THEY HAVE THEIR REASONS: MOTIVES FOR SUPERVISOR TRUST IN

EMPLOYEES

by

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(Under the Direction of Jason A. Colquitt)

ABSTRACT

Why do people trust? To this point, the literature has focused on only two answers to that question: because they are trusting and because others are trustworthy. Although those answers are supported by meta-analytic research, they omit other potentially powerful answers. For example, trust may stem from a desire to help employees develop, to conform to norms of ethical and responsible behavior, to encourage the formation of meaningful relationships, to appear to be a developmental and empowering supervisor, or out of necessity. Drawing on the decision making and motivation literatures, I theorize supervisors have motives to trust—reasons they are willing to be vulnerable apart from being trusting and because their employees are trustworthy. Using a theory of motivated reasoning and an appraisal theory of affect, I build and test a model that proposes supervisors' motives are an additional base of trust in their employees. I test my predictions in a field study with four organizations in China.

INDEX WORDS: Trust, motives, trustworthiness, motivated reasoning

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Stable and effective social relationships depend on trust (Blau, 1964; Gambetta, 1988; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Luhmann, 1979; Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). *Trust* —a behavioral intention reflecting the willingness to be vulnerable based on positive expectations of a trustee's behavior (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995)—enables cooperation (Deutsch, 1962; Gambetta, 1988), facilitates social exchange (Blau, 1964), and reduces the need to protect against self-interested behavior (Bromiley & Cummings, 1995; Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Zand, 1972). Within organizations, scholars have proposed trust lies at the heart of an engaged and productive workforce (Kahn, 1990; Pfeffer, 1998). Research supports these proposals, showing trust in the workplace leads to increased cooperation, more positive attitudes, and increased performance (Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). In a cross-disciplinary review of trust, Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer (1998) concluded that scholars uniformly agree trust is important to organizational life.

Why do people trust? Until this point, the literature has focused on only two answers to that question: the trustor's disposition to trust and the trustworthiness of the trustee (Mayer et al., 1995). The trustor's disposition to trust, or *trust propensity*, is a personality trait reflecting a generalized expectation that the words and deeds of others can be relied on (Rotter, 1967; Rotter, 1980). *Trustworthiness* is a multidimensional construct that reflects the ability, benevolence, and integrity of the trustee (Butler, 1991;

Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Gabarro, 1978; Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; Mayer et al., 1995). Together, these antecedents are proposed to increase positive expectations of a trustee's behavior, thereby increasing the likelihood of trust. Both narrative and meta-analytic reviews have concluded that trust research has focused on these two antecedents (Colquitt et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Möllering, 2006). At this stage in the literature a clear theoretical and empirical consensus has emerged—supervisors trust because (1) they are dispositionally trusting and/or (2) because employees are trustworthy.

This consensus may be problematic, as research and observation indicate these bases of trust do not fully explain supervisors' trust in their employees. Levels of trust often exceed what trust propensity and trustworthiness would predict (Berg, Dickhaut, & McCabe, 1995; Kramer, 1994). Indeed, it is not uncommon for supervisors to delegate important tasks to new employees, for whom trustworthiness is largely unknown. Likewise, they may "go out on a limb" for employees whose trustworthiness is seemingly low. If trust is only based on "good reasons" (Lewis & Weigert, 1985), what explains why supervisors trust in these situations?

A potential answer to this question is suggested by the decision making and motivation literatures. Drawing on these literatures, I theorize supervisors have motives to trust—reasons they are willing to be vulnerable apart from the positive expectations fostered by trust propensity and trustworthiness. For example, trust may stem from a desire to help employees develop, from a sense of responsibility, to foster meaningful relationships, to appear to be a developmental and empowering supervisor, or out of necessity. Using a theory of motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990), I build and test a

model—shown in Figure 1—that proposes supervisors' motives are an additional base of trust in their employees. These predictions are tested in a model in which the effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness are transmitted through positive expectations (Mayer et al., 1995), while the effects of motives are not. Importantly, if the effects of trust motives are not transmitted through positive expectations, then they represent a base of trust that could not be extrapolated from the existing literature. I test my predictions in a field study in four organizations in China.
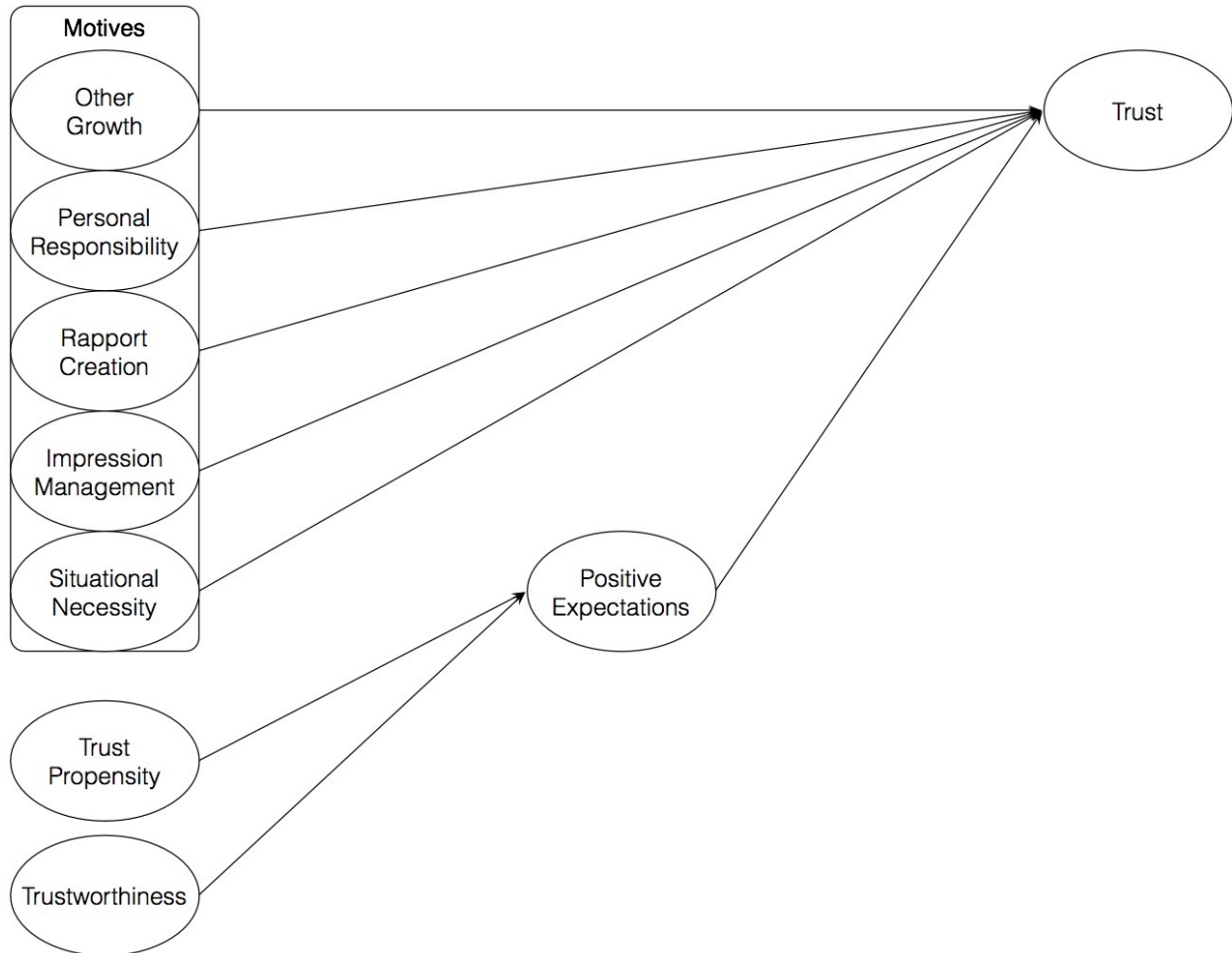

FIGURE 1

Theoretical Model

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Trust Defined

Although researchers have reached a consensus on the importance of trust, there has been considerable dissensus on the definition of trust (for discussions of this issue, see Golembiewski & McConkie, 1975; Hosmer, 1995; Kramer, 1999; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Luhmann, 1979; Mayer et al., 1995; Möllering, 2006; Rousseau et al., 1998). While some research has defined trust as a personality trait (Rotter, 1967), other research has defined trust as cooperation (e.g., Deutsch, 1962; Burt & Knez, 1996; Gambetta, 1988), predictability (e.g., Shapiro, Sheppard, & Cheraskin, 1992), and positive expectations (e.g., Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). This conceptual confusion has also affected the measurement of trust, leading to operationalizations such as a personality trait of the trustor, cooperative behavior, positive expectations, and behavioral intentions. I review the different conceptualizations of trust, define trust as used in this paper, and then review the antecedents of trust.

