

The impact of cultures: a measuring instrument for intercultural trust between Irish and Chinese employees

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Outline

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 - Literature survey
 - Theoretical model of intercultural trust
 - Measuring instrument for intercultural trust
 - Application of intercultural trust measures
 - Conclusion and Discussion
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1. Introduction

Research background

- Joint research project : Inter-cultural trust within relationship management between China and English speaking countries in Western Europe
<http://mis.ucd.ie/research/InterCulturalTrust>
- Rong's Post-doctorial research: Scholarship given by China Scholarship Council
- Support from Rong and Shizhong's home university: Xidian Univ. & UCD Seed Funding

Main fundamental work done for this study

- Study on the application of nomological framework to KMS: paper accepted by KSS 2007 conference (An Integrated Knowledge Management Development System)
- Study on the application of nomological framework to inter-cultural trust development: paper accepted by AOM 2007 meeting (Implications from Decision Science for the Inter-Cultural Trust Development in Information Systems)
- Study on the impact of trust on conflict management: paper submitted to the International Journal of Conflict Management (A Moderating Model of Honesty and Trust in Conflict Management and Negotiation)
- Field Survey: paper presented in the Inaugural International Conference of the UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland and the Irish Institute for Chinese Studies (Inter-Cultural Trust in Chinese-Irish Cooperative Relationships: A Field Study in Dublin, Ireland)

2. Literature Survey

Major literature on trust measuring

- Schoorman et al. (2007): integrative model of organizational trust: past, present, and future
- Mayer et al. (2005): Trust in management and performance
- McKnight and Chervany (2002): definitions, measures, and categories of trust
- Davis et al. (2000). The trusted general manager and business unit performance: Empirical evidence of a competitive advantage.

Major trust measures and scales

- Four-item measure of willingness to be vulnerable (Mayer et al. 1995)
- Measures of Trust, Trustworthiness, and Performance Appraisal Perceptions (Mayer and Davis, 1999)
- Measure of ten-item Behavioral Trust Inventory based on the willingness to be vulnerable definition (Gillespie, 2003)
- Ten-item Trust scale (Mayer and Gavin, 2005)
- Seven-item Trust scale (Schoorman and Ballinger, 2006)

Some other trust measures and scales:

- Rempel et al. (1985). Trust Scale– Trust within close interpersonal relationships
- Hoy (2003). The Conceptualization and Measurement of Faculty Trust in Schools: The Omnibus T-Scale
- Rotter (1967). A new scale for the measurement of interpersonal trust
- Several trust scales for brand trust and trust in online firms

Among all the extant trust measures and scales, there is no consideration about intercultural situations.

Major literature on culture

- Hofstede (2001, 1988, 1980): major cultural dimensions
- Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997): dimensions on cultures
- Schwartz (1999): theory of human values

They proposed some theories, which have been cited frequently.

However, they are incomplete in some aspects.

There is a need to have a more generic structure.

