



Toward a Geocentric Framework of Trust: An Application to Organizational Trust

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ABSTRACT Integrating the typologies of trust dimensions and trust ideal-types with the new typologies of trust forms and trust bases, I propose a geocentric framework of trust in general and of organizational trust in particular. The typology of trust forms is built on the dimension of spatial strength to address the content of trust building from weak trust to strong trust and on the dimension of temporal stage to address the process of trust building from initial trust to mature trust. The typology of trust bases is built on the dimension of trust sources to address the bases of trust building from depersonalized sources to personalized sources and on the dimension of trust domains to address the bases of trust building from dyad domains to network domains. Together with its three pillars (trust-building mechanisms, leadership and trust-as-choice), the central theme of trust building connects all four trust typologies toward a geocentric framework that integrates and transcends the cultural values of the East and the West. This framework bears a special implication for theorizing about transaction cost and transaction value as a duality for interorganizational alliance.

KEYWORDS duality lens, geocentric framework, organizational trust, leadership, transaction value, trust building

INTRODUCTION

Despite the imperative of trust in societies in general and in organizations in particular (Kramer, 1999; Li, 1998; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998; Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007), there is no integrative framework to interpret the extant literature and to guide future research regarding trust (see Li, 2007a, for a systematic review; also see Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002, for meta-analyses). The major debates over the basic forms and bases of trust remain, especially from the perspective of trust building in organizations. There is an urgent need for an overarching framework to solve the puzzles of trust and trust building (Li, 2007a). Such a framework should be interdisciplinary and culture transcending because both trust and trust building are multidimensional across

multiple disciplines and contingent upon distinctive cultural contexts. Further, the framework should adopt a holistic (comprehensive and systematic), dynamic (temporal and evolving) and dialectical (paradoxical and dualistic) approach because this approach has the best potential to build complete and consistent theories regarding complex phenomena (Li, 1998, 2007a,b; cf., Lado, Boyd, Wright, & Kroll, 2006; Lewis, 2000; Poole & Van de Ven, 1989). The purpose of this article is to propose an integrative framework of trust, with a special focus on organizational trust.

As proposed in a new conceptualization of trust (Li, 2007a), it is highly useful to adopt a typological approach to trust. All trust related elements can be presented as typologies. The literature converges toward a four-component typology of trust dimensions (Li, 2007a, see pp. 424–431): (i) a trustor's real uncertainty of a trustee's dependability; (ii) a trustor's perceived or real vulnerability in the dependency on a trustee due to either absence or imperfection of control modes; (iii) a trustor's expectation of a trustee's trustworthiness as the trustor's perception of the trustee's dependability; and (iv) a trustor's willingness of dependency on the trustee as a decision to be trustful to the trustee. The first two dimensions address the conditions of trust, while the last two address the functions of trust. Based on the typology of these four trust dimensions, a typology of four trust ideal-types was proposed (Li, 2007a, pp. 435–439). According to the typology of trust ideal-type, the dimensions of personalized–depersonalized and trustworthiness–trustfulness are imperative for the duality of trust-as-attitude and trust-as-choice, which serves as the holistic, dynamic and dialectical conceptualization of trust. Specifically, trust-as-attitude refers to the psychological state with an expectation of other's trustworthiness and a willingness of one's trustfulness, while trust-as-choice refers to a behavioural decision of trustfulness as a self-initiated and self-regulated commitment to trust building. While trust-as-attitude is a reactive and protective psychological assurance of certainty and control, trust-as-choice is a proactive and promotional behavioural commitment to uncertainty and vulnerability as an opportunity to initiate a trust-building process. Hence, trust-as-choice results in relationship commitment behaviours, which build strong ties and strong trust. In this sense, trust-as-choice is central to the notion of transaction value, referred to as joint value creation via both economic exchange (due to co-specialization) and social exchange (due to strong trust) between alliance partners, in contrast to the notion of transaction cost that focuses on internalization and distrust (Li, 1998).

To supplement the proposed typologies of trust dimensions and trust ideal-types, I further develop two new typologies regarding trust form and trust base. All geocentric in nature, the four typologies serve as the building blocks of a geocentric framework of trust, with a special focus on organizational trust. I term this framework 'geocentric' because it is an interdisciplinary and culture transcending perspective that integrates Eastern and Western cultural values into a holistic, dynamic and dialectical framework. I refer to 'organizational trust' as a generic

term to include all types of trust in organizational settings with 'organization' (e.g., member–organization trust and interorganizational trust) and 'person' inside organizations (e.g., member–member trust as well as the trust between boundary spanners in different organizations) as trust referents. This framework can be regarded as a meta-typology with four specific typologies. The central theme of this framework is trust building, especially in organizational settings, with three pillars. First, trust building is facilitated by specific mechanisms that delineate trust-building content and process. Second, leadership plays a pivotal role in trust building in organizational settings. Third, trust-as-choice is the underlying driver behind trust-building mechanisms and the leadership role.

The article is organized into four sections. First, I introduce the geocentric duality lens as the central tenet to unify the trust related issues based on the Eastern and Western approaches to the logics of dialectics. Second, I propose two new typologies (i.e., trust forms and trust bases) and then integrate them with the typologies of trust dimensions and trust ideal-types into an overarching framework. Third, I discuss the key research implications of this framework for future research. Finally, I conclude with a brief summary.

THE GEOCENTRIC APPROACH TO TRUST

A major recognition in the literature is that trust is culture specific with respect to the different typical forms and bases it takes across cultures, especially between Eastern and Western cultures (Li, 1998; Yuki, Maddux, Brewer, & Takemura, 2005). For example, it is well documented that both the typical form and base of trust in China are personalized and strong, while they are depersonalized and weak in the USA (e.g., Chua, Morris, & Ingram, 2005; Li, 1998). It is reasonable to expect that Chinese culture can shed light on the content and process of strong trust, and US culture can shed light on those of weak trust. Hence, it is helpful to adopt a geocentric approach that incorporates the role of cultural values into the analysis of trust, especially comparing those values of the East and the West in developing a geocentric view. I focus on two aspects of Chinese and Western cultures: (i) the distinction and linkage between the Chinese *yin-yang* logic of duality and the prevailing either/or logic in the West as well as between the Chinese duality and the Western paradox (cf., Chen, 2002; Lado et al., 2006; Lewis, 2000; Li, 1998; Poole & Van de Ven, 1989); and (ii) the distinction and link between the Chinese preference for personalized and informal exchanges and the Western preference for depersonalized and formal ones (Li, 1998, 2005, 2007b).

Cultural Foundations of the Geocentric Duality Lens

The notion of duality is central to cultural values and philosophical perspectives in China (Fung, 1970), best represented by Taoist *yin-yang* duality (Chen, 2002).

Central to Chinese culture, from art to medicine, *yin-yang* duality implies that the Chinese worldview is holistic, dynamic and dialectical (Li, 1998). In particular, Chinese culture endorses the logic of duality (opposites in unity) in contrast to that of dualism (opposites in conflict) embraced in the West. However, the Chinese *yin-yang* duality is not incompatible with all Western views. For instance, the Western view of paradox is related to the Chinese view of duality (Li, 1998). I argue that it is feasible and desirable to integrate Eastern and Western views into a geocentric synthesis.