Some research has characterized trust as trait-like. Rotter (1967) argued that the characteristics of a trusting personality could be distilled to a single trait, which he called interpersonal trust. Rotter defined trust as an individual's generalized expectancy that another individual can be relied on. Rotter's subsequent work (1971, 1980) emphasized his conceptualization of trust as a relatively stable personality characteristic. A sample item from Rotter's (1967) interpersonal trust scale illustrates this conceptualization:

"Most people can be counted on to do what they say they will do." Wrightsman (1964) measured a similar construct using the trustworthiness facet of his Philosophies of Human Nature Scale. There are two important limitations of this trait-like conceptualization of trust. First, generalized trust is most likely to be a valid predictor of trust in ambiguous or new situations—when there is little "data" on which to base trust (Rotter, 1971). Second, an individual may trust others to varying degrees, despite a stable disposition to trust (Hardin, 2002; Johnson-George & Swap, 1982).

Trust has also been characterized as *cooperation*. This approach was encapsulated by Burt and Knez (1996: 70): "The decision to cooperate is a decision to trust.…Trust is anticipated cooperation." Trust research in this vein is typically conducted in laboratory studies, with cooperative behavior in exercises such as the Trust Game or Prisoner's Dilemma being interpreted as a manifestation of trust (e.g., Axelrod, 1984; Deutsch, 1973; Malhotra, 2004; Pillutla, Malhotra, & Murnighan, 2003). The characterization of trust as cooperation is rooted in rational choice theory, which proposes individuals are motivated to make choices that maximize potential gains and minimize potential losses (Kramer, 1999). Accordingly, the trust as cooperation perspective suggests trust is based on the extent to which the trustee is expected to cooperate (Dasgupta, 1988; Gambetta, 1988; Hardin, 1992).

There have been a number of critiques of this perspective. Kee and Knox (1970) argued that the behavior in trust experiments can be attributed to causes other than trust, such as the trustor trying to maximize gains or minimize losses. Additionally, trust likely operates on a continuum, but the observable behavior is dichotomous—cooperate or compete (Kee & Knox, 1970). Although trust may manifest as risk-taking behavior,

there is also a subjective state that underlies that behavior. Rapoport (1963) expressed concern that the focus on outcomes in this research neglects the psychological mechanisms of trust, and therefore cautioned against extrapolating this research to real-life settings. March and Olsen (1989) proposed that if trust is defined as cooperative behavior it is simply an alternate form of economic exchange. Mayer et al. (1995) theorized that a missing element in the definition of trust as cooperation is vulnerability. In many situations there may be organizational policies that protect the employee or the employee's outcomes may be independent of the other party's behavior. Consequently, it is possible to cooperate without trust (Axelrod, 1984; Cook, Hardin, & Levi, 2005; Gambetta, 2009; Hardin, 2002).

Other scholars have suggested trust is *predictability* (Shapiro et al., 1992). This definition of trust has some overlap with the definition of trust as cooperation, in that cooperation is based on predictions of cooperative behavior from the other party (Gambetta, 1988). However, Shapiro et al. (1992) argued that even predictions of uncooperative behavior can result in trust. If trust is predictability, a coworker who can be expected to consistently act self-interestedly is "trusted." In opposition to this perspective, Deutsch (1958) asserted that predictability is not sufficient to capture the meaning of trust. If predictability is equivalent to trust, one could be said to trust that they will die. Similarly, an employee who can accurately predict that a supervisor will get angry when given bad news does not necessarily trust that supervisor (Mayer et al., 1995). Other scholars have argued that trust involves a cognitive leap beyond what prediction warrants. Luhmann (1979) called this "overdrawing" on the available

information. Lewis and Weigert (1985: 976) similarly concluded "trust begins where prediction ends."

Trust has also been defined as *positive expectations*. Gabarro (1978: 294) noted that trust is the extent to which a person can predictably expect "good faith" behavior. Similarly, Golembiewski and McConkie (1975) proposed trust implies confidence in the other party. Boon and Holmes (1991) extended this approach, defining trust in close personal relationships as "confident positive expectations about another's motives with respect to oneself" (p. 194). Several well-cited definitions of trust in organizational research (e.g., Lewicki & Bunker, 1996; Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies, 1998; Sitkin & Roth, 1993) have similarly characterized trust as positive expectations. However, some scholars contend that although positive expectations may contribute to trust, they are not trust per se (e.g., Mayer et al., 1995). They lack a critical component—vulnerability.

Deutsch (1958) argued that trust implies the trustor will be harmed if the trustee breaks faith. Gambetta (1988) similarly suggested that trust is only relevant when there is the possibility the trustee will disappoint the trustor's expectations. Kee and Knox (1970) theorized that a trust scenario only exists when there is the possibility of betrayal. These scholars highlight the risk element of trust. But the mere presence of risk is not sufficient for trust. Golembiewski and McConkie (1975) noted that the central features of trust are a degree of uncertainty about the outcome and the willingness to risk despite the uncertainty. Likewise, Barber (1983) suggested trust is the willing grant of power to another party. Other scholars have similarly proposed that the willingness to take risks is a key element of trust situations (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; Rempel et al., 1985).

Mayer et al. (1995) defined trust as the willingness of a trustor to be vulnerable to a trustee based on the expectation the trustee will perform some specific action, regardless of the trustor's ability to monitor the trustee. This is the definition I adopt for this paper. The definition of trust as a willingness to be vulnerable clarifies several confusions in the literature. First, it defines trust as a behavioral intention rather than a characteristic of the trustor or the trustee. Second, it specifies that trust is not a behavior such as cooperation or risk taking—which Mayer and colleagues term "risk taking in the relationship." Further clarifying this distinction, McKnight, Cummings, and Chervany (1998) proposed trust could be considered trusting intentions while risk taking in the relationship could be considered trusting behavior. Finally, this definition of trust contains the element of vulnerability that distinguishes trust from predictability and positive expectations.

In addition to defining trust, Mayer et al. (1995) proposed an integrative model of trust that clearly separated trust from its antecedents and outcomes. They argued that characteristics of the trustor and characteristics of the trustee were antecedents of trust rather than trust. Characteristics of the trustor were labeled trust propensity. Characteristics of the trustee were labeled trustworthiness—a multidimensional construct consisting of the trustee's ability, benevolence, and integrity. Although a broad range of trustee characteristics have been examined, Mayer and colleagues (1995) proposed these three characteristics are a parsimonious yet inclusive set that embody trustworthiness. Together, these four predictors—trust propensity, ability, benevolence, and integrity—comprise the current set of researched antecedents of the willingness to be vulnerable.

Trust Propensity

Mayer et al.'s definition of trust propensity matches Rotter's (1967) definition of interpersonal trust—an individual's generalized expectancy that another party can be relied upon. Mayer et al. (1995) proposed that this generalized disposition to trust be called trust propensity in order to distinguish it from trust as the willingness to be vulnerable. Trust propensity is a stable personality trait with roots in early childhood and development (Deutsch & Krauss, 1965; Rotter, 1971). Deutsch and Krauss (1965) proposed that a generalized trust or mistrust starts to develop in children as early as 6 to 18 months of age. The extent to which needs are met during this developmental period determines an individual's trust of the outside world (Erikson, 1963; Webb & Worchel, 1986). This disposition to trust is relatively enduring, although it continues to be refined through experiences with parents, peers, teachers, and other trusted sources (Katz & Rotter, 1969; Rotter, 1967; Webb & Worchel, 1986).

The hypothesized effects of trust propensity on trusting intentions and behavior are grounded in social learning theory (Rotter, 1954; Rotter, Chance, & Phares, 1972). According to social learning theory, expectancies in each situation are determined not just by experiences in that situation but also by experiences in similar situations. The theory also specifies that the influence of generalized expectancies is relative to the amount of experience the person has in that particular situation (Rotter, 1980). For example, a person's expectations of a used car dealer are likely influenced by experiences with that particular dealer as well as experiences with previous dealers. If previous dealers were dishonest, the person will likely expect the current dealer to also

be dishonest. However, through interactions with the current dealer, the person gains situation-specific data, thereby decreasing the impact of generalized expectancies.

Although trust propensity certainly contributes to the willingness to be vulnerable, its ability to explain trust is limited. Rotter (1967) theorized all generalized expectancies—including trust propensity—are more applicable in novel situations. Also, despite having a stable propensity to trust, an individual does not trust everyone equally in every situation. Similarly, an individual may trust someone in one area but not in another area (Barber, 1983; Hardin, 2002). What explains these variations in trust? To this point, Johnson-George and Swap (1982) argued trust is not simply based on a trusting personality, but rather on good reasons, such as the attributes of the trustee. Elaborating on the notion of good reasons, Lewis and Weigert (1985) suggested trust is person and situation specific, and is based on evidence of trustworthiness. Integrating these ideas, Mayer et al. (1995) proposed trustworthiness is encapsulated by ability, benevolence, and integrity.

Trustworthiness

Ability. *Ability* is the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to perform effectively in some specific domain (Gabarro, 1978; Mayer et al., 1995). This definition highlights the notion that ability, and its relationship with trust, are task specific. For example, a skilled auto mechanic might be trusted to replace a transmission, but not to perform a medical procedure. Ability matters because of the interdependent nature of trust (Kee & Knox, 1970; Sitkin & Roth, 1993). Consider a supervisor who has been given a project from upper management. To efficiently complete the project, the supervisor contemplates delegating an important part of the project to a subordinate.

