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Trustworthiness and Trust: Influences and Implications

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Trustworthiness and Trust: Influences and Implications[1]

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Trustworthiness and Trust: Influences and Implications

INTRODUCTION

Trust plays a pivotal role in facilitating the exchange relationships which are central to the process of marketing. Numerous scholars have argued that commitment built on trust is essential for the effective functioning of marketing relationships and indeed, that relationships cannot be created and managed without trust (see for example Moorman et al., 1993; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Caldwell & Clapham, 2003). Given its undoubted importance to marketing relationships, it is not surprising that the issue of trust has received considerable attention in previous studies and is regarded as underpinning numerous interactions both business and non-business (Ben-Ner & Halldorsson, 2010). However, while our understanding of the way in which trust impacts on marketing relationships and relationship quality is well developed, there is much less in the way of systematic empirical research to address the antecedents of trust, notwithstanding that trust decisions must be based on pre-existing motivational factors. We know that trust is an antecedent of commitment in a relationship (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) and that a good, strong relationship can impact positively on a range of outcome variables including share of business, customer advocacy and profit (Barry et al., 2008). The study reported in this paper contributes to our current understanding of trust by identifying a comprehensive set of antecedents t consumer trust and identifying their relative importance as drivers of trust in the context of retail financial services. As Sichtmann (2007) noted the scholarly work in trust had focussed either on the antecedents or marketing related outcomes, but two had not been integrated into one model.

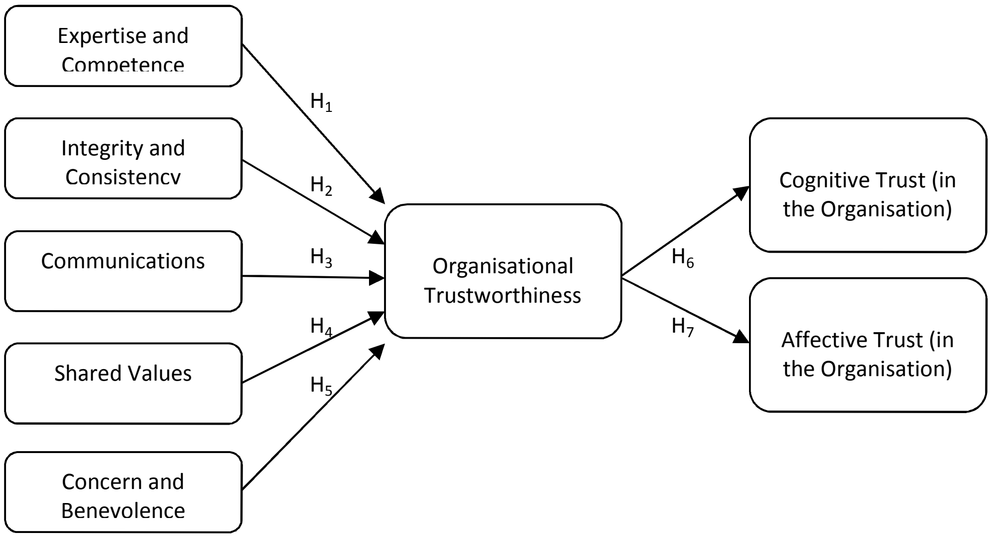
We contend, therefore, that our study makes a compelling contribution on a number of fronts. Firstly, calling upon conceptual foundations from a number of disciplines, we derive a new comprehensive measurement model for trust. In doing so, we characterise trust as a concise, bounded, two dimensional concept and we test and validate our measure accordingly. Secondly, in contrast with previous research which has paid little attention to it in the marketing literature, we identify trustworthiness as a separate upstream construct with its own properties as the key antecedent of trust and we also offer a comprehensive measure of trustworthiness in our study. Indeed Hardin (2002) noted that the debate should really be about trustworthiness, rather than trust given that it is the former which organisations can manage rather than the latter. It may be because of the multifarious nature of the services marketing literature that a review into trustworthiness has been neglected, hitherto. To elaborate, our theoretical model recognises that while trust is a property vested in the individual, trustworthiness is a primary antecedent, being a property of the trustee. From a modelling perspective, therefore, there is a need to focus on the antecedents of trustworthiness. Finally, our contributions are based on comprehensive survey data gained over a number of years.

