UDC 331.1

Економіка та управління підприємствами

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TRUST AT THE WORKPLACE: EXPERIENCE OF UKRAINIAN IT-COMPANIES

ДОВІРА НА РОБОЧОМУ МІСТІ: ДОСВІД УКРАЇНСЬКИХ ІТ-КОМПАНІЙ

ANNOTATION

Trust is one of the most important stabilizing factors of the effectiveness of any organizations under uncertainty environment. To study trust at the workplace the IT-sphere as most intensively developed in the last decade and knowledge-based was selected. The analytical insights based on processing of results of questioning more than 100 employees of IT-companies of Ukraine and are build on determining the behavioral characteristics of employees in relation to direct supervisor and senior management. This allowed us to determine the components and importance of trust at different hierarchical levels.

Keywords: trust at the workplace, trust in the organization, the cohesion of the team, a personalized trust, organizational loyalty

АНОТАЦІЯ. Довіра є одним з найважливіших стабілізуючих факторів ефективності будь-якої організації в умовах невизначеності середовища. Для дослідження довіри на робочому місці обрана галузь ІТ, яка найбільш інтенсивно розвивається протягом останнього десятиліття. Аналітичні висновки засновані на обробці результатів анкетування більше 100 співробітників ІТ-компаній України та базуються на визначенні поведінкових особливостей співробітників по відношенню до безпосереднього керівника, а також вищого керівництва. Це дало змогу визначити складові та значимість довіри на різних ієрархічних рівнях.

Ключові слова: довіра на робочому місці, довіра в організації, згуртованість колективу, персоніфікована довіра, організаційна лояльність.

АННОТАЦИЯ. Доверие является одним из важнейших стабилизирующих факторов эффективности любой организации в условиях неопределенности среды. Для исследования доверия на рабочем месте выбранная отрасль IT, которая наиболее интенсивно развивается на протяжении последнего десятилетия. Аналитические выводы основаны на обработке результатов анкетирования более 100 сотрудников IT-компаний Украины и базируются на определении поведенческих особенностей сотрудников по отношению к непосредственному руководителю, а также высшего руководства. Это позволило определить составляющие и значимость доверия на различных иерархических уровнях.

Ключевые слова: доверие на рабочем месте, доверие в организации, сплоченность коллектива, персонифицированное доверие, организационная лояльность.

Problem definition The corporate culture of the organizations in the conditions of postindustrial society, includes trust as an essential component of labour relations. In a changing environment zones of uncertainty are expanding, and the organization needs the special stabilizing factors. In modern organizations such factor is a trust, as it latently controls the implementation of rules and responsibilities. So the study of the trust in the workplace is of great scientific and practical interest.

Trust in human life was the subject of research in psychology and sociology. The main reasons of it are the lack of clear criteria for measurement, evaluation and prediction of trust.

In management, the interest in the phenomenon of trust in the workplace has increased in connection with occurrence of new directions of research such as the study of corporate culture that supports the company's strategy, social capital and intelligence, the creation of learning organizations and high performance teams, development of competitiveness based on capacity of the organization.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The problem of trust in the workplace should have the multidisciplinary contest (psychology, sociology, economics, management, etc). The analysis of the literature has shown the absence of agreed definition of the term "trust".

According to Barber B. (1983), trust is more than a contemplative consideration of future possibilities. One must actively behave in relation to the future, committing a certain action with at least partly uncertain and unpredictable consequences" [1].

Up to Morgunov E. (2004), the business ethics is impossible without integrity, delicacy, commitment and trust. The trust is born in communication and interaction as some secondary system, along with values and beliefs. A separate entity and relationship in the market are weak without the trust [2].

Guzhavina T. offers own definition of the phenomenon of trust. It can be seen as the expectation of reliability from other individuals not associated with any specific behavior in a particular situation. The expectations contain the expected result of the interaction, the impact assessment, and the values attributed to the participants of the interaction both themselves and others. These values arise in the process of deciding what actions and reactions are rationally effective and emotionally and morally fit the situation [3].