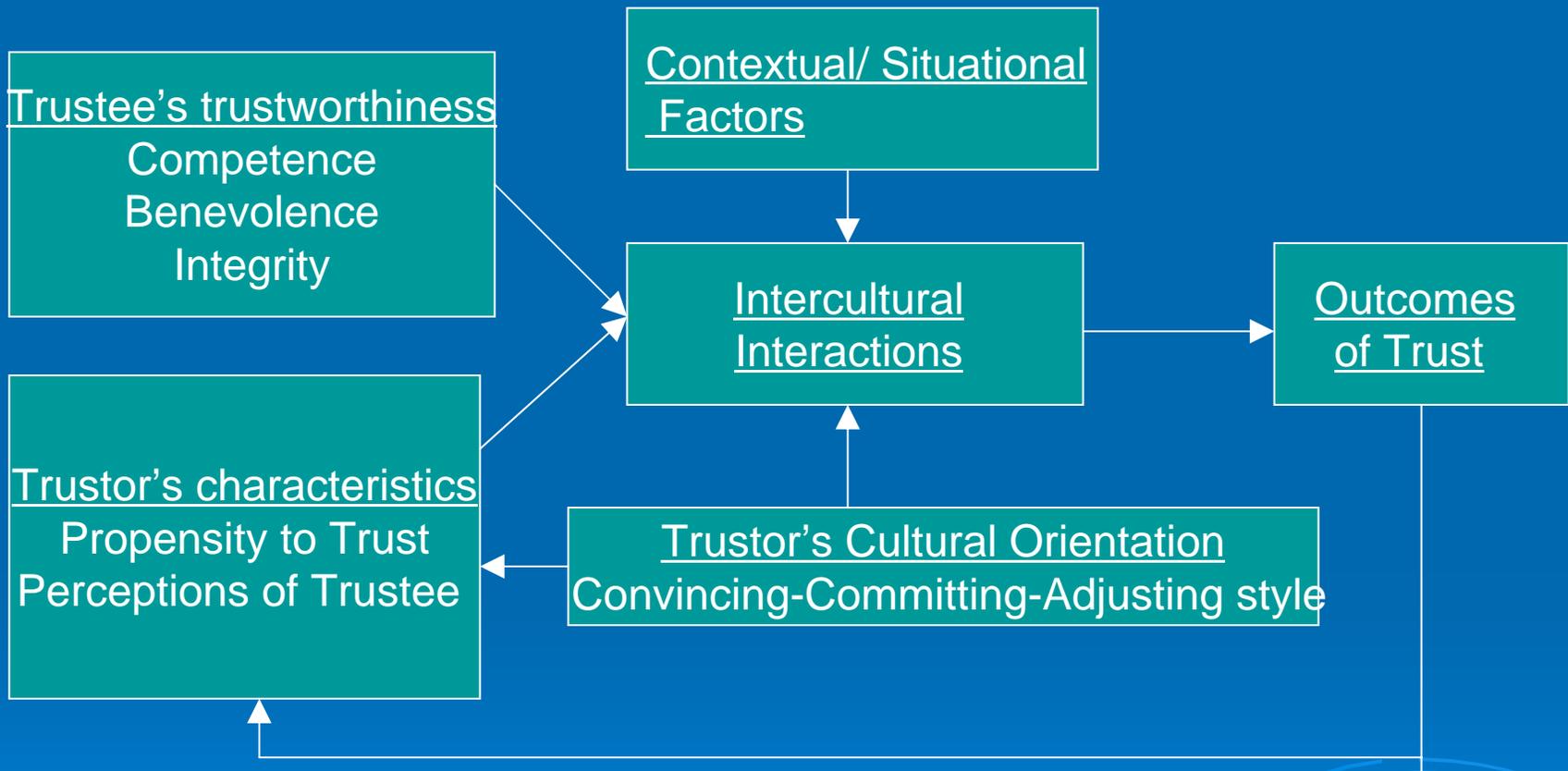
3. Theoretical model of intercultural trust

Some definitions

- Trustor: person who trusts
- Trustee: person who is trusted
- Trustor's propensity to trust: initial trend to trust or not trust people
- Trustor's cultural orientation: culture related to values and ethics held by trustor
- Trustee's trustworthiness: competence, benevolence and integrity

Model is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Model of Inter-Cultural Trust



Elements of the model

- **Characteristics of Trustor: Trustor's propensity to Trust.**

Trustor's traits affect the trust that he/she has for the trustee. Some people are more likely to trust than are others. Similarly, some people are more likely to have positive perceptions of a trustee than are others. Among the various traits of a trustor that may affect trust, a trustor's propensity to trust is the most influencing one.

➤ Trustor's Cultural Orientation

To get a more complete knowledge about the difference between trustors from different cultures, we develop a new dimension system for cultural orientation, which is based on nomological structure, a meta-structure that conforms to the laws of the mind.

Shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Nomological framework for recognising trustor's cultural orientation

	Technical (Self) Competence	Contextual (Others) Benevolence	Situational (Goals) Integrity
Somatic (needs)	Physical Intuiting	Political Recognizing	Economic Believing
Psychic (preferences)	Social Sensing	Cultural Learning	Emotional Trusting
Pneumatic (value/being)	Artistic Experiencing	Religious Understanding	Mystical Realising

➤ **Trustee's Trustworthiness: Antecedents of Trust**

Even though a number of factors have been proposed, three characteristics of a trustee appear often in the literature: Competence, Benevolence, and Integrity.

These three appear to explain a major portion of trustworthiness. Each contributes a unique perceptual perspective from which to consider the trustee, and they provide a concise foundation for the empirical study of trust for the trustee.