Given that the supervisor is ultimately responsible for the outcome of the project, it is highly unlikely that the subordinate will be chosen at random. Rather, the supervisor is likely to select and trust a subordinate who has the ability to effectively accomplish the assigned task. In support of this proposal, Sitkin and Roth (1993) theorized ability is the primary indicator of trust within organizations.

Various scholars have used the term *competence* to refer to a construct that is conceptually similar to ability (e.g., Butler, 1991; Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Gabarro, 1978; Hardin, 2002; Kee & Knox, 1970). Barber (1983: 14) proposed trust is the expectation of "technically competent role performance." Of the nine bases of trust that Gabarro (1978) identified, four of them—*functional competence*, *interpersonal competence*, *general business sense*, and *good judgment*—are representative of ability. Sitkin and Roth (1993) referred to a similar concept—an employee's ability to reliably complete assignments—as *task reliability*. Likewise, Cook and Wall (1980) focused on the capability and reliability aspects of ability as predictors of trust. *Expertness*—the degree to which an individual is a source of valid assertions—is another construct that is similar to ability (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953). Concepts coded as ability in Colquitt et al.'s (2007) meta-analysis of trust included competence, expertise, knowledge, and talent.

Benevolence. *Benevolence* is the extent to which the trustor believes the trustee is concerned about the trustor's well-being, apart from any self-interested motives (Mayer et al., 1995). Larzelere and Huston (1980) proposed benevolence was a key attribution preceding trust. Specifically, a trustor is likely to question whether a potential partner is genuinely interested in the trustor's welfare or is motivated by individualistic goals. To the extent that a trustee is seen as benevolent, the trustor is more likely to

predict positive outcomes in the relationship. As a consequence, the trustor's

willingness to be vulnerable increases (Larzelere & Huston, 1980). For example, a

supervisor would likely rely on attributions of benevolence when deciding whether or not

to share sensitive information with an employee. An employee with low benevolence

would be expected to disclose that information if it provided a personal benefit.

Conversely, an employee who was concerned about the supervisor's welfare would be

less likely to breach confidence.

Other scholars have discussed concepts that overlap with benevolence. Gabarro

(1978) suggested favorable perceptions of a trustee's motives were a base of trust.

Communications researchers have proposed that a speaker's credibility is based on

whether the speaker is perceived to have ulterior motives or is truly concerned about

the listener (Hovland et al., 1953). Barber (1983) similarly argued that trust was based

on an expectation that others would demonstrate a concern for interests above their

own. Along these lines, Rempel et al. (1985) noted trust is dependent on a belief that

the trustee will be responsive and caring. Other scholars have suggested trust is based

on expectancies of altruism (Frost, Stimpson, & Maughan, 1978; Lindskold & Bennett,

1973). Several researchers (Butler, 1991; Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Jennings, 1971) have

used *loyalty*—wanting to protect and make the trustor look good—to refer to

benevolence. Concepts coded as benevolence in Colquitt et al.'s (2007) meta-analysis

included openness, loyalty, concern, and perceived support.

Integrity. *Integrity* is the trustor's perception that the trustee adheres to a set of

values that the trustor finds acceptable (Mayer et al., 1995). To a large extent,

perceptions of integrity are based on consistency between the trustee's words and

deeds (Larzelere & Huston, 1980; Rempel et al., 1985; Schlenker, Helm, & Tedeschi, 1973). However, adhering to a set of values or having high word–deed consistency is not sufficient for perceptions of integrity. To illustrate, consider an employee who values and single-mindedly pursues personal gain. Although the employee's actions have high integrity—they are internally consistent, after all—a supervisor is unlikely to perceive the employee as having integrity unless the supervisor shares similar values (Mayer et al., 1995). Larzelere and Huston (1980) proposed attributions of honesty allow a trustor to take the trustee's word at face value. Accordingly, the trustor has more positive expectations of the outcome and a greater willingness to be vulnerable in the relationship.

Gabarro (1978) related the concept of integrity to honesty and morality, proposing that integrity represents adherence to a moral code. Sitkin and Roth (1993) suggested a base of trust was the compatibility of values and beliefs between trustor and trustee. They proposed a lack of value congruence would decrease trust. Likewise, Butler and Cantrell (1984) found that integrity was one of the most important bases of trust. In an extension of this research, Butler (1991) examined several antecedents of trust that fit beneath the umbrella of integrity: integrity, promise fulfillment, consistency, and fairness. Cook and Wall (1980) proposed *trustworthy intentions* were a key predictor of trust. Although this construct overlaps with benevolence, some of their scale items are reflective of integrity. Concepts coded as integrity in Colquitt et al.'s (2007) meta-analysis included procedural justice, promise keeping, and credibility as integrity.

Summarizing the state of the literature, Möllering (2006: 13) proposed that a consensus has been reached: trust is influenced by the disposition to trust, but is

"primarily and essentially" a function of perceived trustworthiness. Considerable

empirical research supports this consensus. A meta-analysis revealed ability,

benevolence, and integrity were strongly correlated with trust, while trust propensity was

modestly correlated with trust. Moreover, all four predictors explained unique variance in

trust (Colquitt et al., 2007). Of note, trust propensity continued to have a significant

relationship with trust when controlling for trustworthiness. Now that these relationships

have been meta-analytically established, the question shifts to whether these predictors

of the willingness to be vulnerable are an exhaustive set. I theorize that there are

additional reasons supervisors trust—motives that explain trust when controlling for the

effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness.

CHAPTER 3

THEORY DEVELOPMENT AND HYPOTHESES

Before investigating additional predictors of trust, it is first necessary to establish

a baseline model against which the incremental effects of trust motives can be

examined. According to consensus conceptualizations of trust, the effects of trust

propensity and trustworthiness on trust are transmitted through positive expectations of

the trustee's behavior (Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). In the next section I

first outline the role of positive expectations in current conceptualizations of trust

antecedents. I then propose an explicit operationalization of positive expectations in

order to establish a more rigorous baseline model. As shown in Figure 1, trust motives

—unlike trust propensity and trustworthiness—are not expected to affect trust through

positive expectations. In the subsequent sections I introduce and define specific trust

motives and develop theory around their effects on trust.

Positive Expectations

According to Mayer et al.'s (1995) conceptualization, favorable expectations of

the trustee are a definitional component of trust. The willingness to be vulnerable is

"based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the

trustor" (p. 712). In a restatement of Mayer et al.'s definition, Rousseau et al. (1998:

395) emphasize these expectations, noting that the willingness to be vulnerable is

based upon "positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another." Ferrin,

Bligh, and Kohles (2008) suggested that the trust field should coalesce around Mayer et

al.'s conceptualization, yet added one important caveat. They observed that Mayer et al.'s definition is actually comprised of two constructs—the willingness to be vulnerable and positive expectations. Accordingly, Ferrin and colleagues argued empirical research is needed to tease apart the relationships between trust, positive expectations, and their antecedents (also see McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011).

Mayer et al.'s model makes a clear distinction between the willingness to be vulnerable—trust—and its antecedents. Additionally, their model does not equate the antecedents of trust with the positive expectations mentioned in their definition of trust, suggesting that positive expectations comprises the mechanism—an unoperationalized mediator—through which trust propensity and trustworthiness affect trust. Indeed, Ferrin et al. (2008) proposed that Mayer et al.'s conceptualization and definition of trust are an untested theoretical proposition wherein positive expectations are expected to transmit the effects of trust antecedents to trust. Because no empirical research has simultaneously operationalized positive expectations and trust as distinct constructs, this part of Mayer et al.'s model remains untested. Accordingly, an important empirical question remains unanswered: Do positive expectations transmit the effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness to trust?

Hypothesis 1: Trust propensity has a positive indirect effect on trust through positive expectations.

Hypothesis 2: Trustworthiness has a positive indirect effect on trust through positive expectations.

Motives

The conceptualization of positive expectations as the most proximal predictor of trust paints trust as largely reactive (Gambetta, 1988; Lau, Lam, & Wen, 2014; Möllering, 2006; Tyler & Degoey, 1996). This characterization becomes curious when considering that at its core, trust is a behavioral intention. Scholars have argued that behavioral intentions are driven by *motives*—conscious desires that direct people's attention and energy toward activities that help attain desired outcomes (Mitchell & Daniels, 2003; Roberts, O'Donnell, & Robins, 2004). People intend to go to the gym because they want to lose weight or live a healthier lifestyle. They intend to get to sleep earlier so they can wake up rested and alert. They intend to take night classes so they can qualify for a promotion. Research supports the proposal that motives predict intentions. For example, motives for leaving an organization predict turnover intentions (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004) while motives for volunteering predict volunteering intentions (Clary et al., 1998). In turn, intentions are important because they predict behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Thus, the absence of motives in current conceptualizations of the antecedents of trust—a behavioral intention—seems inconsistent with the literature addressing the antecedents of behavioral intentions.

Why should motives predict trust? Scholars have proposed trust is placed "in the expectation of a gain" (Golembiewski & McConkie, 1975: 133). Michalos (1990) suggested that trust will only occur if it's perceived to lead to some "greater good"— either for the self, another, or the organization (also see Hosmer, 1995). Likewise, other scholars have argued that "incentives" (B. Williams, 1988) and "tangible benefits" will be motivators of trust (Weber, Malhotra, & Murnighan, 2005), although these scholars did

not elaborate on which incentives and benefits would be motivating. Coleman (1990)

proposed that trust is like placing a bet. When placing a bet, a bettor considers not just

the probability of winning, but also what might be gained. In trust situations the

probability of winning is positive expectations—the probability that the trustee honors

the trust. Motives represent what the trustor hopes to gain from the trust situation—the

desired outcome. Just as potential monetary gains influence bettors, motives may

influence trustors. The question then becomes, what motives might influence

supervisors to trust their employees?

