Call for Papers

Special Issue on ‘Trust and HRM’

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Deadline for paper submissions: 15th July 2011

Extant research and theory has shown internal levels of trust to be a critical variable influencing the effectiveness, efficiency and performance of organizations (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Searle, Weibel, & Den Hartog, 2011).

Human resource management (HRM) policies are amongst the most influential in the development of trust relations inside organisations (see Mayer & Davis, 1999; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Whitener, 1997; Zeffane & Connell, 2003). HR strategies and policies serve as the employer’s statements of intent about the employment relationship within their organisation. HRM shapes parties’ trust expectations inside their employer – what employees can expect of managers, and vice versa; what colleagues can expect of each other. Moreover, through their implementation, HRM reveals the extent to which management’s intentions are genuine and can be trusted (Skinner, Saunders, & Duckett, 2004). Yet, while the design and content of HR policies is typically the domain of HR professionals, their delivery is often the responsibility of line managers. Indeed, Wright and Nishii (In press) distinguish between the intended HR practices from those that line managers implement, and in turn differentiate implemented practices from the ones that employees perceive. At each stage distortion is possible, resulting in disjunctions with potentially profound implications for trust levels inside the workplace.
Thus, HRM provides a rich context in which to explore trust, as within HRM several parties’ confidence and vulnerability are exposed (Searle & Skinner, 2011), not just employees, but managers, and union officials, too. Yet, to date, limited theoretical and empirical attention has focused on trust in the context of HRM.

The aim of this special issue is to attract and publish a collection of papers that will enhance our understanding of trust within this HRM context. We invite theoretical and/or empirical submissions of trust (not justice, or the psychological contract, despite the conceptual similarities with trust), explicitly within an HRM context. Submissions without this exact focus cannot be considered.

We welcome papers exploring the dynamic interplay of interpersonal, group, organisational and institutional trust within HRM. We encourage potential contributors to consider challenging questions that highlight systemic inter-relationships between factors such as employee-level personality and behaviours, management communications and behaviour, the role of HR professionals, organisational HRM strategy, and the institutional (historical and regulatory) context. We would welcome contributions that examine trust across multiple levels of analysis.

We encourage submissions that adopt novel, as well as traditional, methodologies that are appropriate for the study of trust processes and dynamics, including case-studies, ethnographic and other qualitative methods, mixed, grounded and critical approaches, conjoint analysis and vignettes, survey studies and experiments. We also would welcome novel conceptual or polemical commentaries on trust and HRM. Some of the challenging questions to address might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- How can organizational and institutional trust be conceptualised and understood in the HRM context?
- What are the antecedents, processes and outcomes of trust in an HRM context?
• Do the antecedents and processes for trust vary across different organizations, institutions, sectors (e.g. government, private sector, not-for-profit) and cultural contexts, and what are the implications of this for HRM?

• To what extent do the antecedents and processes of trust vary across different stakeholder groups (e.g. employees, HR professionals, line managers, etc.)? Are there incompatible expectations between these stakeholder groups?

• The impact of HRM on multiple internal trust relationships inside organisations

• What HRM strategies and approaches are most effective for creating and maintaining trust?

• Trust as a mediator or moderator of the relationship between HRM and performance, howsoever defined and operationalised

• What factors might shape the dynamics of trust during a particular ‘HR’ episode (e.g. recruitment and selection, appraisal, bonus allocations, redundancies)?

• Can ‘HRM’ and/or HR professionals realistically deliver trust? Is trust sustainable in contemporary workplaces?

• Is HRM a context in which trust becomes more salient to employees?

• To what extent is there a spill-over effect from past experience of HRM policies in shaping employees’ trust levels with subsequent employers? Or, how might widely publicised policies of other organisations, such as reward and recognition, impact on employees’ trust?

• Vivid and methodologically robust case studies of trust-building or trust repair, using HRM, inside organisations.

• HR professionals’ experiences of trust, whether initiating it, sustaining it, destroying it, repairing it.

Submissions
Please submit papers by 15th July 2011 by email to angela.sice@nuigalway.ie and ensure manuscripts are prepared according to the guidelines shown on the HRMJ website (http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1748-8583). Please do not submit to the Special Issue via Manuscript Central. All papers will be blind-reviewed following HRMJ’s normal review process and criteria. The Special Issue is scheduled for publication in end 2012.

For further information, and to discuss the suitability of planned submissions, please contact any of the Guest Editors for this Special Issue:
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