Our paper proceeds as follows. In section two, we explain the conceptual background to our study and derive hypotheses for investigation. In section three, we introduce the context of our study and explain our methodology. In the fourth section we present data analysis and results, whilst in the following sections we highlight our theoretical contribution and attendant managerial implications. Finally, in the last section, we offer our conclusions.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND and HYPOTHESES

We present our conceptual model in Figure 1, which illustrates the central position of organisational trustworthiness in our model, as well as the antecedents. Subsequent discussion of literature and derivation of hypotheses explain and justify our model and elucidate the relationships between the constructs in our model.

Figure 1: The conceptual model



We start by explaining the concept of trustworthiness in detail and highlighting how it differs from trust *per-se.* We then explore trust in the organisation in more detail before considering the antecedents of trustworthiness. To assist our understanding of the subsequent discussion, the term ***trustor*** describes the party that makes the decision whether or not to trust, whilst the ***trustee*** is the party in the relationship wishing to be trusted. Typically in a commercial relationship, the trustor would be the customer and the trustee would be the firm, for instance, a client and his/her bank.

Organisational Trustworthiness and Trust

Crucially, we make the central distinction between trust and trustworthiness because often, and wrongly, the two are used interchangeably (Greenwood & Buren, 2010). We posit that trustworthiness is a characteristic of the trustee, which is in turn informed by a set of expressed or implied values and previous behaviours (Ben-Ner & Halldorsson, 2010; Bews & Roussouw, 2002; Caldwell & Clapham, 2003,).

It may not always be the case (Colquitt, 2007), but normally for trust to emerge the trustor makes an assessment of the trustworthiness of the trustee based on the accumulated knowledge of that party (Kim et al., 2009). Further, Hodson (2004) suggested that trustworthiness is a set of behaviours on the part of the trustee that support expectations on the part of the trustor and are essentially a characteristic of the trustee concerned.

Many previous studies on trust, particularly those in the marketing domain, tend to focus more on the consequences of trust on the part of the consumer than its causes. Those studies that do focus on the antecedents typically develop their conceptualisation around the notion of trust rather than trustworthiness. The distinction between the two is important; trust is essentially a belief held by the trustor in a relationship whereas trustworthiness can be seen as an element of reputation projected by the trustee. Given, the fundamental difference between trust and trustworthiness, trustworthiness may be influenced directly by the strategies and actions of a trustee in a way in which trust cannot. Therefore, we propose a positive causal relationship from trustworthiness to trust in an organisation.

Before formulating specific hypotheses, we now consider the nature of trust in the organisation in greater depth. There are a variety of definitions and conceptualisations of trust which reflects its position as a key construct for scholars in different disciplines, including amongst others economics (Williamson, 1993; 2004), sociology and psychology (Bews & Roussouw, 2002). In general, trust is a belief that is held by one party about the attitudes and behaviour of another party. In conventional marketing terms, trust would be a belief held by customers about organizations or their representatives. Central to almost all definitions of trust is the ideas of a willingness to be vulnerable and confident expectations (Rousseau *et al* 1998). Vulnerability is a future construct that is founded on interdependence and risk; confident expectations relate to the ability of one party to predict how the target of trust will behave in the future. Trust is, therefore, a belief held by individuals with respect to others with whom they interact; while there are numerous and diverse definitions, ultimately trust is the degree to which uncertainty can be absorbed.

Korczynski (2000) focuses attention on the bases on which the trustor can be confident about the actions of the trustee. He identifies four different sources of confidence drawn from the perspectives of economics and sociology. Implicit in Korczynski's (2000) analysis is the existence of a calculative dimension of trust as well as a non-calculative one, or as McAllister has described it, cognitive and affective forms of trust. Cognitive trust is essentially based on some level of knowledge and belief about others; it represents a conscious choice on the part of an individual and is likely to be based on attributes such as the competence, reliability and dependability of exchange partners. In contrast, affective trust is essentially based on emotional ties in relationships and is likely to be structured around elements such as care and concern for others. In a similar vein, Darley (1998) distinguishes between a form of trust which is based on rewards and sanctions and one which is more idealized, honourable and personal. The former is essentially calculative, based on self interest while the latter is non-calculative and may be thought of as being based on care and concern for the interests of the relationship partner. Support can also be found for the proposition that trust has one more than one dimension in Benedicktus et al (2010).