Characterise trustee's trustworthiness by Nomological framework

- Competence: Technical (self)
- Benevolence: Contextual (others)
- Integrity: Situational (goal)

➤ Intercultural Interactions and Outcomes of Trust

Trustor's propensity and trustee's trustworthiness work together to influence intercultural interactions between trustor and trustee, which constitute a dynamic process that leads to the outcomes of trust. The outcomes of trust give feedbacks to trustor's propensity and perception.

➤ Contextual / situational Factors

Intercultural interactions are also affected by some contextual/situational factors.

4. Measuring instrument for intercultural trust

➤ Items for the measurement of a trustee's trustworthiness in Nomological framework

17 items, comparing the differences between the respondents' perceptions on Chinese people and Western people

6 items for competence (technical)

5 items for benevolence (contextual)

6 items for integrity (situational)

➤ **Items for the measurement of trustor's propensity to trust**

9 items to measure respondent's general propensity to trust

Five-point Likert questions

➤ **Items for the measurement of trust outcome**

11 items to measure respondent's willingness to be vulnerable

➤ **Items for the measurement of some control variables**

age, gender, education, native region, time spent working with the people from foreign region, time spent in the foreign region, training and knowledge about cross cultural issues, *guanxi*.

➤ **Items for the measurement of respondent's cultural orientation in the Nomological framework**

8 questions to measure respondent's cultural orientation

In answering the questions respondents will be asked to think about their own points of views on ethics and values, and give their choices.

In face-to-face interviews they may be asked to weight the alternatives for every question in terms of their importance by allocating a share of 10 points.

Two Adjusting Dynamics

- The greater importance in Chinese Culture of
 - 1. Avoiding Disharmony, and of
 - 2. Respecting Authority
- This latter leads to the use of indirect approaches to relationships: Guanxi
- How do all three change with increasing long-term interaction East and West?

And a Strategic Adjusting Question

- For senior managers, CEOs, Heads of HR, Experienced & Influential People
- Aimed at informing policy-makers about China-Europe relations:
- Diagnosing the Priorities for Development:
- What adjustments are needed to:
- Develop Inter-Cultural Business Relationships,
- To improve: inter-cultural trust? and
- What are the barriers preventing both?

5. Application of Intercultural Trust Measures

Current application: Survey of intercultural trust between Irish and Chinese employees in some Irish companies/firms in Ireland and China

- Interviews
- Questionnaire survey
- Focus group

Levels: Executives, employees, interested people

Future potential application: four parts

- Part 1: intercultural trust between Western and Chinese employees in Western companies/firms in China
- Part 2: intercultural trust between Western and Chinese employees in Western companies/firms in Europe
- Part 3: intercultural trust between Western and Chinese employees in Chinese companies/firms in China
- Part 4: intercultural trust between Western and Chinese employees in Chinese companies/firms in Europe

6. Conclusion and Discussion

Definitions, constructs, measures and scales for culture and trust were surveyed. We found that prior research on trust

- (1) has used diverse, incomplete, and inconsistent definitions, making it difficult to compare results across studies.
- (2) has developed some measures and scales for trust, but with no considerations about intercultural issues.

In this paper we have outlined how we have

- (1) built a relatively complete and generic set of constructs for intercultural trust;
- (2) developed a instrument for measuring intercultural trust, with intercultural issues in consideration;
- (3) proposed an integrated framework to be used to measure various cultural orientations.

A set of questionnaires has been designed.

It is being applied to the survey of intercultural trust between Irish and Chinese employees in some Irish companies/firms in Ireland and China.

Ongoing joint survey by

- UCD Institute for Chinese Studies
- UCD Business School
- School of Economics & Management, Xidian University.

The measuring instrument will be validated in some future surveys in Chinese and Western firms in both China and Western European countries.

Future potential surveys

- Survey on Western EU firms in China
- Survey on Chinese firms in Western EU countries e.g., Huawei

Further research

- Make comparison of the results in the surveys in Western Europe with those in China
- Make comparison of the results in the surveys in Western companies with those in Chinese companies
- Make comparison of the results in the surveys with those in the prior research

Thanks for your attention

Questions and comments?

Dec 15, 2007

Talk for the Inaugural Conference of the Association for Chinese Studies in
Ireland: Building Bridges between Ireland and China