Specifically, compatible with certain Western views (e.g., Ilinitch, D'Aveni, & Lewin, 1996; Osborn & Hagedoorn, 1997), the *yin-yang* duality, as the central theme of Taoism, has three tenets. The tenet of 'holistic duality' posits that a phenomenon or entity cannot be complete unless it has two opposite elements. This is compatible with Godel's theorem that complete theories cannot be internally consistent, while consistent theories are inherently incomplete (van Heijenoort, 1963). The tenet of 'dynamic duality' posits that opposite elements will mutually transform into each other in a process of balancing under various conditions. This is similar to the pattern of punctuated equilibrium (Gersick, 1991) and also consistent with the theory of structuration (Giddens, 1984). The tenet of 'dialectical duality' posits that the holistic and dynamic tenets can stand because two contrary (relatively contradictory) yet interdependent (relatively compatible) elements exist as opposites in unity to mutually affirm (for consistency and equilibrium) and mutually negate (for completeness and punctuated shift). This is related to the dialectical logic of paradox (Lado et al., 2006; Lewis, 2000; Poole & Van de Ven, 1989). The dialectical tenet is the most salient as the anchor for the other two tenets of duality.

The underlying distinctions between the Chinese duality lens and the Western either/or logic, as well as between Chinese duality and Western paradox, are the ideas of Eastern relativism and Western absolutism (Li, 1998, 2007a). First, the Western either/or logic posits that two opposites are absolutely mutually exclusive as two totally incompatible elements so that paradox should not be tolerated. Second, the Western dialectical logic fails to truly transcend the either/or logic because it still regards paradox as a problem to be solved. Western dialectical logic tends to separate the opposites spatially in different aspects or temporally at different times (Poole & Van de Ven, 1989); avoid, confront or transcend opposites as incompatible (Lewis, 2000; Smith & Berg, 1987); accept or accommodate opposites as compatible (Lado et al., 2006; Murnighan & Conlon, 1991). Hence, Western scholars tend to focus on paradox resolution, while the Chinese tend to prefer duality enhancement (Leung, Brew, Zhang, & Zhang, 2007). In contrast, Taoism in China regards the spatial and temporal integration (the holism and dynamism) of opposing forces as the only possible form or state of any existence, so the Chinese duality lens embraces not only the 'both/and' integration, but also the 'either/or' distinction between the opposites as necessary (Li, 1998; cf., Chen,

2002). Hence, it is possible to spatially and temporally separate the opposites to a certain degree so as to ease their conflicts in relative terms. Some Western scholars refer to the Chinese *yin-yang* duality in their research on paradox (e.g., Lewis, 2000), but they tend to focus on the incompatible conflict rather than the necessary balance between opposite tendencies.

While Western paradox prefers diversity (conflict) to unity (harmony), Eastern duality favours unity (harmony) over diversity (conflict) (Chen, 2002; Leung et al., 2007). I argue that both are imperative, so I integrate the two views into a geocentric duality lens. Specifically, I take the approach of transcending the conflicting tendency inherent in Western paradox by regarding it as part of *yin-yang* duality so as to balance the opposites to varying degrees in different aspects at different times. While Western paradox helps when analysing the distinction between the opposites, Eastern duality helps synthesize the link between the opposites.

Cultural Foundation of the Duality Theme of Trust

In addition to the Taoist *yin-yang* logic of duality, Chinese culture is also built on Confucian values, which have implications for trust. Confucianism emphasizes four key sources of trust (Fung, 1970): (i) 'Ren' (love and empathy for others) as an affective source of trust; (ii) 'Yi' (an obligation and commitment to helping others) as the behavioural source of trust; (iii) 'Li' (the norm and rule for helping others) as the moral source of trust; and (iv) 'Zhi' (wisdom and competence for 'Ren,' 'Yi' and 'Li') as the rational source of trust. The first two sources are strong personalized bases and the last two are weak personalized bases. In contrast, the primary sources of trust in the West are strongly depersonalized (e.g., institutional rule, norm and role for trust-as-attitude). This contrast can be explained by two major cultural values.

First, the relative centrality of affect (sentiment) or cognition (rationality) in different cultures is pivotal to the choice of trust form and trust base across cultures. For instance, personalized bases, especially shared affect for trust-as-choice, are more imperative in the East than in the West (Li, 1998, 2007b). It is evident that task oriented, cognition based trust and relationship oriented affect based trust play different roles in social or economic exchanges. The affective base of trust tends to influence the cognitive base in the context of China (Ng & Chua, 2006), in sharp contrast to the opposite effect from cognition to affect in the context of the USA (McAllister, 1995). Further, Chua, Morris, and Ingram (2005) found that affective trust and cognitive trust were much more intertwined among Chinese managers than US managers in the sense that affective trust is more related to instrumental motives among Chinese managers. They also found that strong ties increased both affective trust and cognitive trust among Chinese managers but only increased affective trust among US managers.

Second, the cultural value of collectivism–individualism is related to the relative role of depersonalized sources in the group domain (for trust-as-attitude) or personalized sources in the dyad domain (for trust-as-choice). While the former is more prevalent in the West, the latter is more dominant in the East (Huff & Kelly, 2003; Li, 1998; Yuki et al., 2005). Given the trend toward globalization and the accompanied cross-fertilization between distinctive cultures, I expect a gradual integration across cultures, thus the convergence of their associated trust forms and trust bases. In this sense, the unique Chinese forms and bases of trust, together with the special Western forms and bases of trust, can serve as the building blocks for the geocentric framework of trust.

AN INTEGRATIVE GEOCENTRIC FRAMEWORK OF TRUST

A Geocentric Typology of Trust Forms

One way to differentiate trust form from trust base is to perceive the trust form as an endogenous status of trust in contrast to an exogenous context (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998). Another approach is to differentiate trust form as a specific content strength in a trust-building process (Child & Möllering, 2003; Lewicki, Tomlinson, & Gillespie, 2006; Williams, 2007). I adopt a third approach by integrating the above two methods, not only because each has its unique pros and cons, but also because the critical issue of trust building has been neglected (Levin, Whitener, & Cross, 2006; Li, 2007a). The literature makes a clear distinction between the initial trust between strangers and the mature trust between known parties (e.g., McKnight, Cummings, & Chervany, 1998) as well as between weak trust and strong trust (e.g., Barney & Hansen, 1994; Li, 2007a). Initial trust and weak trust differ not only quantitatively (in terms of strength or intensity of trust), but also qualitatively (in terms of role or effect of trust) from mature trust and strong trust (Dyer & Chu, 2003; Meyerson, Weick, & Kramer, 1996). Further, I differentiate the temporal dimension of trust from its ‘spatial’ dimension. I argue that initial trust and mature trust are temporal in nature (related to the stages of trust building in the process of social exchange), while strong trust and weak trust are ‘spatial’ in nature (related to the strengths of trust building as the content of social exchange). Hence, I apply the two dimensions to a typology of trust forms, where trust-as-choice serves as the underlying driver of social exchange (see Fig. 1).