Cognitive based trust originates with rational choice models and is firmly rooted in economics. Castaldo (2007) suggests that cognitive trust is based on the knowledge of the other party. Under normal conditions trust emerges over time, but if cognitive cue are in place then it is possible for it to materialise quicker and at an elevated level (Kim et al, 2004). In a business setting cognitive trust serves as a foundation for exchange in the absence of complete contracting; based on the belief that partners will not behave opportunistically because it is not in their interests to do so. Fundamentally, cognitive based trust suggests that a trustee will be reliable and honest (McAllister, 1995) and that they will do what they say they will do. Thus, cognitive trust is about dependability (Johnson & Grayson, 2005).

While cognitive trust is rooted in rational choice, affective trust is firmly rooted in social psychology and emphasises the significance of having the trustor’s interests at heart, and the suggestion is that it manifests itself as a consequence of repeated interactions (Williams, 2001). This type of trust is based on the emotional investment (Lewis & Weigert, 1985) and hence, helps to add depth to the relationship (Costigan et al, 1997). Rousseau *et al.* (1998) described cognitive trust as relational and is analogous to Lewicki and Bunker’s (1995) notion of identification based trust and Korczynski’s (2000) perspective on trust based on knowledge of internal norms. For some, the affective form of trust is based on care and concern (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982) while Doney and Cannon (1997) posit that it is about benevolence; for Morgan and Hunt (1994) it is about integrity and shared values, while Darley (1998: 321) refers to it as ‘idealised’. In sum, affective trust is the degree of emotional connection between the trustor and trustee, and it is these connections which inform the degree to which cognitive trust exists.

Combining our conceptualisation of trust with earlier arguments articulating the causal relationship between trustworthiness and trust,the following paragraphs outline the proposed conceptual framework.

Antecedents of Trustworthiness

Drawing on a wide body of knowledge we propose a number of drivers of trustworthiness, justify our posited relationships and formulate hypotheses accordingly.

Expertise and Competence

In our proposed model, expertise and competence are important in demonstrating trustworthiness for an organisation. Expertise and competence signal ability and Mayer *et al.* (1995) adduce that such signalling is important in enhancing organisational trustworthiness. In the relationship management literature, Doney and Cannon (1997) dealt with expertise and competence under the broad heading of experience of the salesperson, whereas Moorman *et al.* (1993) refered to this as the ability to complete a task. However, Sirdeshmukh *et al.* (2002) conceptualised ability as operational competence, a position later echoed by Coulter and Coulter (2003) who also deal with ability under the heading of competence, whereas Johnson and Grayson (2005) deal with it in the context of expertise.

For a trustor to be willing to accept vulnerability they must be confident that the trustee has the ability to deliver what is promised and deliver solutions (Abrams et al*.,* 2003), this relates to competence which as debated earlier has been considered to be an important construct by Butler (1991). Essentially this relates to the trustee's ability to deliver it promises and is what Colquitt (2007) refers to as the "can-do" component of trustworthiness. Therefore, the assumption is that the trustee is dependable and thus we propose the following hypothesise:

H_1: Greater expertise and competence leads to higher levels of trustworthiness

Integrity and Consistency

Integrity and consistency are aligned to notions of honesty and fulfilment of the promise (Mayer et al., 1995). Such concepts are highly relevant to notions of trustworthiness, as the trustor must be confident that a trustee is honest on a consistent basis, meaning that the trustor can be confident of ongoing ethical future behaviour. Taken together, the underlying ideal is that integrity is about the trustee's reliability (see also Butler, 1991), and implicitly means that the trustee treats the trustor fairly in relation to others in the relationship. We predict that integrity alone is not enough and, therefore, consistency is also important for demonstrating trustworthiness. In this case consistency is about predictable future behaviour and hence we hypothesise that:

H_2: Greater integrity and consistency leads to higher levels of trustworthiness.

Communications

It is self-evident that communication is necessary and important for building relationships (Theron & Terblanche, 2010), and therefore, a potential contributor to levels of trustworthiness. The phrase communication should not be interpreted as meaning a mundane exchange of information or a one-way flow, because the goal of effective communications should be to open up to each other (Solomon & Flores, 2001), thus, a requirement for rich and frequent communications (Abrams et al., 2003).