Motives can be both distal and proximal (for a review, see Austin & Vancouver,

1996). Distal motives, or needs, are non-conscious desires and wants that do not

require cognition or awareness in order to affect behavior (McClelland, 1987; Novacek

& Lazarus, 1990). Maslow (1954) identified five basic needs (e.g., physiological, safety,

love/belonging, esteem, self-actualization). Alderfer (1972) suggested three needs—

existence, relatedness, and growth—are key within organizations. McClelland (1987)

proposed needs for affiliation, power, and achievement are the key drivers of behavior.

Deci and Ryan (2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000) proposed the innate psychological needs are

competence, relatedness, and autonomy. Some scholars have suggested that although

these general needs may provide a baseline for action, "they are distal determinants at

best" (Bagozzi, Bergami, & Leone, 2003: 916; also see Austin & Vancouver, 1996). To

this point, Deci and Ryan (2000) suggested research should focus on proximal motives

rather than the innate needs that underlie them.

Proximal motives are "highly contextualized cognitive–motivational units [that]

reflect individuals' conscious intentions to shape or adapt to their current environment or

life situation" (Roberts et al., 2004: 541). Proximal motives answer the question "*What do I strive for?*" (Bagozzi et al., 2003). Because these motives are conscious, they lead to goals, task strategies, and context-specific behavior. Proximal motives are also more predictive of behavior than needs because they imply commitment and persistence in the face of obstacles (Novacek & Lazarus, 1990). Novacek and Lazarus (1990) identified six motives that drive behavior across a variety of contexts. Their taxonomy of motives—affiliation, power–achievement, personal growth, altruism, stress avoidance, and sensation-seeking—was derived by examining motives along multiple dimensions, such as importance, the willingness to devote time and effort to their achievement, and expectations of achievement.

The affiliation motive is characterized by wanting to have close, satisfying relationships with others, and needing to feel a sense of belonging. The power–achievement motive involves desiring to be popular and accepted, and wanting to obtain awards and recognition. The personal growth motive is characterized by aspiring to be an ethical, fair, and responsible person. The altruism motive involves trying to be supportive of close others and wanting to help others in need. The stress avoidance motive is characterized by wanting to avoid stress and failure. The sensation-seeking motive involves pursuing fun, sex, excitement, and novelty.

These motives should be predictive of trust to the extent that they are appropriate to the workplace, attainable through trust, and social. To be appropriate to the workplace, the desired outcome of the motive should be seen as a legitimate pursuit for supervisors. Supervisors, and others within the organization, may see certain pursuits as diverging from the expectations of the role (Sarbin & Allen, 1968). To be attainable,

there should be a reasonable expectation that trust will help satisfy that motive. A motive should predict trust to the extent that trust is seen as a viable, helpful, or necessary means of achieving that motive. To be social, satisfying the motive should be facilitated by social interaction. Some motives are inherently social—they are difficult or impossible to satisfy without interacting with and trusting others (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003; Simon, 1990).

These criteria suggest that the sensation-seeking motive is unlikely to be a good predictor of supervisors' trust in their employees. Supervisors are likely to see the pursuit of fun and excitement in the workplace as inappropriate for their role and as behavior that is detrimental to their position. Additionally, satisfying this motive does not necessarily require trust or social interaction. Conversely, I propose that the affiliation, power-achievement, personal growth, altruism, and stress avoidance motives are all appropriate to the role, attainable through trust, and facilitated by social interaction. These five motives provided the deductive basis for my creation of a taxonomy of supervisors' trust motives.

I supplemented this deductive approach to creating a taxonomy with an inductive study that asked supervisors to identify their motives for trusting employees. This inductive study was conducted with thirty-three executive MBA students at a large southeastern university. Their responses identified the same five motives that I deductively selected from Novacek and Lazarus's (1990) taxonomy. Based on a combination of my deductive and inductive approaches, I propose supervisors have five primary motives for trusting their employees: other growth, personal responsibility,

rapport creation, impression management, and situational necessity. In the section that follows I provide deductive and inductive support for these motives.

Motives to Trust

The *other growth motive* is a desire to help employees learn and grow. This motive is derived from the altruism motive (Novacek & Lazarus, 1990), which involves trying to be supportive of others. Inductive responses that identified this motive include "[Because of] empathy for a junior employee trying to advance" and "As a way to improve the employee's job satisfaction and motivation." One way supervisors can develop employees is by giving them stretch assignments (Ragins, Townsend, & Mattis, 1998; Zaccaro & Banks, 2004). By definition, stretch assignments challenge the limitations of employees' skill sets. These assignments require supervisors to trust their employees to rise to the challenge. This is a risky proposition, because supervisors may lose time, effort, or status if employees fail. Conversely, trust may lead to trusting behaviors that provide the employee with the ability to learn and develop. It may be difficult for employees to progress without their supervisors' trust. Likewise, it may be difficult for supervisors to satisfy an other growth motive without trusting their employees.

The *personal responsibility motive* is a desire to be an ethical and responsible person. This motive is derived from the personal growth motive (Novacek & Lazarus, 1990), which is characterized by aspiring to be a fair, ethical, and responsible person. Inductive responses that identified this motive include "I have a responsibility as a leader to protect them, take care of them, and for them to know that I will have their back in certain situations" and "Generally speaking all employees should feel they can

be trusted." Hosmer (1995) proposed that trust is based on the assumption of an implicit duty to mankind. It is the trustor's recognition that a cooperative, functioning society depends on people being both trustworthy and trusting (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). Some research suggests trustors feel they should trust so that trustees feel trustworthy (Dunning et al., in press). Supervisors may feel an obligation to make employees feel trusted and trustworthy. To this point, one supervisor remarked "Employees should be given trust to ensure they feel the manager has confidence [in them]." Trust may allow supervisors to conform to internal norms that suggest who they ought to be.

The *rapport creation motive* is the desire to create close, satisfying relationships. This motive is derived from the affiliation motive (Novacek & Lazarus, 1990), which is characterized by wanting to have close, satisfying relationships. Inductive responses that identified this motive include "To develop a deeper relationship with those individuals," and "[If I trust them] they can trust me, because trust is a two-way street that is needed on both sides." The rapport creation motive is relevant to trust because it is both attainable through trust and social in nature. Indeed, it may be that this motive can only be satisfied through trust and social interactions (Rempel et al., 1985). Pursuing this motive is also likely seen as appropriate workplace behavior given that having close, affective ties at work can have positive outcomes for employees, supervisors, and the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

The *impression management motive* is people's desire to influence the image others have of them (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). This motive is derived from Novacek and Lazarus's (1990) power–achievement motive, which is characterized by desiring to be popular and accepted, and wanting to obtain awards and recognition. Leary and

Kowalski (1990) theorized that obtaining social approval and maximizing outcomes are key drivers of impression management behavior. Inductive responses that identified this motive include "It looks good for me; a good leader should stand up for their people" and "[I'm] concerned that any perceived 'lack of trust' reflects poorly on [my] character." Social roles carry behavioral expectations (Sarbin & Allen, 1968). Those who fail to fulfill those expectations may be censured or removed from the role (Goffman, 1959). Therefore, people are motivated to conform to the prototypical characteristics of the roles they occupy (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Supervisors are likely motivated to portray the image of a developmental and supportive leader. Trusting employees may assist in making that impression.

The *situational necessity motive* is the desire to avoid failure and stress. This motive is derived from Novacek and Lazarus's (1990) stress avoidance motive, which is characterized by wanting to avoid failure and stress. Inductive responses that identified this motive include "Because I have to; I can't do everything myself" and "I don't always know as much as they do." Sometimes deadlines, workload, and the complexity of the task require additional hands on deck. Indeed, Spreitzer and Mishra (1999) noted that employees often have specialized knowledge and skills that make them better suited than their supervisors to certain tasks and decisions. Given that organizational goals are served by supervisors accomplishing the task, the necessity motive is highly appropriate to the workplace. Trust facilitates behaviors such as delegating, which shift a portion of the supervisors' workload to employees. Accordingly, satisfying this motive is certainly attainable through trust. In many situations satisfying this motive may only be attainable

by trusting employees. Finally, because meeting the demands of a task may require depending on others, the necessity motive is also social.

Motivated Reasoning

The question now becomes, how do these motives influence trust above and beyond trust propensity and trustworthiness? The answer is suggested by Kunda's (1990) theory of *motivated reasoning*. Motivated reasoning proposes that when people have a preferred conclusion—a motive—they search for and interpret information in a way that justifies that conclusion. People do not blindly conclude there will be a positive outcome because they have a preference for that outcome. Rather, people try to construct a defensible justification—one that would satisfy a "dispassionate observer" (Kunda, 1990; also see Boiney, Kennedy, & Nye, 1997; Kunda & Sanitioso, 1989). Accordingly, people search their memory for information that supports their decision or behavior. They also selectively interpret the available information.