Initial and mature trust. I refer to initial trust as the trust between two total strangers, either persons or organizations, in their initial exchange and mature trust as the trust between two well-known parties after many encounters, either successful or unsatisfactory. Initial trust differs from mature trust in two major aspects. First, initial trust tends to be weak in strength, while mature trust can be either weak

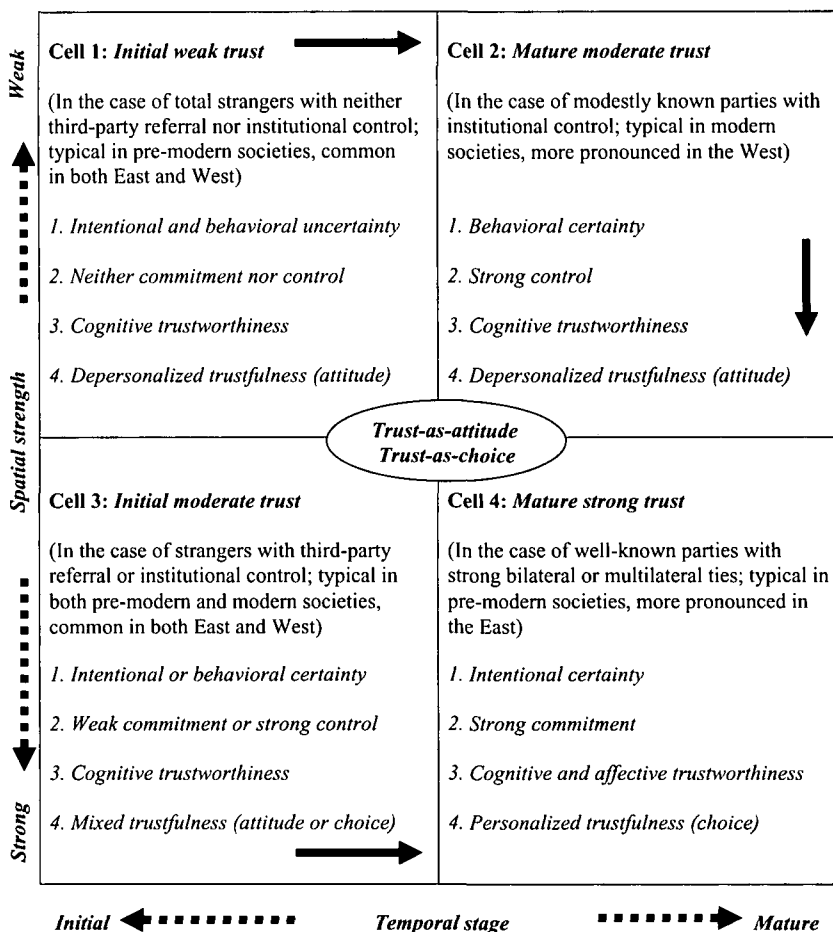


Figure 1. A geocentric typology of trust forms

Notes:

- (1) The horizontal dimension is concerned with the temporal stage (trust stage) in terms of initial vs. mature trust for the process of trust building, while the vertical dimension is concerned with the 'spatial' strength (trust strength) in terms of weak vs. strong trust for the cognitive affective contents of trust building.
- (2) The solid arrows represent the typical trajectories of trust building in social exchange.
- (3) The duality of trust-as-attitude and trust-as-choice serves as the underlying driver, especially for trust building in organizational settings.

or strong. Second, initial trust normally derives from depersonalized bases (e.g., institutional bases), while mature trust can derive from both depersonalized and personalized bases (e.g., interpersonal affective bond). Hence, initial trust differs both quantitatively (in terms of strength or intensity of trust) and qualitatively (in terms of base or effect of trust) from mature trust (McKnight et al., 1998; Meyerson et al., 1996). The normal process of trust building is from initial trust to mature trust, where trust-as-choice plays a critical role to initiate this trust-building process.

Weak and strong trust. Due to the distinction between weak and strong ties (Granovetter, 1973) related to trust, I refer to weak trust as cognitive trust with little affective or sentimental content and strong trust as trust with a heavy dose of affective trust. Weak trust differs from strong trust in two significant aspects. First, weak trust is relatively fragile, thin, cognitive, instrumental, and it can occur at both the initial or mature stage of trust building; in contrast, strong trust is relatively resilient, thick, affective, sentimental, and it can only occur at the mature stage of trust building (Gibbons, 2004; Granovetter, 1985; Li, 1998, 2007b). Second, weak trust derives from depersonalized bases, while strong trust derives from personalized bases (Li, 2007a). Hence, weak trust differs both quantitatively (in terms of strength or intensity of trust) and qualitatively (in terms of base or effect of trust) from strong trust (Lewis & Weigert, 1985; McAllister, 1995). The normal process of trust building is from weak trust to strong trust, with trust-as-choice playing a key role in the proactive development of trust (Li, 2007a). However, the reverse process is also possible when strong trust is violated and reduced to weak trust over time.

An interesting issue is the unique paradox of initial strong trust (e.g., McKnight et al., 1998). I explain this paradox by reframing 'initial strong' trust as 'initial moderate' trust because such trust is not strong due to the absence of affect. Further, one must also attribute the trust to the effect of trust transfer via third party referrals (personal or institutional ones) or the depersonalized bases of trust propensity and control systems. In no case would initial trust be as strong as mature strong trust, which is derived from strong ties built over time. It is worth noting that, while weak trust is cognitive or instrumental, strong trust is cognitive affective rather than purely sentimental, especially when applied to social exchange in the organizational context (Gibbons, 2004; Li, 1998, 2007b; McAllister, 1995; Uzzi, 1997).

Based on the dimensions of spatial strength and temporal stage, I formulate a typology of four ideal-typical trust forms. Cell 1 of Figure 1 shows the initial weak form of trust (e.g., total strangers without third party referrals or without the presence of institutional control). It is characterized by both intentional and behavioural uncertainties, all types of vulnerability without commitment or control, cognitive trustworthiness and depersonalized trustfulness, thus related to trust-as-attitude. Cell 2 presents the mature moderate form of trust (e.g., moderately known parties with the knowledge of trustee's trustworthy character or the presence of institutional control). It is characterized by behavioural certainty, reduced vulnerability due to available knowledge or institutional control, cognitive trustworthiness and depersonalized trustfulness, thus also related to trust-as-attitude. Cell 3 describes the initial moderate form of trust (e.g., total strangers with the presence of institutional control or the propensity to trust; semi-strangers with third party referrals). It is characterized by intentional or behavioural certainty, reduced vulnerability due to weak commitment or strong control, cognitive trustworthiness and either depersonalized or semi-personalized trustfulness, thus related to either

trust-as-attitude or trust-as-choice. Finally, Cell 4 involves the mature strong form of trust (e.g., well-known parties with strong ties). It is characterized by intentional certainty, limited vulnerability due to strong commitment, cognitive and affective trustworthiness and personalized trustfulness, thus related to trust-as-choice. I must point out that both initial moderate trust and mature moderate trust remain weak trust due to the lack of affect in the two trust forms. The notion of 'moderate' trust is a relative term to reflect a level of trust that is higher than the virtually non-existent trust in the case of initial weak trust.

I argue that mature strong trust is related to the proactive trust-as-choice in behavioural terms, while mature moderate trust is related to the passive trust-as-attitude in psychological terms (Li, 2007a), especially from the trust-building perspective (Giddens, 1990; Zand, 1972). While weak trust is pervasive in the West (Granovetter, 1973), strong trust is the norm in the East (Bian, 1997; Li, 2007b). I posit that the two moderate forms of trust exist because of the moderating effect of the quality of social ties, which is either enhanced by third party referrals or reduced by institutional control. From the historical and geocentric perspectives, initial weak form is typical in pre-modern societies, while initial moderate form is typical in modern societies, both being common in the East and West. While mature moderate form is typical in modern societies, it is less pronounced in the East; finally, while mature strong form is typical in pre-modern societies, it is more pronounced in the East (Li, 1998; cf., Giddens, 1990). Further, from the trust-building perspective, the links between the four trust forms lie in the typical trajectories or paths of trust building from initial trust to mature trust in temporal terms as well as from weaker trust to stronger trust in spatial terms. In sum, the four ideal-typical trust forms embody four typical forms of economic and social exchanges with distinctive profiles. This typology is geocentric as it integrates the typical trust forms in the East and the West.