Information from one party to another is an important aspect of human behaviour and may be central to the effective functioning of society (Wetzel & Buckley, 1988). Specifically, three aspects of communications are central for the trustor; accuracy, explanation and openness (Whitener et al., 1998) and given the nature of our research venue accuracy may be of particular significance. Other work in the field of organisational theory also suggests that openness is a factor that influences trust building (Farris et al., 1973; Hart et al., 1986; Leslie, 2004), however, it can be argued that this is related to open dialogue and its associated benefits such as shared value (Zineldin & Jonsson, 2000). Thus:

H_3: More effective bi-lateral communication leads to higher levels of trustworthiness.

Shared Values

As an important aspect Morgan and Hunt (1994) address shared values directly whereas Doney and Cannon (1997) have a similar construct in mind when refer to similarity.

In their work, Coulter and Coulter (2003) also adopt an approach of dealing with shared values within the broad heading of similarity between the service provider and customer.

Sitkin and Roth (1993) propose the importance of value congruence during the development of trust within an organisation. They relate this to the alignment of employee's beliefs with those of the organisation and the lack of congruence could lead to distrust. Extending this hypothesis we propose that when there is an alignment of the values between trustee and trustor, greater trustworthiness will be apparent. This supports the position of Dwyer *et al.* (1987), who in conceptual work also posit the importance of shared values as part of the relationship development process.

The creation of shared values with the trustor is likely to be a product of the culture that exists within an organisation (Galford & Drapeau, 2004). The culture will reflect management beliefs/practices which result in the development of trust internally and where an organisation is characterised by internal trust building, then trust is more likely to be built with the trustor. On the basis of arguments presented here, we hypothesise that:

H_4: Greater shared values lead to higher levels of trustworthiness

Concern and Benevolence

We predicate that a demonstration of concern and benevolent behaviour is likely to be of particular significance in relation to the development of affective or relational trust (Mayer et al., 1995; Leslie, 2004). Benevolence has three main dimensions; consideration and sensitivity, acting in protecting the interest of others and refraining from exploiting others. A trustee that is able to show concern or benevolence is demonstrating that it will not exploit the trustor's vulnerability and is focussed on the well being of the other party.

In the general relationship management literature, benevolence has been viewed as a key factor to achieve trustworthiness (Fang et al, 2008). Sirdeshmukh *et al.* (2002) state that operational benevolence is a central activity in effective relationship formation. The earlier work of Morgan and Hunt (1994) implicitly deal with the issue of benevolence as a lack of opportunistic behaviour. Coulter and Coulter (2003) treated benevolence within the heading of empathy. It is evident from the literature that benevolence is important and it is predicted that the level of trustworthiness will be influenced by the extent to which benevolent behaviour is a characteristic of the trustee and perceived as such by the trustor (Jones et al., 1975). Thus:

H_5: Greater concern and benevolence leads to higher trustworthiness.

H_6: Greater organisational trustworthiness leads to higher levels of cognitive trust

H_7: Greater organisational trustworthiness leads to higher levels of affective trust

METHODOLOGY

The context of our study is the market for financial services in the UK (we provide more detail on the precise nature of the institution types covered later). Financial services offer fertile ground for the testing of our conceptual model, as it is an environment where trust is considered crucial to customer engagement (Kuneva, 2009). There is also a clear relationship between the trustor (customer) and trustee (product provider). And, as Berry (1995) posited, where there is vulnerability, risk and interdependence associated with the purchase of services there will be a role for trust. The buying process for financial services is complicated by the variety and complexity of the products available. Thus, financial services are not a homogenous offering, which downstream means the need for a trusting relationship. Given that many financial services also involve risk, it means that the presence of trust is important if consumers (trustors) are to engage with providers (trustees) with confidence.

Next, there is also a lack of switching behaviour, from which we can adduce that customers are able to make assessment of trust based on a number of transactions rather than a one-off experience which may have been negative or otherwise. Finally, subjected to what can only be described as negative publicity, and enduring perceived low levels of trust for the sector *per se*, understanding the nature of trustworthiness will be beneficial for financial services to re-build trust. Taken together, and given the timely nature of our work we therefore contend that financial services are an excellent context for our study.

Sample and Data Collection

Our model was tested using data collected annually in waves starting in 2005 with on average more than 2,000 cases in each wave. This a period which covers the time before the current crisis in financial services as well as during its height; thus real insight that might not be gained from one-off cross-sectional research.