Although people intend to be objective, it is an "illusion of objectivity" because they do not realize their motives are biasing their reasoning (Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1987). They may not realize they are only accessing a subset of their memories or that they are interpreting information in a way that justifies the desired conclusion (Kunda, 1990). To illustrate, consider an employee who is preparing to take a professional certification exam. Because failure would have negative consequences, the employee wants to believe the exam will have a positive outcome. Although the employee may have failed three out of five practice exams, the employee is more likely to recall the two out of five exams that were successful. The employee may also justify the possibility of success by thinking about extenuating circumstances that explain the failed exams,

such as being tired or distracted. Although the employee can create a defensible justification for success, this argument is clearly biased by the desire for a positive outcome.

One way that motives affect reasoning is through biased memory search. Motives prompt a selective memory search wherein people only recall information which supports the desired outcome (Kunda, 1990). Motivated reasoning suggests supervisors with a motive to trust will be more likely to recall situations in which trust had a positive outcome, thereby supporting a trusting intention in the current situation. Research supports this proposal. Sanitioso, Kunda, and Fong (1990) found that people who were asked to generate memories supporting a particular preference were able to more quickly generate the memories (and generate more of them) than were people without the preference. Relatedly, people who were told certain activities were good for their health could more easily recall engaging in those activities than people who were told those activities were bad for their health (Ross, McFarland, & Fletcher, 1981).

The motive-biased memory search may also be the result of a positive test strategy (Kunda, 1990). Substantial research indicates that when people are testing a hypothesis they search for information and memories that confirm rather than disconfirm the hypothesis (for a review, see Klayman & Ha, 1987). Motives turn questions into directional hypotheses. For example, supervisors faced with a trust or do-not-trust situation may ask themselves, "Should I trust?" A motive turns that question into a hypothesis: "I should trust." The supervisor then conducts a memory search that focuses on events that confirm rather than disconfirm that hypothesis. For example, a supervisor with a situational necessity motive may be more likely to recall occasions

when trusting an employee was beneficial. Accordingly, the hypothesis-confirming memory search should produce instances that support the decision to trust.

Motives may also affect processing through biased interpretation of the available information (Kunda, 1990). For example, consider two supervisors with identical levels of trust propensity and perceptions of an employee's trustworthiness. One supervisor has an other growth motive while the other supervisor does not. Both supervisors think there is a 30 percent chance their employee will fail at a potential assignment and thereby breach their trust. However, the supervisor with the motive may think a 30 percent chance of failure is *low*, and therefore trusts. The supervisor without the motive may think a 30 percent chance is *high*, and therefore does not trust. The motive, therefore, affects trust above and beyond trust propensity and trustworthiness. Research provides some support for the proposal that motives bias interpretation. Gilovich (1983) found that fans of winning and losing teams have different interpretations of "fluke events" that determine the outcome of the game. Fans of the winning team see the fluke as irrelevant to the outcome. Fans of the losing team, however, attribute the team's loss to the fluke event and not to the team's ability.

Trust motives may affect trust through this process of motivated reasoning. Motives lead to a biased perception that trust will have a positive outcome. In turn, these biased expectations of a positive outcome increase the supervisors' perception that trusting is the right course of action. Importantly, motives are predicted to increase trust by biasing the expectation of a positive outcome rather than biasing the expectation of positive behavior from the trustee. Because people feel the need to construct a defensible justification that would satisfy a "dispassionate observer" (Kunda,

1990), motivated reasoning should not supplant or influence the information provided by positive expectations. A positive outcome expectancy is likely more justifiable than a positive behavioral expectation that is not consistent with the available evidence. For example, it would be difficult for a supervisor to argue that she can count on an employee when that employee's ability is not ideal. Accordingly, the effects of trust motives on trust should not be transmitted through positive expectations, as are the effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness. The information provided by trust propensity and trustworthiness is certainly not disregarded when there is a clear motive to trust. Rather, motives should incrementally predict trust.

> *Hypothesis 3: The other growth motive has a positive effect on trust, controlling for the effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness.*
>
> *Hypothesis 4: The personal responsibility motive has a positive effect on trust, controlling for the effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness.*
>
> *Hypothesis 5: The rapport creation motive has a positive effect on trust, controlling for the effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness.*
>
> *Hypothesis 6: The impression management motive has a positive effect on trust, controlling for the effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness.*
>
> *Hypothesis 7: The situational necessity motive has a positive effect on trust, controlling for the effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness.*

CHAPTER 4

METHOD

Sample and Procedure

The sample for this study was 265 supervisors from two manufacturing organizations in China that provide electrification systems to the railway industry. Participants' average age was 40.6 years (SD = 8.03). Thirty-four percent of the participants were female. The participants had been with their organizations for 16.7 years (SD = 8.18), on average. They each had, on average, 17 direct reports (SD = 27.81).

The data collection was administered in one wave. All supervisors within the four organizations received a paper-and-pencil survey. At the beginning of the survey, supervisors were asked to list five employees whom they supervised. They were then instructed to randomly select one of those five employees and write his/her name at the bottom of the page. In the instructions for several of the measures that followed, supervisors were asked to refer to that employee when responding to the items. I utilized this approach to limit any selection biases or range restriction that might have arisen as a result of the supervisor selecting the employee. Six hundred and twenty supervisors received the survey. Two hundred and sixty-eight supervisors returned the survey. After listwise deletion of missing data, there were 265 useable responses (an overall yield of 43 percent).

Measures

Unless otherwise noted, participants rated their level of agreement with all items using six-point scales (1 = *Strongly disagree* to 6 = *Strongly agree*). Six-point scales were used to avoid the central tendency bias that is sometimes found among Chinese research participants (Yang & Chiu, 1997). Measures were counterbalanced within the survey to reduce context and priming biases (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

Trust motives. Given that motives for trust have not been previously investigated, I created trust motives scales for this study. These scales were created using the measure creation and validation procedures recommended by Hinkin and Tracey (1999; also see Hinkin, 1998). In this procedure, a scholarly definition is first created for each construct, then items reflecting this definition are generated. Study participants are asked to quantitatively assess the level of correspondence between the items and the definition. Given that the only requirement for an exercise of this nature is sufficient mental ability to evaluate the correspondence between items and definitions, scholars have argued that undergraduates are an appropriate participant pool (Hinkin & Tracey, 1999; Schriesheim, Powers, Scandura, Gardiner, & Lankau, 1993). I recruited 214 undergraduates from a large southeastern university for this exercise. Participants received class credit for their participation. Participants were randomly assigned to receive the definition of a single motive to trust followed by the four items for that scale. The instructions to the scale read, "*Trust* is a willingness to be vulnerable to someone based on the expectation that they will perform some action. When we trust, we 'stick our neck out'—we put our fate in another person's hands. There are many reasons why

supervisors might trust their employees. For each statement below, please indicate to what extent you agree it is a reason why you 'stick your neck out' for [employee name]." Participants were instructed to rate the level of correspondence using a seven-point scale from 1 = *Item is a very bad match to the definition* to 7 = *Item is a very good match to the definition*. The item-level means for all trust motives scales are shown in Table 1.

The other growth items were: "I want him/her to develop," "It will give him/her an opportunity to grow," "I care about his/her progress," and "I want to help him/her advance in the organization." The mean level of definitional correspondence for the four other growth items was 6.16 out of 7 (N = 43). The personal responsibility items were: "That's what a good supervisor should do," "It's the right thing to do," "I have an obligation to," and "It's what I ought to do." The mean level of definitional correspondence for the four items was 5.54 out of 7 (N = 47). The *rapport creation* items were: "I want us to form a meaningful relationship," "It will build a deeper connection between us," "It will help us create a satisfying relationship," and "I want us to establish close ties." The mean level of definitional correspondence for the four items was 6.30 out of 7 (N = 46). The impression management items were: "I want to create a good impression to others," "I want to look like an effective supervisor," "It makes me look good," and "It will give the image that I'm a good supervisor." The mean level of definitional correspondence for the four items was 5.08 out of 7 (N = 39). The situational necessity items were: "I have to in order to get the work done," "It's the only way to accomplish the task," "The job won't get done if I don't," and "I need help to get projects done." The mean level of definitional correspondence for the four items was 5.49 out of

7 (N = 39). The level of definitional correspondence for the five trust motives scales

compares favorably with other uses of this procedure (Baer, Dhensa-Kahlon, Colquitt,

Rodell, Outlaw, & Long, in press; Colquitt, Baer, Long, & Halvorsen-Ganepola, 2014;

Gardner, 2005; Long, Baer, Colquitt, Outlaw, & Dhensa-Kahlon, in press; Rodell, 2013).

In the substantive study, the coefficient alphas for the five trust motives scales were:

other growth, α = .88; personal responsibility, α = .83; rapport creation, α = .85;

impression management, α = .83; situational necessity, α = .65.