A Geocentric Typology of Trust Bases

Two dimensions of trust base can be identified from the literature (Dietz & den Hartog, 2006; Kramer, 1999; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Rousseau et al., 1998). The first dimension is the duality of depersonalized (universalistic and formal) and personalized (particularistic and informal) sources as causes or antecedents of trust building. The second dimension is the duality of dyad (unilateral vs. bilateral) and network (unitary vs. multilateral) domains as the levels or effects of trust building. Based on these two dimensions, a typology of four ideal-typical bases is developed regarding the cause and effect of trust building. When applied to organizational settings, the role of leadership is pivotal due to its primary responsibility of developing shared goals as well as coordinating interdependent tasks, which is facilitated by the dispositional and relational bases of trust in leadership (see Fig. 2). I will

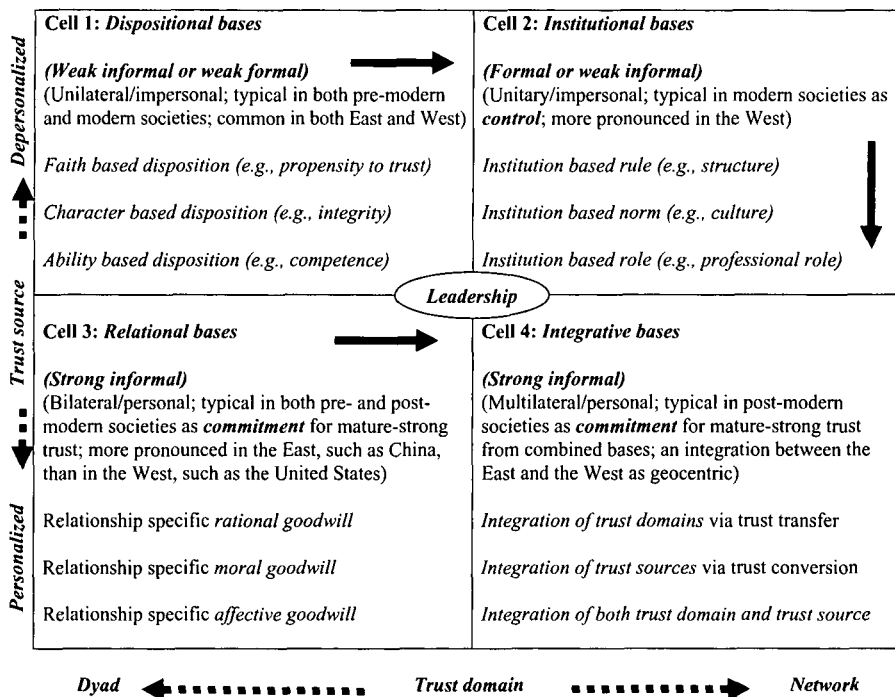


Figure 2. A geocentric typology of trust bases

Notes:

- (1) The horizontal dimension is concerned with the scope and level of trust target (trust domain) in terms of dyad (unilateral vs. bilateral) and network (unitary vs. multilateral), and the vertical dimension is concerned with the nature and feature of trust source (trust source) in terms of depersonalized (universalistic & non-relational) and personalized (particularistic & relational).
- (2) The dispositional base results in psychological trust, while the institutional base results in organizational trust.
- (3) The solid arrows represent the historical and temporal trajectories of trust building in social exchange. While the horizontal arrows present trust transfer, the vertical arrows present trust conversion. Integrating the two trust sources, trust conversion is a vertical shift from depersonalized sources to personalized sources. Integrating the two trust bases, trust transfer is a horizontal shift from dyad domains to network domains.
- (4) Leadership plays a pivotal role in the process of trust building in organizational settings. Leadership is central to the institutional and integrative bases due to its primary responsibility of developing shared goals and coordinating interdependent tasks. The effectiveness of this role hinges on the dispositional and relational bases of trust in leadership.
- (5) Control is for compliance related to transaction cost, while commitment is for self-initiation related to transaction value.

elaborate on how leadership facilitates economic and social exchanges later in the section on the pivotal role of leadership.

Depersonalized and personalized sources. Based on the distinction between impersonal and personal trust (Giddens, 1990; Kramer, 1999; Shamir & Lapidot, 2003; Zand, 1972; Zucker, 1986) as well as the distinction between general and public confidence (highly depersonalized) and relational and private trust (highly personalized)

(Hardin, 2002; Luhmann, 1979; Möllering, 2006), I identify six universalistic elements as the depersonalized sources of trust and three particularistic elements as the personalized sources of trust. In terms of depersonalized sources, the first three are dispositional bases (Cell 1). Faith-based disposition refers to a faith in universalistic human virtue, consistent with the notions of dispositional trust (Kramer, 1999). Character-based disposition refers to the universalistic trait of a trustee's personal integrity and goodwill (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Zucker, 1986). Ability-based disposition refers to the universalistic trait of a trustee's ability or competence (Das & Teng, 2001; Mayer et al., 1995). The other three depersonalized sources are institutional bases (Cell 2). Institution based rule refers to the universalistic power of formal institutions (e.g., law, state, market, corporate structure and policy) (Rousseau et al., 1998; Zucker, 1986). Institution based norm refers to the universalistic power of weak informal institutions (e.g., ethics, culture and custom) (Hosmer, 1995; Kramer, 1999). Institution based role refers to the universalistic duties prescribed by formal rule (e.g., doctor, teacher and formal leader) or assumed by weak informal norm (e.g., peer, neighbour and informal leader) (Kramer, 1999). It is worth noting that leadership is a special institutional role in organizational settings. None of the above six sources are relationship specific because they are either trustee generic (in the case of dispositional bases) or trustor generic (in the case of institutional bases).

Further, there are three personalized sources of trust (Cell 3). First, relationship specific rational goodwill refers to shared interests as a rational commitment between a specific trustor and a specific trustee (Li, 1998, 2007a). This is consistent with the notions of encapsulated trust (Hardin, 2002) and cognitive or calculus based trust (Jones & George, 1998; McAllister, 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). Personalized rational goodwill differs from depersonalized formal rationality because relationship specific shared interests are particularistic, indeterminate and asymmetrical, thereby defying calculation (cf., Williamson, 1993). Second, relationship specific moral goodwill refers to shared values as a moral commitment between two specific parties. This is consistent with the notion of moral goodwill (Barney & Hansen, 1994; Das & Teng, 2001). Personalized moral goodwill differs from depersonalized social ethics or group norms for clan control because relationship specific shared values derive from a reciprocal identification of dyad norm rather than group norm (cf. Hosmer, 1995; Ouchi, 1980). Third, relationship specific affective goodwill refers to shared sentiments as an affective commitment between two specific parties, distinctive from weak benevolence or social bond (Li, 1998, 2007a). This is consistent with the notions of affective trust (Jones & George, 1998; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; McAllister, 1995) and friendship based trust (Gibbons, 2004; Giddens, 1990).