A professional market research agency was employed and a CATI approach was used for data collection. To ensure representativeness in term of the type of institution and UK population, sample members were screened, with sample members being selected on a random basis from an appropriate database. The sampling method was not a panel data approach, as those sampled differed in each wave. The sampling approach resulted in a sample that broadly reflected the density of the various type of financial services institution in the UK and the UK population.

Measurement

The scale development process relied extensively on the methodology suggested by Churchill (1979) with some ideas from Rossiter (2002), and a number of steps were undertaken to ensure that a robust set of measurement scales emerged. At the outset, a potential item pool was generated from the existing literature, and this consisted of 166 items. These items were then purified to eradicate duplicate items and new ones created where similar, but not with exact wording, existed for certain items. These two steps were undertaken by two subject experts from two separate universities. The next stage involved 15 depth interviews being completed with sample members in order to further validate our approach to measurement in the study. The sample members were selected through a convenience approach with each member selected on the basis of holding a retail bank account and general household insurance. As part of the depth interviews, the research also explored which relationships were in place during the formation of trust. In addition, participants were also asked to complete a card sort exercise, whereby they ranked items related to trustworthiness and trust. In particular, participants were asked to rate prompts in terms of their relevance and importance to trust and trustworthiness. Each interview took roughly one hour.

This stage of the scale development process resulted in 29 of items being identified, of which 13 were new items. New items were combined with existing items where appropriate to generate measures for cognitive and affective trust in the organisation, organisational trustworthiness, and the posited antecedents of trustworthiness concern/benevolence, integrity/consistency and communication. Established measures were used for expertise/competence and shared values (see appendix 1 for item sources). The final research instrument used a 5-point scale and the midpoint was anchored using neutral with the extremes anchored using “strongly agree” and “strong disagree”. No anchors were applied to points 2 and 4.

The research instrument was then piloted via circulation to all the Faculty members (both academic and non-academic) of two universities in the UK to ensure that the items were being correctly interpreted. The two universities selected for the pilot were, due to convenience and access, the host institutions of the lead researchers. Based on this activity, in total 198 units of data were gained. Face validity is an important factor in measurement models (Hair et al., 2006) and the approach adopted for the pilot helped ensure that every item's content and meaning was properly understood. The data from the pilot study was subject to exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis and the results (not reported here in the interests of conciseness), were indicative of good discriminant validity and reliability. Analogous to other leading works in the area of relationship marketing (see Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Doney & Canon, 1997; Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002), the measures in our research were treated as being reflective rather than formed. Following the successful pilot exercise our final research instrument was taken forward for use in the main study.

DATA ANALYSIS and RESULTS

The data were analysed on two levels. Firstly, using the random selection in SPSS, *n*=450 cases from the five waves of data were selected to form a sample covering all five waves of data collection. The reporting sample consisted of a total of 450 respondents; 250 male and 200 female. The precise composition of the sample was: Retail Banks *n*=145; Building Societies *n*=83, General Insurers *n*=41; Life Insurers *n*=35, Investment Companies *n*=85, Independent Financial Advisors *n*=35; and, Credit Card providers' *n*=26. In addition, 300 cases were selected from each of the five waves, again at random, to provide a manageable sample from each wave of data reporting. At the outset, given that we are assessing the model at the overall data level, the multicollinearity of the data were assessed through the Variable Inflation Factors (VIF) method and tolerance values (see Table 1). VIF values of 10.0 and above suggest a high level of multicollinearity and a value of 0.10 as a cut-off threshold for tolerance level (Hair et al, 2010). Therefore, if tolerance levels are below 0.1, multicollinearity might be a problem and Table 1 show that no such issues exist.

Table 1: Multicollinearity diagnosis

Construct	VIF level	Tolerance Level
Expertise and Competence	2.14	0.35
Integrity and Consistency	3.48	0.41
Communications	4.89	0.63
Shared Values	5.37	0.50

Concern and Benevolence	6.95	0.58
Trustworthiness	4.13	0.62
Cognitive Trust	5.68	0.31
Affective Trust	5.27	0.62

Common bias method test was conducted to mitigate the risk of common methods bias in our sample. Harman's one-factor test was carried out through entering all the dependant and independent variables in an exploratory factor analysis using SPSS. The sample would have a common methods bias problem if a single construct explains more than 50% of the extracted variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results indicated that the emerged factor only attained 19.6% of extracted variance. We further checked for common methods bias in our data by applying common latent factor test using AMOS. We added a latent variable and correlated the variable to every observed item in the proposed model through adding regression lines. The results showed that common variance was 3% which is a positive indication that our data does not have common methods bias.