TABLE 1

Trust Motives Items Assessed for Content Validity [a]

Construct	Item	Mean
Other Growth	I want him/her to develop.	6.23
	It will give him/her an opportunity to grow.	6.30
	I care about his/her progress.	6.14
	I want to help him/her advance in the organization.	5.98
Personal Responsibility	That's what a good supervisor should do.	5.51
	It's the right thing to do.	6.00
	I have an obligation to.	5.36
	It's what I ought to do.	5.30
Rapport Creation	I want us to form a meaningful relationship.	6.33
	It will build a deeper connection between us.	6.35
	It will help us create a satisfying relationship.	6.33
	I want us to establish close ties.	6.22
Impression Management	I want to create a good impression to others.	5.41
	I want to look like an effective supervisor.	5.23
	It makes me look good.	4.59
	It will give the image that I'm a good supervisor.	5.10
Situational Necessity	I have to in order to get work done.	5.62
	It's the only way to accomplish tasks.	5.49
	The job won't get done if I don't.	5.31
	I need help to get projects done.	5.54

[a] The reported means are the definitional correspondence between the items and the construct definition. Items were rated on a seven-point scale.

Trust propensity. Trust propensity was measured using MacDonald, Kessel,

and Fuller's (1972) ten-item scale ($\alpha = .70$). The items were: "I expect other people to

be honest and open," "I am less trusting than the average person (reverse-scored [R]),"

"I have faith in human nature," "I am suspicious of other people's intentions (R)," "I feel that other people can be relied upon to do what they say they will do," "I am less trusting that most (R)," "I have faith in the promises or statements of other people," "I feel that other people are out to get as much as they can for themselves (R)," "I am more trusting than a lot of people," "I am cynical (pessimistic) (R)."

Trustworthiness. The trustworthiness of the target employee was measured using Mayer and Davis's (1999) 17-item trustworthiness scale. As the distinctions between the three sub-facets of this scale—ability, benevolence, and integrity—were not essential to our research question, in the analyses the sub-facets were treated as indicators of a higher-order trustworthiness factor. The ability items were: "He/she is very capable of performing his/her job," "He/she is known to be successful at the things they try to do," "He/she has much knowledge about the work that needs to be done," "I feel very confident about his/her skills," "He/she has specialized capabilities that can increase our performance," and "He/she is well qualified." The benevolence items were: "He/she is very concerned about my welfare," "My needs and desires are very important to him/her," "He/she would not knowingly do anything to hurt me," "He/she really looks out for what is important to me," and "He/she will go out of their way to help me." The integrity items were: "He/she has a strong sense of justice," "I never have to wonder whether he/she will stick to their word," "He/she tries hard to be fair in dealings with others," "His/her actions and behaviors are not very consistent (R)," "I like his/her values," and "Sound principles seem to guide his/her behavior." Coefficient alpha for the 17-item scale was .86.

Positive expectations. Although some treatments of trust have focused on the

positive expectations aspect of the trust construct as identified by Mayer et al. (1995),

there are no existing measures that focus exclusively on positive expectations as a

distinct variable. Indeed, scholars have noted that some current operationalizations of

positive expectations are more akin to perceived trustworthiness (Colquitt et al., 2007;

Ferrin et al., 2008; McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011). For example, McAllister's (1995)

measure of trust as positive expectations has considerable overlap with Mayer and

Davis's (1999) measure of trustworthiness. Cummings and Bromiley's (1996) measure

of trust as positive expectations also has conceptual and operational overlap with

trustworthiness beliefs (McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011). Thus, scholars have recommended

that future research and measure development should address this issue (Ferrin et al.,

2008; McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011).

Accordingly, I created a measure of positive expectations for this study following

the procedures recommended by Hinkin and Tracey (1999). My definition of positive

expectations—"The belief that another person's actions will meet your positive

expectations"—was based on Mayer et al.'s (1995) definition of trust as well as

Rousseau et al.'s (1998) definition of trust as a willingness to be vulnerable "based upon

positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (p. 395). I generated four

items based on this conceptual definition: "I know he/she will meet my expectations," "I

believe his/her behavior will be positive," "I'm sure he/she will act in a way that is

beneficial to me and the organization," and "I'm convinced his/her actions will have a

positive outcome." One hundred sixty-five undergraduates from a large southeastern

university were recruited for this exercise. They received class credit for their

participation. The mean level of definitional correspondence for the four-item measure was 5.89 out of 7—a number that matches or exceeds other uses of this procedure (Baer et al., in press; Colquitt et al., 2014; Gardner, 2005; Long et al., in press; Rodell, 2013). Item-level means are shown in Table 2. Coefficient alpha for this measure was .85.

TABLE 2

Positive Expectations Items Assessed for Content Validity [a]

Construct	Item	Mean
Positive Expectations	I know he/she will meet my expectations.	5.95
	I believe his/her behavior will be positive.	5.81
	I'm sure he/she will act in a way that is beneficial to me and the organization.	5.92
	I'm convinced his/her actions will have a positive outcome.	5.89

[a] The reported means are the definitional correspondence between the items and the construct definition. Items were rated on a seven-point scale.

Trust. Supervisors' trust in their employees was measured using Mayer and Gavin's (2005) ten-item scale ($\alpha = .82$), adapted to reflect supervisor trust in employees. Instructions directed supervisors to "Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about your employee." The items were: "I don't feel the need to 'keep an eye' on my employee," "I would be willing to let my employee have significant input on important projects," "I would be comfortable relying on my employee for something that was critical to me, even if I couldn't monitor their actions," "If someone questioned my employee's motives, I would give my employee the benefit of the doubt,"

"If my employee asked me to do something, I would respond without worrying about whether my actions might be held against me," "I would inform my employee about mistakes I've made on the job, even if those mistakes could damage my reputation," "I would share my opinion about sensitive issues with my employee, even if my opinion was unpopular," "I would let my employee have an impact on issues that are important to me," "If my employee asked why a problem occurred, I would speak freely even if I was partly to blame," and "I am not afraid of what my employee might do to me at work."

    Controls. I also investigated controlling for several demographic variables with the potential to affect the results, including the supervisor's gender, age, tenure with the organization, and number of direct reports. Given that the focal employee was selected by the supervisor, I also investigated controlling for possible sources of selection bias, including how long the supervisor had known the focal employee, how long the supervisor had supervised the employee, and how much the supervisor liked the employee. Liking was assessed with Wayne and Ferris's (1990) four-item measure (α = .85), adapted for use with a Likert scale. The items were: "Is someone I like as a subordinate," "Is someone I get along well with," "Is a pleasure to supervise," and "Is someone I think would make a good friend." I also investigated controlling for trait negative affect using Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann's (2003) four-item neuroticism scale (α = .73). Items were: "Anxious," "Calm (R)," "Easily upset," and "Emotional stable (R)." None of these potential control variables affected the tests of my hypotheses. Therefore, I followed recommended procedures and did not include them in my final analyses (Becker, 2005; Carlson & Wu, 2012).

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

To verify the factor structure of the measures, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL 8.72 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1989). All of the latent factors were modeled using item-level indicators. Trustworthiness was treated as a higher-order latent factor, with the latent factors for ability, benevolence, and integrity modeled as indicators. The hypothesized nine-factor model demonstrated a good fit to the data: χ^2 (1730) = 3172.67, $p < .01$; comparative fit index (CFI) = .94; root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .054; standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) = .082. The nine-factor model fit the data better than alternative models that combined the various trust motives as well as alternative models that variously combined trustworthiness, positive expectations, and trust. The factor loadings for all items in the five trust motives scales were statistically significant and averaged as follows: other growth = .74; personal responsibility = .84; rapport creation = .81; impression management = .80; situational necessity = .81.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations for the variables are shown

in Table 1. The coefficient alphas are on the diagonal in parentheses.

TABLE 3

**Descriptive Statistics and Correlations** [a]

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Other Growth	5.28	0.78	(.88)								
2. Personal Responsibility	5.04	0.92	.40*	(.83)							
3. Rapport Creation	5.04	0.87	.28*	.21*	(.85)						
4. Impression Management	5.01	0.88	.58*	.41*	.16*	(.83)					
5. Situational Necessity	4.16	1.00	.16*	.19*	.21*	.33*	(.65)				
6. Trust Propensity	4.34	0.72	.26*	.18*	.02	.12	-.21*	(.70)			
7. Trustworthiness	4.85	0.58	.50*	.21*	.20*	.33*	.16*	.27*	(.86)		
8. Positive Expectations	5.06	0.71	.46*	.32*	.29*	.31*	.16*	.18*	.56*	(.85)	
9. Trust	5.04	0.70	.44*	.35*	.38*	.36*	.14*	.23*	.44*	.52*	(.82)

[a] N = 265. Coefficient alphas are on the diagonal in parentheses.
* $p < .05$, two-tailed.