Personalized affective goodwill differs from unilateral benevolence because a relationship specific sentimental bond is the strongest when it is reciprocal with strong intimacy (Giddens, 1990; cf. Mayer et al., 1995). It is these personalized

sources that render trust a behavioural choice of commitment or trust-as-choice (Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Li, 1998, 2007a; Luhmann, 1979; Möllering, 2006; Zand, 1972). The personalized sources of trust are primarily strong informal (Granovetter, 1985; Li, 2007a). It is personalized sources that render trust-as-choice the exchange mode of commitment in contrast to those of hierarchy control and market control. Even in the case of initial encounters between strangers, the intention to build a personalized exchange relationship is the motive behind trust-as-choice to voluntarily and unilaterally increase one's vulnerability as an investment of one's trust as well as an invitation for the other party to reciprocate the trust. It is worth noting that the personalized sources result in not only behavioural trust-as-choice in terms of personalized trustfulness, but also psychological trust-as-attitude in terms of personalized trustworthiness (see Li, 2007a). Given the inherent problems with the character based conceptualizations of integrity and benevolence (Lapidot, Kark, & Shamir, 2007; Schoorman et al., 2007) and their applications across different cultures (Wasti, Tan, Brower, & Onder, 2007), the relational dimensions can shed light on the possible revision to the prevailing character based dimensions (cf., Colquitt et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002).

The domains of dyad and network. Trust is concerned with special ties between trustor and trustee, but the relationship may occur in various domains (levels), including the micro-level individual dyad domain (e.g., Barney & Hansen, 1994; Dyer & Chu, 2003; McAllister, 1995; Whitener et al., 1998) and the macro-level collective network domain (e.g., Insko, Kirchner, Pinter, Efav, & Wildschut, 2005; Shamir & Lapidot, 2003). I define the micro-level individual dyad with one trustor and one trustee as 'dyad domain'. Dyad domain is either unilateral in terms of one-way trust or bilateral in terms of two-way trust. Hence, dyad domain is related to interpersonal trust and inter-unit trust if it is defined by the interpersonal trust between the boundary spanners of two units. Further, I define the macro-level collective network with multiple trustors and multiple trustees as 'network domain'. Network domain is either unitary if one views a collective unit as an integrated institution (the sole referent of single-level trust), or multilateral if one regards a collective unit as a blend of diverse components (with both institutions and persons as a combined referent of cross-level trust). Hence, network domain is related to system trust as well as a collection of interpersonal trust among multiple parties.

It is worth noting that interpersonal trust is not equivalent to personalized sources simply because the former is exclusively concerned with the issue of trust domain with only individual 'person' as trust referent regardless of trust sources, while the latter only covers the issue of relationship specific sources regardless of trust domains. The same distinction applies to the link between inter-unit trust (from either a personalized or depersonalized source) and depersonalized sources

(in either dyad or network domain) (cf. Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). In addition, personalized trust only emerges via repeated direct exchanges or trust transfer with third party referrals, thus, the causes of mature strong trust in a long-term interpersonal tie within and across the domains of dyad and network. I refer to personalized sources in the dyad domain as relational bases (Cell 3) and personalized sources in the network domain as integrative bases (Cell 4). It is the integrative bases that are unique to organizational trust because they can integrate different trust sources across different trust domains via the mechanisms of 'trust transfer' and 'trust conversion'. Trust transfer refers to the mechanism and process of deriving initial trust from mature trust via third parties as personal referrals (Burt & Knez, 1995) or institutional referrals (Uzzi, 1997). Trust transfer is critical to building initial moderate trust, and it is especially imperative for extending interpersonal trust from dyad domains to network domains. Trust conversion refers to the mechanism and process of transforming weak trust into strong trust or vice versa. It is generally accepted that repeated exchange strengthens trust if exchange partners are satisfied with the exchange, but it can also weaken trust if either party is disappointed with the exchange (Uzzi, 1997). In this sense, trust building is an investment in terms of commitment to a long-term relationship (Li, 2007b). Trust conversion is critical to upgrading or substituting depersonalized sources with personalized sources. These two mechanisms are imperative to trust building in organizational settings, which I will elaborate later in the section on trust-building mechanisms.

Based on the dimensions of trust source and trust domain, I formulate a typology of four ideal-typical trust bases. Cell 1 of Figure 2 shows the depersonalized sources in the dyad domain as the dispositional bases of trust-as-attitude. Cell 2 presents the depersonalized sources in the network domain as the institutional bases of trust-as-attitude. Cell 3 describes the personalized sources in the dyad domain as the relational bases of both trust-as-attitude and trust-as-choice. Cell 4 involves the personalized sources in the network domain as the integrative bases derived from trust transfer and trust conversion. Further, from the historical and geocentric perspectives, dispositional bases (Cell 1) are typical in pre-modern societies, while integrative bases (Cell 4) are typical in post-modern societies, both common in the East and the West. Institutional bases (Cell 2) are typical in modern societies and are less pronounced in the East. While relational bases (Cell 3) are typical in both pre- and post-modern societies, they are more pronounced in the East (Li, 1998; cf. Giddens, 1990). Finally, from the perspective of trust building, the links between the trust bases lie in the typical trajectories or paths of trust building from dispositional bases to institutional bases (typical in the West) or relational bases (typical in the East). I posit that institutional and relational bases can converge toward integrative bases as a geocentric integration. Hence, the typology is geocentric because it integrates the typical trust bases in the East and the West.

Toward an Integrative Geocentric Framework of Organizational Trust

I integrate the typologies of trust dimensions and trust ideal-types from Li (2007a) with the typologies of trust forms and trust bases introduced in this article into one framework (see Fig. 3). I evoke four constructs to integrate the four trust typologies. First, the dynamics of trust building underlie the interplays between the four

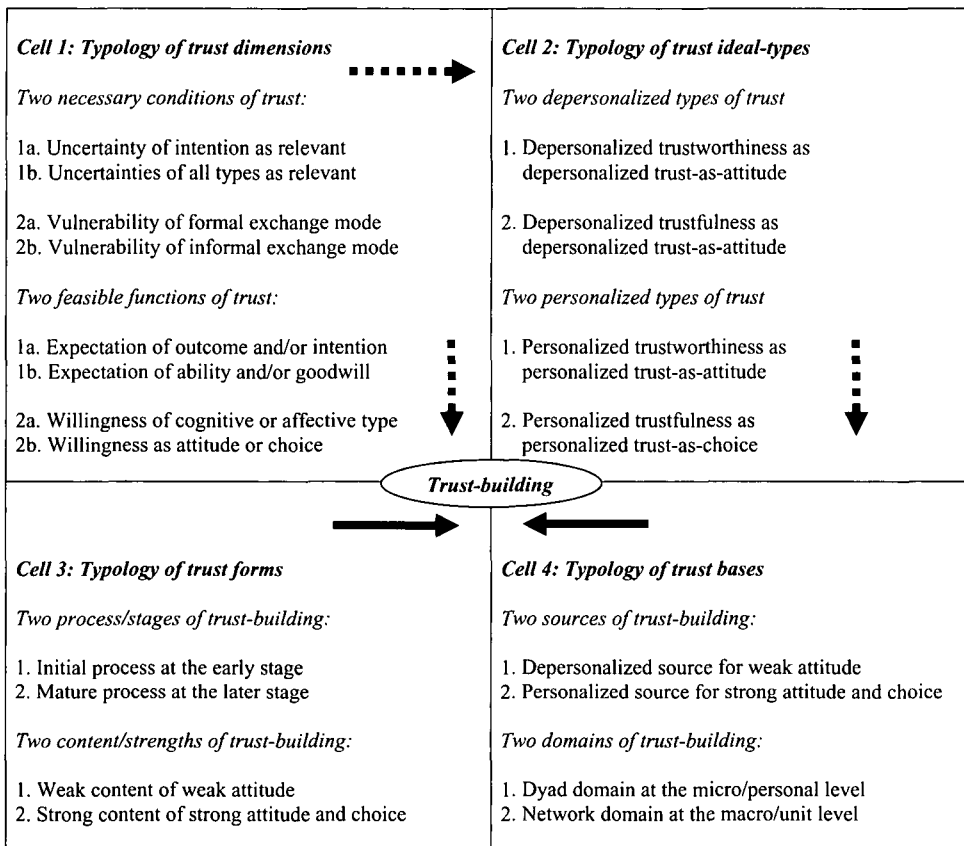


Figure 3. An integrative geocentric framework of organizational trust

Notes:

- (1) Trust building in social exchange is the central theme that integrates the four trust typologies.
- (2) Trust building mechanisms, leadership and trust-as-choice serve as the three pillars of the central theme.
- (3) The top two cells address the abstract dimensions and ideal-types of trust, while the bottom two cells are concerned with the concrete forms and bases of trust. While the top two typologies serve as the logical foundations for the bottom two typologies, the bottom two typologies serve as the logical applications of the top typologies.
- (4) The dotted lines indicate the unidirectional trajectories from abstract foundations to concrete applications, while the solid lines indicate the bidirectional interplay to delineate the content and process of trust building.

typologies, especially the content and process of trust building in organizational settings. Second, trust transfer and trust conversion are two mechanisms of trust building. Third, leadership plays a pivotal role in building organizational trust, especially in facilitating both trust transfer and trust conversion in organizational settings. Fourth, trust-building mechanisms and leadership hinge on trust-as-choice. In sum, I regard trust building as the central theme of the integrative framework of organizational trust, with three interrelated pillars of trust building in organizational settings, i.e., trust-building mechanisms, leadership and trust-as-choice.

Trust-building Mechanisms

The interplays between the four typologies can best be demonstrated in the content and process of trust building, which are facilitated by the mechanisms of trust transfer and trust conversion. First, trust transfer from dyad domains to network domains can be accomplished by connecting strangers via third party referrals, either as persons in the personalized process from relational bases to integrative bases or as institutions in the depersonalized process from dispositional bases to institutional bases, resulting in either initial moderate trust or mature moderate trust. Hence, trust transfer can broaden the scope of trust from narrow dyad domains to broad network domains. Second, trust conversion from depersonalized sources to personalized sources can be achieved by augmenting depersonalized sources with personalized sources so as to build mature strong trust in both dyad and network domains. Hence, trust conversion can enhance the quality of trust from depersonalized sources to personalized ones. Third, the two mechanisms can cross-facilitate each other with recursive interplays in the trust-building process, especially with leadership and trust-as-choice as imperatives for both trust transfer and trust conversion.

Fourth, one can further regard trust transfer and trust conversion as the mechanisms for the interplays between trust base and trust form. For instance, initial weak trust typically derives from the dispositional bases in the dyad domain, so the domain shift of initial weak trust from dyad to network requires trust transfer via the presence of institutional control to move from dispositional bases to institutional bases, while the source shift of initial weak trust from depersonalized elements to personalized elements requires trust conversion via third party personal referrals. Similarly, mature strong trust tends to derive from relational bases in the dyad domain, so the domain shift of mature strong trust from dyad to network requires trust transfer via third party personal referrals. Further, in the cases of initial moderate trust and mature moderate trust, the shift from either relational or institutional bases to integrative bases requires either trust transfer or trust conversion, with the former shifting from relational bases to integrative bases and the latter shifting from institutional bases to integrative bases. Even though trust

transfer and trust conversion are two distinctive mechanisms, they also occur as a combined process. For instance, organizational socialization tactics can facilitate the development of mature strong trust in the network domain via the joint effect of trust transfer and trust conversion, especially for newcomers (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007).

Finally, the interplays between trust transfer and trust conversion should be regarded as recursive cycles between the two mechanisms in the trust-building process. Trust transfer can facilitate trust conversion by broadening the scope of trust conversion with more strangers being turned into acquaintances via third party referrals (either persons or institutions), thus expanding the opportunity set for future trust conversion. Similarly, trust conversion can facilitate trust transfer by broadening the scope of trust transfer, with more weak ties being transformed into strong ties, thus expanding the opportunity set for future trust transfer. The notion of interplay is consistent with the structuration perspective defined by the structure–agency duality (Giddens, 1984). For instance, trust bases are recursive via trust conversion, trust domains are recursive via trust transfer and trust transfer and trust conversion are recursive for integrative bases across all trust sources and domains. As a recursive duality, trust-as-attitude and trust-as-choice play critical roles in all recursive processes. For instance, trust-as-choice can serve as both motive and instrument for trust transfer and trust conversion, especially the trust-as-choice of leadership.

The Pivotal Role of Leadership

Leadership is pivotal to building trust in organizational settings because it has the capacity to facilitate organizational trust via its direct impact on trust transfer and trust conversion in the network domain. The roles of leadership at both top and supervisory levels are critical to the interplay between various trust dualities among the four typologies. Specifically, the literature on leadership in the West focuses on three trust related forms of leadership (Bass, 1999; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; McAllister, 1995): task and people oriented leadership, transformation-transactional leadership and leadership–member exchange (LMX). Further, the emerging literature on the unique paternalistic leadership in the East may shed light on the benevolent and moral dimensions of leadership (Farh & Cheng, 2000), which also bear geocentric implications beyond the Chinese context (see Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008, for a review). First, task oriented leadership is related to trust with weak form and depersonalized sources (e.g., cognitive trust), while relationship oriented leadership is related to trust with strong form and personalized sources (e.g., affective trust) (McAllister, 1995; see Burke, Sims, Lazzara, & Salas, 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002, for reviews). Second, transformational and transactional leadership styles cover initial moderate and mature moderate trust in the network domain. Consistent with their institutional roles,

transformational leadership is related to cultural norms, while transactional leadership is related to structural rules (Bass, 1999). Third, LMX focuses on strong trust from personalized sources in the dyad domain because it is a relationship specific bilateral trust (e.g., a mix of cognitive and affective trust) between leaders and followers (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Finally, paternalistic leadership, delineated by the dimensions of personalized authoritarianism, personalized benevolence and personalized integrity, emphasizes strong personalized trust in the network domain by turning an organization into an extended family (Farh & Cheng, 2000). Due to the special role of leadership in organization settings, I regard leaders as the most important facilitators of organizational trust via trust transfer and trust conversion to build new trust (Whitener et al., 1998) or to rebuild eroded trust (Lapidot et al., 2007).