The measurement model was tested separately from the structural model and for both steps of analysis we used Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS 18.0. Maximum likelihood was selected as the estimation method best suited to the data, as it requires multivariate normality and is commonly used with Likert-type scales (Hair et al., 2010). Adopting Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach, we firstly report the findings from the confirmatory approach used to ascertain the reliability and validity of our measurement model, before reporting in detail the findings of the structural model.

MEASUREMENT MODEL

Based on the randomly selected 450 cases a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed on the measurement model, representing the first stage of a two-step approach proposed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). The results (χ^2 1,013.7; d.f 476; χ^2/d.f 2.12;

RMSEA 0.07; NFI .96; CFI .97; PGFI .96; GFI .97) show that the original eight constructs of the proposed model are supported hence suggesting robustness of model's constructs. Furthermore, the composite reliability of each of these eight measures (see Table 2) range from .73 to .82, indicating a high reliability of the research constructs, and exceeds Bagozzi and Yi's (1988) recommended threshold of .6.

Table 2: AVE, CR and SD

Construct	**AVE**	**C.R**	**SD**
Expertise and Competence	.74	.76	16.35
Integrity and Consistency	.71	.73	13.70
Communications	.75	.80	15.72
Shared Values	.66	.82	13.49
Concern and Benevolence	.72	.77	15.05
Trustworthiness	.72	.78	16.75
Cognitive Trust	.82	.79	15.08
Affective Trust	.75	.81	14.54

We assessed the measurement model through CFA and an assessment of each item's construct validity. During this stage all our proposed constructs met the standard tests for convergent and discriminant validity. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of each construct was above the recommended .5 threshold (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), see Table 2. As a result, all the research hypotheses were retained. Moreover, all the proposed constructs have met the criteria of ensuring discriminant validity, in which the AVE is greater than the squared correlations between each construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The standardised loading for each item is shown in appendix 1, thus serving the purpose of evaluating convergent validity of each construct, and the results of the standardised loadings were above .4 thresholds, which is the recommended level according, to Bagozzi and Yi (1988). Overall, the CFA resulted in a robust statistical model with significant measures.

Structural Model

A number of goodness of fit indices were used to evaluate our model (see Table 3). As well as the overall model data, we also report the fit indices for each wave to demonstrate the temporal stability of our proposed model. In line with Hu and Bentler (1999) the result of the goodness-of-fit indices indicate the hypothesised theoretical model to be structurally sound at both levels; the overall model (χ^2 1323.8; d.f 350; χ^2/d.f 3.78; RMSEA .04; NFI .98; CFI .97; PGFI .96; GFI .97) and for each wave of our study.

Table 3: Goodness of fit indices

Model	*n*	χ^2	d.f.	RMSEA	NFI	CFI	PGFI	GFI
Wave 1	300	650.4	350	.02	.97	.98	.96	.97
Wave 2	300	724.1	350	.02	.98	.96	.97	.96
Wave 3	300	681.3	350	.05	.96	.98	.98	.97
Wave 4	300	669.4	350	.03	.98	.98	.98	.96
Wave 5	300	717.0	350	.07	.97	.97	.97	.96
Overall Model	450	1323.8	350	.04	.98	.97	.96	.97

After examining the measurement model, structural model regression weights Table 4 presents an assessment of each hypothesis. As we are assessing an aggregated model these results are reported at the overall level rather than for each wave.

Table 4: Total effects between the model's constructs

Path	**Hyp.**	**Total effect**	***P* value**	**Path**	**Hyp.**	**Total effect**	***P* value**
Expertise and Competence→ Trustworthiness	H_1	.51**	0.000	Trustworthiness→ Cognitive Trust	H_6	.56**	0.000
Integrity and Consistency→ Trustworthiness	H_2	.47**	0.000	Trustworthiness→ Affective Trust	H_7	.34**	0.000
Communications→ Trustworthiness	H_3	.48**	0.001				
Shared Values → Trustworthiness	H_4	.54**	0.000				

Concern and Benevolence→ Trustworthiness	H_5	.63**	0.001
**: significant at P<.05 and all coefficients are standardised. χ^2 1323.8; d.f 350; χ^2/d.f 3.78; RMSEA .04; NFI .98; CFI .97; PGFI .96; GFI .97			

The robustness of our proposed model is evident from the path coefficients, total effects of the model properties and the significant p-values that support eight out of the nine hypotheses.