Shatroo V. and Balakshin M. describe the trust as the psychological attitude, which includes an interest and respect to the object or partner; the understanding of the needs that can be satisfied by interaction with them; the positive emotional evaluations of the partner; unconditional willingness to show the good will and also to perform successful collaboration [4].

The analysis of foreign literature has enabled us to identify the relevant areas of studies on the process and specifics of the trust formation. They are the following:

research articles as individual scientists and small research groups [5-7];

analytical research of specialized institutions [8-10];

mass sociological polls [11-12].

Traditionally, there are four approaches to the study of the phenomenon of trust in the workplace:

1) the trust inherent in the society as a basis for optimization in this exchange of resources [13];

the phenomenon of the emergence of western individualism and of modern society in general [14];

trust in authoritarian and totalitarian societies [15-16];

trust as a moral and ethical value, the premise of social integration and social order [17-18].

For the purposes of our study we analyze the situation in Ukrainian IT-sector in the framework of the mentioned first and fourth approaches. This choice has the following prerequisites:

IT-sphere is a key driver of Ukraine's economy and demonstrates the highest growth among other types of economic activity;

the growing differentiation of social groups on a range of factors - from income to the nature and content of work;

the trust in the workplace is an important component of the employment relationship within the team work;

the trust is the basis of effective formation of decentralized structures of management that is typical for IT-sphere.

There are difference between types of trust. In compiling the questionnaire of "Trust on a workplace of IT specialists" were taken as a basis of trust, emerging as interpersonal interaction and cooperation within formal and informal social institutions. Personalized trust in the survey acts as a "source of feeling of integrity and authenticity of himself" [19]. At the same time, trust in abstract systems provides a sense of security everyday attitudes survey which also included into the study.

In his article, we rely on the typology of E. Giddens (2011), which has provided personalized trust and trust in abstract systems ("anonymous others").

Trust permeates all levels of the organization. In the framework of the questionnaire investigates the confidence internally to which the related trust of subordinates to leaders, managers trust each other, trust among members, trust to newcomers, the credibility of the reform of the organization.

The result of a lack of trust in the organization becomes insufficient communication between team members, between managers and subordinates, insufficient use of delegation of authority, dissatisfaction of employees work, low employee motivation, nervous tension, the inability of the group to adapt to changes and inadequate socio-psychological climate. This leads to indifferent attitude of employees to their work, their frequent dismissal to frequent conflicts, loss of clients and partners, the negative image of the company and its leaders to distrust the

organization as a whole, to the emergence of a real threat to its existence as a whole.

Trust in organizations can be viewed as a powerful management tool. Trust as a psychological state of a person implemented in his behavior. Any positive results of any actions evoke in the mind of the person credibility and the repetition of these actions will inevitably lead to the consolidation of the positive response of trust in human behavior [20]. This means that, positively reinforcing desired results and causing trust, the leader can train the staff and achieve set goals. It should be noted, first, that the trust inherent selectivity, which means that people trust selectively and in varying degrees to different people. Subordinates in some advance confidence in the leader, hoping he will not let them down, because they are in a situation of dependence on its decisions. Secondly, man is more inclined to believe information that does not contradict his value orientations and meets the needs of [21]. This means that the leader should be attentive to bring to subordinates information, for example, not to scare them of possible layoffs and pay cut, creating a sense of security, encourage and support subordinates a sense of pride in themselves and their own dignity. You must also consider that the trust has rational and emotional components. So, people are more inclined to trust those who are similar to themselves, even if it is only the external similarity.

The sequence of actions of the head and create between him and his subordinates an atmosphere of mutual trust leads to the emergence of the phenomenon of organizational loyalty. However, trust must not be abused, turning it into a tool of manipulation. Recognizing manipulation, subordinates and business partners will no longer trust the leader. In the article "the Enemies of trust" Robert Telford and Ann Sibol the Drape emit some of the most serious barriers to achieve confidence in the organization, such as inconsistency of actions of the head, differentiation of standards, ignoring the incompetence of subordinates [22].