Tests of Hypotheses

I tested the model in Figure 1 using structural equation modeling in LISREL 8.72. All variables were modeled using item-level indicators. As in the CFA, trustworthiness was treated as a higher-order factor, with the fully-latent sub-facets of ability, benevolence, and integrity modeled as indicators. All exogenous latent variables were allowed to covary (Kline, 2011). Direct effects from trustworthiness and trust propensity to trust were also modeled, as those paths are necessary when testing for indirect effects (MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002). Although indirect effects from the trust motives to trust through positive expectations were not hypothesized, I modeled effects from the trust motives to positive expectations for the analyses. This was done to determine whether the motives had effects on trust through the presumed, implicit mechanism of motivated reasoning, or whether they had effects on trust through the same mechanism—positive expectations—as trust propensity and trustworthiness. The hypothesized model demonstrated a good fit to the data: χ^2 (1730) = 3172.67, p < .01; CFI = .94; RMSEA = .054; SRMR = .082. The structural equation modeling results are shown in Figure 2.
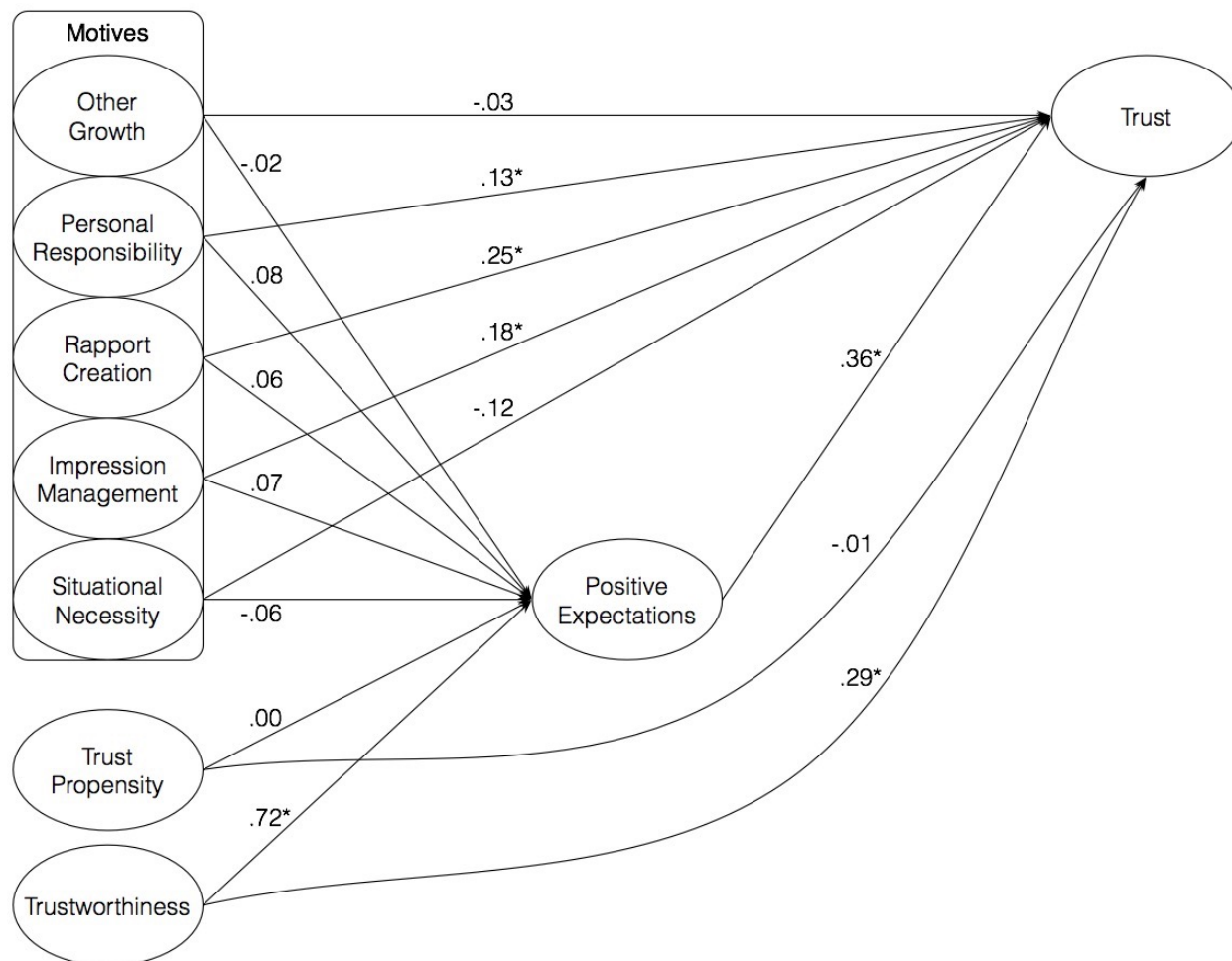
FIGURE 2

Structural Equation Modeling Results a

TABLE 4

Covariances Between Exogenous Latent Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Other Growth						
2. Personal Responsibility	.48*					
3. Rapport Creation	.36*	.26*				
4. Impression Management	.68*	.48*	.21*			
5. Situational Necessity	.17*	.25*	.28*	.42*		
6. Trust Propensity	.24*	.19*	.09	.10	-.29*	
7. Trustworthiness	.61*	.34*	.35*	.39*	.20*	.17*

* $p < .05$, one-tailed.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 predicted that trust propensity and trustworthiness, respectively, would have positive indirect effects on trust through positive expectations. I tested these hypotheses using a product of coefficients approach (MacKinnon et al., 2002), wherein the indirect effect is calculated by multiplying the independent variable → mediator path coefficient by the mediator → dependent variable path coefficient. Given that the product of two path coefficients is rarely normally distributed, scholars suggest that the significance of the indirect effect should be calculated using a distribution of the product method (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007; MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004; Tofighi & MacKinnon, 2011). This approach corrects for the non-normality of the product, and has more power than traditional tests of significance such as the Sobel test (MacKinnon et al., 2004; MacKinnon, Fairchild, &

Fritz, 2007). Accordingly, I used the RMediation package within *R* software (Tofighi & MacKinnon, 2011) to estimate the significance of the indirect effects.

As shown in Table 5, the indirect effect of trust propensity on trust (.00) was nonsignificant. Hypothesis 2, therefore, was not supported. The indirect effect of trustworthiness on trust (.25) was significant, thereby supporting Hypothesis 2. That indirect effect can be recovered using the tracing rule (Kline, 2011) and the path coefficients from Figure 2: trustworthiness → positive expectations * positive expectations → trust = .76 * .36 = .26.

TABLE 5

**Effect Decomposition Results for Mediation Tests
Through Positive Expectations**

Variable	Effects on Trust		
	Indirect	Direct	Total
Trust Propensity	.00	-.01	-.01
Trustworthiness	.26*	.29*	.55*
Other Growth	-.01	-.03	-.04
Personal Responsibility	.03	.13*	.16*
Rapport Creation	.02	.25*	.27*
Impression Management	.02	.18*	.20*
Situational Necessity	-.02	-.12	-.14

* $p < .05$, one-tailed.

Hypotheses 3 through 7 predicted that the five trust motives would have positive effects on trust, controlling for trust propensity and trustworthiness. Results of these

tests are shown in Figure 2. The nonsignificant path from the other growth motive to trust (b = -.03) fails to provide support for Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 4, however, was supported, as shown by the significant path from the personal responsibility motive to trust (b = .13). Likewise, the significant paths from the rapport creation motive (b = .25) and the impression management motive (b = .18) to trust provide support for Hypothesis 5 and Hypothesis 6. The situational necessity motive did not have a significant effect on trust (b = -.12). Therefore, Hypothesis 7 was not supported. Motives were expected to increase trust by biasing the expectation of a positive outcome, rather than the expectation of positive behavior—which would likely be difficult to justify (Kunda, 1990). This suggested direct effects of the motives on trust rather than indirect effects through positive expectations. In support of this proposal, the paths from all five trust motives to positive expectations were nonsignificant. Additionally, the indirect effects of the trust motives on trust were also nonsignificant and near-zero, as shown in Table 5. Taken together, these results provide support for my proposal that the motives for trust affect trust "outside" the mechanism of positive expectations.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

Supervisors trust their employees when the employees demonstrate acceptable

levels of competence, show concern for the supervisor, and adhere to shared values.

Supervisors also trust as a result of their dispositional tendencies to rely on the words

and deeds of others. Given the risk inherent in trust, it is intuitive that when deciding

whether to trust, supervisors would rely on the "good reasons" represented by trust

propensity and trustworthiness. Conceptual and empirical trust research has focused on

these "good reasons," understandably reaching a consensus that trust is based on trust

propensity and trustworthiness (Colquitt et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Mayer et al.,

1995; Möllering, 2006; Rousseau et al., 1998).

The consensus focus on trust propensity and trustworthiness may be

problematic. My research was motivated, in part, by instances when levels of trust

exceed what would be predicted by trust propensity and trustworthiness (Berg et al.,

1995; Kramer, 1994). Supervisors routinely delegate critical tasks to new employees, for

whom data on trustworthiness is murky. Similarly, they may "stick their necks out" for

employees whose ability, benevolence, or integrity may be less than ideal. Therefore, in

this research I sought to shed some light on this mystery by investigating other potential

antecedents of trust. In so doing, I sought to answer two main questions. First, what are

additional reasons that supervisors trust their employees? Second, do these reasons

have incremental effects on trust, above and beyond trust propensity and

trustworthiness? Additionally, to provide a baseline comparison for the tests of these questions, I investigated whether the effects of trust propensity and trustworthiness on trust are transmitted through positive expectations, as conceptualized in the literature. Presumably, the effects of trust motives should not operate through this same mechanism. In the sections that follow, I summarize my results and discuss the theoretical and practical implications of my research. I also outline potential limitations of my research.