In supporting H_1, our data clearly shows that expertise and competence has a positive impact on trustworthiness (Total Effects (TE) = .51, *p*= 0.000). Similarly, the presence of integrity and consistency were also found to increase the level of trustworthiness in the organisation H_2 (TE = .47, *p*= 0.000), as well as, how effective the organisation is communicating with their customers H_3 (TE = .48, *p*= 0.001). But, it should be noted that integrity and consistency has the least effect.

In supporting H_4, namely that sharing the same values with the organisation was found to increase the level of organisational trustworthiness (TE = .54, *p*= 0.000), moreover this hypothesis was found to be the second greatest impact on trustworthiness in comparison with the rest of the constructs. Concern and benevolence H_5 were found to have a strong positive impact on trustworthiness (TE = .63, *p*= 0.001), and was found to have the greatest impact.

The preceding constructs were found to have a strong influence on organisational trustworthiness, which in turn was found to increase the level of which customers trust their financial service provider cognitively and affectively. Trustworthiness was found to increase cognitive trust H_6 (TE = .56, *p*= 0.000) and affective trust H_7 (TE = .34, *p*= 0.000).

CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The important role of trust in managing long-term marketing relationships is well documented in the literature (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Even though the debate should have been focused on it, the influence of trustworthiness did not receive the same attention and the majority of previous studies focused on conceptualising trust over trustworthiness. This study addressed this pertinent issue and proposes and tests a conceptual model measuring trustworthiness and trust, not only this, it recognises that trust is not a simplistic one dimensional measure.

Our work shows the important role of trustworthiness in informing trust. Previous studies had simply presented trust without recognising trustworthiness even though some scholars had posited that it should have been trustworthiness (Hardin, 2002; Xie & Peng, 2009). Our contribution recognises that trustworthiness informs both affective and cognitive trust. However, trustworthiness has a greater impact on cognitive rather than affective trust, and this is probably because of the two, cognitive trust is easier to achieve than affective.

The next major contribution is that utilising a set of new and existing measures, this study has established the role of expertise and competence, communication, concern and benevolence, shared values and integrity and consistency in conceptualising trustworthiness. Previous studies have built their conceptualisations around Mayer et al (1995) typology but as this work demonstrates trustworthiness is driven by a number of factors and our factors were empirically supported to be considered as essential in forming trustworthiness, which in turn creating trust. A compelling finding is that shared values and concern and benevolence to have greater impacts than the other constructs thus appearing to support some of the literature where the two are positioned are being more interactive and relationally focussed, than the others. This is in itself is a further new addition because while other works seem to apply equal weighting, our study demonstrates this should not be the case. Based on our work it seems those services that are high in experience and credence attributes, such as our context appear to lend themselves more strongly to developing trustworthiness based on concern and benevolence, and shared values rather than the other variables in our model.

Finally, published empirical research on the management of organisational trustworthiness in financial services is limited. Studies focus on the general conceptualisation of trust across industries, with limited discussion on trustworthiness and limited research within the financial services industry.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings from our work are compelling and have confirmed the importance of expertise and competence, integrity and consistency, communication, shared values as well as concern and benevolence in creating organisational trustworthiness and ultimately trust for the UK financial services industry.

Practitioners should, therefore, focus on the various methods with which trustworthiness could be created. The findings of this study clearly indicate that a financial organisation should open a two-way communication channel with their customers and be receptive when contacted by customers. At the same time the organisation should respond and communicate clearly, avoiding all different types of industry jargon and use appropriate communication language that suits customers. Moreover, managers should share information with their customers and encourage them to participate in the decision making process for the organisation, for example, ask customers for input on certain process that affects them directly.

Building on the above, this study recommends that practitioners should effective communication as a method in reducing uncertainty, and, therefore, risk perceptions, by keeping customers well informed about their account and any matter concern their finances as well as updating them on important and relevant issues that they might benefit from in the future.