Specifically, transformational leadership plays a weak informal role related to cultural values as the institutional norm, while transactional leadership plays a formal role related to structural designs as the institutional rule. Because of their distinctive roles, transformational and transactional leadership styles may inform the debate regarding whether trust and control are complementary or substituting (cf., Das & Teng, 2001; Li, 1998; Sitkin & George, 2005). For instance, while transactional leadership tends to affect the trust-as-attitude of employees via its impact on formal control systems, transformational leadership tends to affect the trust-as-attitude of employees via its impact on informal control systems (e.g., clan control, Ouchi, 1980). Also, as transformational and transactional leadership styles augment each other (Bass, 1999), control and trust can be complementary. In contrast to the institutional effect of transformational and transactional leadership in the network domain, LMX affects the relational bases of strong trust between supervisors and subordinates in the dyad domain without informal or formal control, so it has the potential to foster trust-as-choice. As a possible link between the network and dyad domains as well as between trust-as-attitude and trust-as-choice, paternalistic leadership can integrate transformational–transactional leadership with LMX. In particular, the research on paternalistic leadership can contribute to the literature by focusing on personalized authoritarianism, benevolence and morality, thus capable of converting the three dimensions of depersonalized trustworthiness, i.e., ability, benevolence and integrity, into personalized ones, i.e., shared interest, shared value and shared affect (cf. Li, 2007a; Mayer et al., 1995; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008).

Further, while LMX is critical to trust transfer from relational bases to integrative bases because it can facilitate multilateral leader–member ties in a collective unit, transformational leadership and paternalistic leadership are central to trust conversion from institutional bases to integrative bases by facilitating socialization through extensive, flexible teamwork and social exchange. Also, both transformational and transactional leadership are critical to trust transfer from dispositional bases to institutional bases; the former can foster informal institutionalization via

shared identity, while the latter can facilitate formal institutionalization via standardization. With a Chinese sample, Li, Bai and Xi (2006) found that transformational leadership mediated the link between organizational context (e.g., organizational structural rule and cultural norm) and employees' trust-as-attitude toward their organizations. Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang and Chen (2005) also found that LMX mediated the link between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) among Chinese firms. The evidence suggests that the link between leadership and organizational trust is often personalized in China, which is consistent with the Chinese cultural value in favour of *guanxi* (personalized ties). In particular, paternalistic leadership is the most applicable to the institutional context of China, and it plays a special role in trust conversion by converting organizations into extended families (Farh & Cheng, 2000; Li, 1998), which bears geocentric implications (e.g., Uzzi, 1997).

Finally, it is evident (Larson, 1992; Uzzi, 1997) that interpersonal trust in dyad domains can be turned into interorganizational trust in network domains via leaders as the central boundary spanners. However, I take issue with the view that interorganizational trust is a collective sum of interpersonal trust (cf. Zaheer, McEvily, & Perrone, 1998; see Currall & Inkpen, 2002, for a review). I argue that the micro–macro transformation from interpersonal trust to interorganizational trust requires more than the domain shift from dyad to network via trust transfer (e.g., interorganizational socialization); it also requires a special trust conversion from personalized sources to depersonalized ones (e.g., to transform relational bases into institutional bases), similar to the effect of institutionalization (Li, Yao, & Xi, 2006). In sum, leadership, as a fully personalized (in the cases of LMX in the dyad domain and paternalistic leadership in the network domain), a partially personalized (in the case of transformational leadership), or a fully depersonalized (in the case of transactional leadership) institutional role, is pivotal in the process of building organizational trust via cross-level economic and social exchanges.

Trust-as-Choice as the Underlying Driver

I frame trust-as-choice as the underlying driver behind trust building because it provides the best instrument and the strongest motive for both initiating and continuing a trust-building process. First, trust-as-choice is the primary *raison d'être* for initiating trust building where no trust exists. Without trust-as-choice, no trust-building process would ever start; trust-as-choice is required to begin the process by unilaterally investing one's commitment with two functions: (i) to demonstrate one's own trustworthiness to the other party by voluntarily increasing one's vulnerability of depending on the other party; and (ii) to invite the other party to reciprocate this commitment so as to turn one-way trust into mutual trust (Li, 2007a,b). Second, trust-as-choice is also the primary *raison d'être* for trust building

to expand the trust generated in the previous exchange cycle. If one party or both parties retreat from proactive trust-as-choice to reactive trust-as-attitude, the trust-building process will slow down or even stop. Similar to any relationship building process involving social capital, one has to constantly renew and strengthen the existing trust (Li, 2007b). In this sense, trust-as-choice is required in the entire process of trust building beyond the initial stage. Third, as the governance mode of commitment, trust-as-choice mediates the link between the trust-building goal and trust-building behaviour in a temporal process, thus, a four-stage sequence from the need for trust to trust-as-choice as a decision, then to trust behaviour, and, finally, to trust-as-attitude as a psychological result. This four-stage sequence defines the recursive process of trust building. Fourth, trust-as-choice drives trust building because it is embedded in an organic blend of cognitive and affective trust. It is sentiment that defines the unique nature of trust-as-choice as personalized, imperative to the initiation and reinforcement of reciprocal trust due to the satisfaction with repeated social exchange (Li, 2007a,b; Shore, Tetrick, Lynch, & Barksdale, 2006; cf. Schoorman et al., 2007). Fifth, trust-as-choice is essential for leadership in organizational settings with leaders as the initiators of trust-building processes in organizations (McAllister, 1995; Whitener et al., 1998), especially at the moment of trust erosion (Lapidot et al., 2007).

Trust-as-choice tends to be more critical in the East than in the West because it is consistent with the Eastern cultural norm of strong tie (e.g., *guanxi* in a multilayered centrifugal web of differentiated associations (Fei, 1992; Li, 1998, 2007b). To extend this notion beyond the cultural boundary of the East, I frame the notion of social exchange as the *raison d'être* of trust-as-choice in the sense that social exchange is sentimental, personalized, dyadic, reciprocal, long term and indeterminate (Li, 2007b; cf., Granovetter, 1985; Shore et al., 2006). In particular, while trust-as-attitude occurs in the shadow of past social exchange, trust-as-choice lies in the shadow of future social exchange (Poppo, Zhou, & Ryu, 2008). Hence, the central theme of trust building and its three pillars (i.e., trust-building mechanisms, leadership and trust-as-choice) are rooted in social exchange, so trust building can be viewed as a paradigm shift from economic exchange with weak trust to social exchange with strong trust. With social exchange as the underlying logic shared by all cultures, the proposed geocentric framework is applicable across different cultural contexts.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Trust and Control as a Duality

Viewed from the duality lens, control and trust constitute a duality in that they both conflict with and complement each other to varying degrees in different respects at various times (Li, 2007a). I conceptualize trust and control as two

elements in a spectrum with multiple aspects of spatial content as well as multiple stages of temporal process, rather than two simple, fixed and polarized ends. First, in terms of spatial content, we need to differentiate the multiple forms and bases of trust as well as those of control. We also need to distinguish formal control from informal control because they relate to different aspects of trust in different ways (e.g., Makhija & Ganesh, 1997; Sitkin & George, 2005). Researchers must specify which aspect of trust or control is their focus so that they do not confuse control based institutional trust-as-attitude with control free trust-as-choice (Li, 2007a).

Second, we need to distinguish the exclusive adoption of trust-as-choice or formal control from their balanced mix and consider the possibility of partial trust-as-choice (due to the non-verifiable aspects of formal contract) and partial formal control (due to the unwarranted aspects of trust-as-choice) (Srinivasan & Brush, 2006; Wuyts & Geyskens, 2005). The balanced approach recognizes the need for both governance modes to be used in various combinations. For instance, when formal control is non-verifiable, as in the case of transferring tacit knowledge or creating novel knowledge to enhance transaction value, trust-as-choice can be the primary mode; when trust-as-choice is unwarranted, as in the case of routine transactions in the spot market to reduce transaction costs, formal control can be the primary mode. In rare cases do we adopt an exclusive use of one mode at the expense of the other (Das & Teng, 2001; Makhija & Ganesh, 1997; Sitkin & George, 2005; Uzzi, 1997). In general, because all firms need to achieve the purposes of cost reduction and value enhancement, they should apply both governance modes to different degrees in different aspects at different times. This is consistent with my argument that trust and control should be treated as a spectrum rather than two polarized ends.

