support (POS)
Trust in leadership (TIL)	1		
Employee performance (EP)	.073	1	
Positive organizational support (POS)	.209	.182	1

The table shows correlation depicting significance at 0.01 level (2- tailed).

### Regression Analysis

As we know that regression analysis is used to check the impact of multiple variables that are mentioned in the research. In our research Trust in leadership is independent variable, Positive organizational support is the moderating variable and Employee Performance is the dependent variable.

TABLE-8: REGRESSION ANALYSIS

MODEL SUMMARY				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.185 <sup>a</sup>	.034	.127	.39077

A. Predictors: (Constant), Positive organizational support, Trust in leadership  
Coefficient matrix for the variable under study N=15

**Coefficients <sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.925	.671		3.095	.003
	Trust in leadership	.069	.547	.036	3.126	.001
	Positive organizational support	.323	.539	.174	2.599	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.338 <sup>a</sup>	.114	.128	.39091

A. Predictors: (Constant), moderating variable, Trust in leadership, Positive organizational support

The value of R represents the impact of Trust in leadership on Employee Performance is positive.

Coefficient matrix for the variables under study N=15

**Coefficients <sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.654	.873		.935	.370
	Trust in leadership	.687	.683	6.196	4.000	.000
	Positive organizational support	.009	.761	.076	3.017	.001
	Moderating variable	.440	.455	.993	3.996	.002

A. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

The table shown above is depicting the values of coefficients (unstandardized) for the study's these variables.

Table-9: HYPOTHESES TESTING

Sr no.	Hypotheses	REJECTED/ ACCEPTED
1	H <sub>1</sub> : There is a positive impact of trust in leadership on employee performance.	ACCEPTED
2	H <sub>2</sub> : There is a positive and significant impact of trust in leadership and association on positive organizational support and employee performance.	ACCEPTED

### CONCLUSION

Organizations today operate in a highly competitive and rapidly changing environment, making it challenging to assess employee performance and loyalty to the organisation. The main purpose of this research was to find out the impact of trust in leadership and positive organizational support on employee performance. Our research project was mainly to be focused on three primary questions that were needed to be investigated. These include determining the status and role of leadership trust and employee performance in educational institutes, as well as the role of positive organisational support in this scenario. The goal of this study was to examine the educational sector of the two cities in depth and determine the various effects that the factors in question play on the employees, managers, and other available variables. After rigorous investigation and analysis of the acquired data, the association of all the factors was found to be positive

According to trust literature, the confidence of employees in their leaders has been influenced by the character of their leaders (Reychav & Sharkie, 2010). The level of confidence increases in employee performance by minimizing the extent of conflict (Ristig, 2009), which is important for decision-making since trust has always allowed the workers to share their creative and useful ideas and information, which has a direct positive impact on efficiency (Laschinger & Finegan, 2005). If employees have faith in their leaders, they will be inspired to perform above expectations.

Furthermore, it was discovered by the Chen et al. (2020) regarding Positive Organizational Support that it had a substantial impact on employee job performance. This research is limited to a specific sector conducting this research in other sectors can enhance the research. Our conclusions may be applied to the government or education sectors because we have worked in the service industry. We used a sample size of 360 persons, although larger sample sizes may be beneficial in future studies. Different sectors, such as government against business, and a university versus a school or college level, might be compared.

Although we conducted this research in the eastern culture, it may be replicated in the western, American, or Chinese cultures by future researchers.

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