Expertise and competence are central to building trustworthiness, as the second most important factor after communication. This entails that a financial services organisation has to be efficient and knowledgeable about the products and services it is offering. Moreover, it was found that a central element of an exchange partner's trustworthiness is integrity and consistency. Wherein, the financial service provider should be honest with customers when discussing their financial issues. A high level of integrity should be maintained in terms of the moral standards of the organisation and how it is perceived by its customers. However, organisation should make it clear to customers that they are always aiming to treat customers fairly without showing any differential treatment to one particular customer over another without justification, i.e. a customer is paying to belong to a premium/VIP group. From the viewpoint of customers, a financial service organisation has to be perceived as a reliable organisation that can take care of customers' finances, as well as concerned about their best interests.

Trustworthiness, in this study, was found to be a key construct in the management of relationship trust. We argue that trustworthiness should develop when financial service providers understand that customers view credibility and integrity as the key drivers of trust. Credibility and integrity can be built by financial service providers by focusing on essential elements such as honesty, responsible actions, concern for the business of a customer and helpful assistance when possible problems arise with customers' accounts. Financial service providers should also focus on the reliability of their services, which means that made promises should be kept. Shared values imply that customers prefer that the financial service provider's organisational values should be aligned with their own. Respect for each other's business values is important in dealings between financial organisations and customers.

CONCLUSION

As the financial services industry has become more competitive, financial service providers have increasingly shown interest in enhancing relationships with their customers. In an effort to develop solid, long term relationships with customers, organisational trustworthiness has become central in building and maintaining these relationships.

This study provides an insight into the role of trustworthiness in creating trust in the UK financial services industry. Empirical evidence supported the idea that all the five constructs are important in the management of trust, in which five dimensions are key in creating trustworthiness and two (cognitive and affective) are key in creating trust.

Relationship trust can, therefore, be developed by focusing on building trustworthiness between the organisation and its customers, through utilising the five dimensions of trustworthiness (expertise and competence, communication, concern and benevolence, shared values and integrity and consistency). Concern and benevolence is seen as the most important factor in the model, where consumers are likely to perceive the financial organisation as trustworthy when the company presents a concerned and benevolent behaviour.

----------The End----------

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Proposed Model's Factor Loading

Construct/item	F.L
Expertise and Competence	
My ____ has the information it needs to conduct its business (Bhattacherjee 2002)	.67
My ____ competently handles all my requests (Sirdeshmukh et al 2002)	.72
My ____ is efficient (Sirdeshmukh et al 2002)	.82
My ____ is knowledgeable (Doney and Canon (1997)	.71
Integrity and Consistency	
My ____ keeps its word (New item)	.82
My ____ shows high integrity (Morgan and Hunt 1994)	.80
My ____ is honest (New item)	.72
My ____ is consistent in what it does (New item)	.74
Communication	
My ____ is responsive when contacted (New item)	.78
My ____ Informs me immediately of any problems (Anderson and Narus 1990)	.73
My ____ informs me immediately of new developments (Morgan and Hunt 1994)	.64
My ____ communicates regularly (New Item)	.75
Shared Values	
My ____ has the same concerns as me (Siegrist *et al* 2000)	.75
My ____ has the same values as me (Siegrist *et al* 2000)	.78
My ____ acts as I would (Siegrist *et al* 2000)	.83
Concern and Benevolence	
My ____ does whatever it takes to make me happy (Hess 1995)	.81
My ____ acts in the best interests of its customers (Sirdeshmukh *et al* 2002)	.73
My ____ can be relied upon to give honest advice (Sirdeshmukh *et al* 2002)	.77
My ____ shows respect for the customer (New item)	.76
Trustworthiness	
My ____ makes every effort to address my needs (New item)	.57
My ____ has a reputation for being honest (Doney and Cannon 1997)	.74
My ____ has a reputation for looking after its customers (New item)	.83
My ____ has a reputation for having its customers interests at heart (New item)	.71
Cognitive Trust	
I trust my ____ to do what it says it will do (New item)	.74
I trust my ____ to have my best interests at heart (New item)	.51
My ____ is very reliable (Cummings and Bromiley 1996)	.75

Affective Trust	
My ____ is always honest with me (Doney and Cannon 1997)	.76
My ____ is concerned about my best interests (New item)	.80
My ____ makes every effort to address my needs (New item)	.81

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