Third, also consistent with the duality lens, we should differentiate the temporal order of the two modes and the associated effects. A consensus seems to emerge that the temporal order of trust and control is central to their complementary or conflicting link. For instance, an *ex ante* use of formal control as the primary mode is not necessarily in conflict with an *ex post* use of trust-as-choice as the primary mode, but an *ex post* use of formal control as the primary mode is in conflict with an *ex post* use of trust-as-choice as the primary mode (e.g., Dyer & Chu, 2003; Fryxell, Dooley, & Vryza, 2002; Woolthuis, Hillebrand, & Nooteboom, 2005; cf. Malhotra & Murnighan, 2002). It seems that the two modes tend to conflict with each other if both are adopted at the same time, but they can complement each other to a certain degree when used at different times. The preferred order seems to have formal control as the *ex ante* mode and trust-as-choice as the *ex post* mode. This implies that the logic of transaction cost economics (for formal control) best applies to the *ex ante* structural issues (e.g., alliance formation), while the logic of transaction value lens (for trust-as-choice) best applies to the *ex post* process issues (e.g., alliance implementation).

The Integrative Bases of Interorganizational Trust

As most scholars focus on interpersonal trust in dyad domains, there is a lack of research on the intra- or interorganizational trust in network domains (Burke et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Schoorman et al., 2007). The key challenge for the research on trust in the network domain is how to describe and explain organizational trust as a cross-domain, rather than a single domain, phenomenon (Currall & Inkpen, 2002). We know little about how the trust in dyad domains affects the trust in network domains (e.g., Zaheer et al., 1998). Further, we know little about why the trust in dyad domains differs from the trust in network domains. For instance, the trust in network domains tends to be weaker than the trust in dyad domains (Insko et al., 2005). Future research should verify the idea that interorganizational trust is cross-domain and cross-source above and beyond the collective sum of interpersonal trust.

There are five basic approaches to conceptualizing and measuring interorganizational trust. First, the most commonly used approach is to regard the interpersonal trust between the key boundary spanners, either one or multiple representatives from each organization, as interorganizational trust (e.g., Janowicz & Noordehaven, 2006). The second approach is to add the trust transfer from boundary spanners to their intraorganizational peers as part of interorganizational trust (Kostova & Roth, 2003). The third approach is to switch the trust referent from a person to an organization (e.g., a person's trust in an organization) as the proxy of interorganizational trust (e.g., Zaheer et al., 1998). The above three approaches share the view that only persons can trust, so interorganizational trust is a collective sum of interpersonal trust. The fourth approach, in contrast to the above three, focuses on the institutional factors as the primary bases of interorganizational trust (e.g., Currall & Inkpen, 2002). The fifth approach is to take an integrative approach by combining the relational bases with the institutional bases. Adopting the fifth approach and extending it to intraorganizational trust, I explicitly frame organizational trust as consisting of interpersonal ties between boundary spanners and their ties with non-spanners (within and between organizations) as well as institutional ties between collective units (within and between organizations). Further, the key issue of trust referent (e.g., top executive vs. direct supervisor; organization vs. person) is also critical because trust referents are related to different types of trust form and base (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Seppanen, Blomqvist, & Sundqvist, 2007).

Affect as the 'Softest' Base of Organizational Trust

Despite their importance, the relational bases of interpersonal trust have been largely neglected in favour of the dispositional bases (e.g., Mayer et al., 1995; see Burke et al., 2007; Colquitt et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). This neglect extends

into the research on interorganizational trust as well (see Seppanen et al., 2007, for a review) and even those who emphasize the dispositional bases admit the problem (e.g., Schoorman et al., 2007). The proposed framework focuses on both dispositional bases (Cell 1 in Fig. 2) and relational bases (Cell 3 in Fig. 2). Also of concern is the view that institutional bases substitute relational bases as the primary bases of trust in modern societies. Future research should correct these biases by paying closer attention to the three relational bases, especially shared affect, to highlight the unique role of personalized sources not only in the dyad domain but also in the network domain.

In particular, research is needed to examine the affective base of trust for two major reasons. First, as the 'softest' factor, affect is the most unique, especially for trust building, and differs from all other bases. For instance, personal integrity and benevolence, informal institutions of culture and ethics, and shared values are all related; personal ability, formal institutions of law and state, and shared interest are also related. However, affect is not related to any of the above factors. While the 'hard' factor of cognition is essential to reactive trust-as-attitude, affect is central to proactive trust-as-choice (cf., Dietz & den Hartog, 2006; McAllister, 1995; Williams, 2007). Second, affect has been neglected in the research on trust in particular (Colquitt et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Li, 2007a; Schoorman et al., 2007) and organization in general (Lawler, 2001). We know the least about affect among the bases of trust. Take friendship, which is characterized by strong affective bond and relationship based trust, as an example. As Giddens (1990, p. 118) pointed out, 'friendship has rarely been studied by sociologists, but it provides an important clue to broad-ranging factors influencing personal life.' A study on interpersonal citizenship behaviour (ICB) found that the strength of friendship was the most critical for both the offer and the receipt of ICB (Bowler & Brass, 2006). Future research must pay attention to the unique role of affect as the 'softest' base of organizational trust.

In summary, the proposed framework offers a systematic approach to address the top five research issues of trust (McEvily & Zaheer, 2006): (i) identifying the most critical types of trust; (ii) the nature of organizational trust in the network domain; (iii) the effect of trust on transaction cost and transaction value; (iv) the conflicting and complementary links between control and trust; and (v) the relative importance of cognitive and affective trust. The above five issues can be properly addressed in the context of trust building with three pillars. A specific research agenda should cover seven major issues: (i) trust-as-choice as central to the interplays between instrumental and sentimental motives as well as between transaction cost and transaction value; (ii) the role of leadership in building organizational trust and interorganizational trust, including the impact of paternalistic leadership; (iii) the process of building organizational trust via trust transfer and trust conversion; (iv) the relational bases of mature strong trust and the institutional bases of mature moderate trust; (v) the integrative bases of intra- and interorganizational trust in

the network domain; (vi) the balance between trust-as-choice and formal control for transaction cost and transaction value; and (vii) the cross-cultural international trust. The geocentric duality lens is recommended to guide the research on trust related issues.

CONCLUSION

From the geocentric duality lens, I have developed an interdisciplinary and culture transcending framework of organizational trust to address the central problem of fragmented (culture bounded) biases and discipline confined agendas (cross-purpose) in the research on trust. The integration of cultural values in the East and the West has shed light on the development of the geocentric framework of trust. Built on the duality lens, I have conceptualized trust as embedded in various exchanges that are delineated jointly by four trust dimensions, four trust ideal-types, four trust forms and four trust bases. I have also argued that trust can be transferred from dyad domains to network domains as well as converted from depersonalized sources to personalized sources. The process of building organizational trust can be facilitated by leadership (as part of organizational context) and trust-as-choice (as both motive and instrument for transaction value). I hope this framework will serve to facilitate future research on trust in general and organizational trust in particular, both within and between cultural contexts.

NOTE

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