Summary of Results

As predicted, the trust motives I introduced in this research did not exert their effects on trust through positive expectations. This is in contrast to theory surrounding the current antecedents in the trust literature—trust propensity and trustworthiness—which scholars have argued do transmit their effects through positive expectations of the trustee (Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). This conceptualized relationship has been largely accepted at face value, although some scholars have suggested that the literature would benefit from an explicit test (Ferrin et al., 2008; McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011). My results showed that positive expectations do transmit the effects of trustworthiness to trust (indirect effect = .25). Although trust propensity had a significant zero-order correlation with positive expectations (.15), the path from trust propensity to positive expectations was not significant (.00) when trustworthiness was also modeled. When considering that the supervisors in my study had known their employees for an average of 11.6 years ($SD = 6.87$), this result is not entirely surprising, given that the effects of trust propensity should decrease as the familiarity between the trustor and the

trustee increases (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; Mayer et al., 1995; van der Werff & Buckley, in press).

Supplying empirical evidence that positive expectations transmit the effects of trustworthiness on trust was important for three reasons. Most importantly, it provided a baseline model for my predictions about the incremental effects of trust motives. Because trust motives were hypothesized to affect trust through a different mechanism than positive expectations, including that variable in the model as a potential mediator provided a viable alternative to my predictions. The fact that trust motives affect trust in a different manner than the current antecedents of trust provides essential evidence that motives are not redundant with current antecedents of trust. Second, it is the first test of a relationship—positive expectations → willingness to be vulnerable—that forms the core of the most widely-adopted conceptualization of trust. Finally, the test of these predictions necessitated the creation of a measure of positive expectations that does not have content overlap with trustworthiness or trust. Creating this measure answers the call for clearer measurement distinctions between positive expectations and trust as the willingness to be vulnerable (McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011).

My results indicate that supervisors' motives for trust remove some of the mystery surrounding trust that seems to go above and beyond trust propensity and trustworthiness. Indeed, trust may also be a result of supervisors' feelings of obligation toward their employees, their desire to create satisfying relationships with their employees, and their desire to portray positive impressions to others. The personal responsibility, rapport creation, and impression management motives had significant relationships with trust even when the traditional predictors of trust were also modeled.

In support of my theorizing, the effects of these motives were direct rather than transmitted through positive expectations.

Although the other growth ($r = .44$) and situational necessity motives ($r = .14$) had significant zero-order relationships with trust, they did not have significant effects on trust when modeled alongside the other predictors. As the other growth motive was the motive with the largest correlations with trust propensity (.26), trustworthiness (.50), and positive expectations (.46), it is likely that the variance in trust explained by the other growth motive overlapped with the variance explained by those predictors. In support of this proposal, supplementary analyses with ordinary least squares regression found that the effect of the other growth motive on trust was significant when entered in the model with only the other trust motives. The situational necessity motive, however, tended to be only weakly related to the other variables in the model. Indeed, OLS regression revealed that the situational necessity motive was not a significant predictor of trust when entered in a model with only the other trust motives.

Taken together, my results indicate that the predictors of trust are not limited to trust propensity and trustworthiness. Analyses showed that the hypothesized model explained 69 percent of the variance in trust while an alternative model without the motives explained 59 percent of the variance. The significance of the change in R-square between alternative models cannot be assessed in structural equation modeling. Therefore, as a supplement to these analyses I examined the significance of the change in R-square using OLS regression. The results mirrored the findings from structural equation modeling, showing that adding the five trust motives to the model explained an additional 9 percent of the variance in trust ($F = 7.61$, $p < .05$).

Theoretical Implications

There are several theoretical implications of these results. First, given the overwhelming focus in the literature on the "good reasons" represented by trust propensity and trustworthiness (Möllering, 2006), my findings represent a shift toward models of trust that include additional predictors. Although scholars had previously postulated that there are additional predictors (e.g., McKnight et al., 1998; B. Williams, 1988; M. Williams, 2001), my study represents the first comprehensive conceptualization, operationalization, and empirical test of additional predictors. By adding predictors that fall outside the umbrella of trusting dispositions and trusting beliefs, my research expands our understanding of the bases of trust in a way that could not be extrapolated from the existing literature. Hopefully, this expansion will allow for models that explain more of the variance in trust.

Next, my results suggest that there is an element of proactivity to trust. Current conceptualizations have portrayed trust as largely reactive (Lau et al., 2014). In general, people are assumed to have trusting intentions as a reaction to whether they think interactions with the trustee will be positive (Gambetta, 1988; Tyler & Degoey, 1996). When the characteristics of the trustor (trust propensity) or the trustee (trustworthiness) lead to positive expectations, people trust. Given that the importance of trust propensity tends to decrease as the trustor gathers information on the trustee (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; Mayer et al., 1995; van der Werff & Buckley, in press), the characteristics of the trustee tend to be the primary factor in determining trust. Yet, my research suggests supervisors' willingness to be vulnerable to their employees can also be a

means to an end. Accordingly, this research advances theory by elevating the importance of the trustor in the trust equation.

My creation of measures of trust motives also contributes to theory development. Previous scholars had suggested that "incentives" and "motives" might contribute to trust, yet did not elaborate on what those might be (e.g., B. Williams, 1988; M. Williams, 2001). By combining deductive and inductive approaches, I created a set of supervisor trust motives that is parsimonious yet inclusive. These motives provide a base for future conceptual and empirical research on trust motives. Although the other growth and necessity motives did not have significant effects in this study, future research may benefit from including the full set of motives in order to determine their boundary conditions.

My research also provides theoretical insights into supervisor trust in employees. Research on trust between employees and supervisors has focused almost exclusively on employee trust in supervisors (for narrative and quantitative reviews, see Colquitt et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Fulmer & Gelfand, 2012). Although there are likely many similarities between why employees trust and why supervisors trust, there may be important differences. This is especially evident when considering trust motives. For example, while supervisors may feel a personal responsibility to trust their employees, employees may not experience that same sense of obligation.

Practical Implications

Trust has a number of positive benefits, including increased job attitudes, performance, and commitment to the organization (Colquitt et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). A holistic approach to increasing trust and its subsequent benefits may depend

on a more complete understanding of why people trust. Previous recommendations for increasing trust have often focused on what the trustee can do to be more trustworthy (e.g., Korsgaard, Brodt, & Whitener, 2002; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998). My research suggests organizations may also foster trust by focusing on the trustor. For example, organizations could emphasize to supervisors that they should have personal responsibility and rapport creation motives with respect to their employees. If the expectation is clear that supervisors should be striving to fulfill those motives, trust may increase as a result.

Although the impression management motive is more instrumental and self-serving than the personal responsibility and rapport creation motives, it is not necessarily undesirable. Indeed, if the resulting trust is beneficial for the employees and the supervisors, organizations may want to emphasize that being willing to trust employees, regardless of the reason, is seen as a positive behavior. For example, a supervisor might trust an employee to appear developmental and effective. If the end result is an employee that feels empowered, the organization may not be overly concerned with the initial motivation. Accordingly, organizations might consider conveying to supervisors that being more willing to trust their employees would reflect well on the supervisors' overall image.

In this same vein, organizations could make supervisors' engagement in trusting behaviors part of the formal job description. For example, performance evaluations could be partially dependent on whether supervisors challenge employees with stretch assignments, delegate high-profile tasks, or grant discretion over how tasks are accomplished. These behaviors are risky, so supervisors may be hesitant to engage in

them. Establishing that trust is part of the job may encourages supervisors to engage in these behaviors. Likewise, organizations might benefit from assuring supervisors that since satisfying these motives—through trust—is seen as part of the job, employees' failures will not necessarily reflect poorly on the supervisor. If supervisors are assured that the organization understands trusting employees will not always be successful, supervisors may be more willing to trust.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study that should be noted. First, all of the variables were collected at the same time. This could have resulted in common method variance that inflated the relationships between variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Also, because all variables were measured at the same time, it was not possible to provide empirical evidence for the proposed causal ordering (Schwab, 2005). Notwithstanding this limitation, there is strong theoretical and empirical support for the proposed causal ordering (Colquitt et al., 2007; Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998).

Another potential limitation stems from the supervisor selecting the focal employee, which may have resulted in selection biases or range restriction. This concern is largely alleviated by the results of supplementary analyses that controlled for several potential sources of selection bias and range restriction: the supervisor's liking of the employee, length of time the supervisor had known the employee, and length of time the supervisor had supervised the employee. Results showed that none of these controls affected the hypothesized relationships. Additional analyses showed that none of these variables moderated the hypothesized relationships either.

Supervisors in this study had generally known their employees for an average of 11.6 years ($SD = 6.87$). Controlling for this variable did not affect the hypothesized relationships, nor did this variable moderate the hypothesized relationships. Yet, the minimum length of time a supervisor had known a focal employee was one year. Accordingly, it is not known whether supervisor trust in new employees follows a similar pattern, or whether the relative contribution of trustworthiness and motives to trust are different in new relationships. It could be that with new employees, trust propensity and motives play a bigger role in the willingness to be vulnerable while data on trustworthiness is being gathered. A sample that included new employees would increase the generalizability of these results.

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