The basis for drafting the questionnaire and carrying out of research trust in the workplace, IT professionals were the issues of what constitutes trust? the factors that shape trust in the workplace? We have identified the following: the accumulated experience of joint work and to overcome difficult situations; honesty, fulfillment of

promises, adherence to business ethics, the commonality of human values; the completeness, timeliness, accessibility and quality of information that flows through adequate channels of communication; fair remuneration system; lack of pressure on subordinates by the management; the ability of each to express their interests and to influence decision-making. They formed the basis of the questionnaire.

Purpose of the article is to present the quantitative and qualitative results of the workplace trust survey in Ukrainian IT-companies that distinguishes between trust referents: 'personal trust' and 'trust in organization/senior management' and based on australian experience.

Findings

The literature review in the previous section set out important research questions and an existing theoretical model of the key circumstances of trust within knowledge-based workplaces. In this pilot study, a series of questions from successful research based in Australian IT organisations were replicated in the Ukranian IT industry. These questions then make up the variables used for the research. Preliminary results for statistical validity and reliability are provided.

As outlined earlier, for this research the target population was identified by organisational function and occupation. That is workers in IT organisations (or functions). The decision was driven by the need to select knowledge work that meets Warhurst and Thompson's (2006) definition "The central characteristics of knowledge work are that it draws on a body of theoretical (specialized and abstract) knowledge that is utilized, under conditions of comparative autonomy…", as well as displaying high levels of change [23]. To ensure that the sample population approximated the definitional features, organisations and departments with high degrees of work autonomy and knowledge were selected - such as software developers, software engineers and database administrators.

Moreover, the IT industry, IT organisations and IT functions are strongly associated with theories of post-industrial society, information society, and more recently the knowledge-economy. IT organisations are also considered the archetypal knowledge-based workplaces [24], particularly those containing 'software

developers' and 'software engineers'.

Rousseau et al's (1998) definition of trust as a psychological state was adopted in the previous section [25]. A theoretical model of the key circumstances of trust within knowledge-based workplaces was developed, based on an individual worker's trust in management. In addition, the definition led to trust being treated as an attitude for this research. These two factors determine the level of analysis as the individual worker. Because of the importance of identifying 'who trusts whom', and the possibility of influences on an individual's trust being affected by different layers of management within a workplace, trust in immediate manager and trust in senior management are dealt with separately.

In attempting to draw a reasonable sample of IT workers, access to the workers would be needed. The survey method provides efficiency of time and resources, statistical validity and reliability and generalizability, on the other hand surveys lack the capacity to capture the individual's complex point of view (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000), and rely on self-reporting, which may lead to fictitious or incorrect answers, and low response rates [26]. The method may also lead to the 'illusion of precision' with a potential bias to the status quo, thereby acting as: "obstacles to paradigm shifts in our understanding…" [27].

This pilot research involved online survey completion (n=100). Respondents were predominantly male (59%) and supervisors (65% supervised the work of others). This result is not unusual in the Ukraine because of the large number of small IT organisations.

As this research explores the interrelation of the various circumstances affecting trust, the issues may be addressed using Partial Least Squares (PLS). As a component-based structural equation modelling technique, PLS offers several advantages over the better known covariance-based SEM (CBSEM) methods. Where CBSEM relies on a maximum likelihood function to obtain parameter estimates for latent structural modelling, PLS focusses on the explanation of covariance across the model. Both CBSEM and PLS enable researchers to answer a set of interrelated research questions in a comprehensive model simultaneously [28]. The PLS

technique however, offers a stronger explanatory rationale for multiple variables and a more nuanced understanding of possible pathways. This capability is particularly important in this dissertation, because the broader psychological trust research has established a number of different mechanisms through which trust may operate, and a number of other advantages, including use with small sample sizes [29].

As mentioned earlier, trust within knowledge-based workplaces has been assessed in Australia [30]. This study sought to replicate that research in a different language and culture, using the following variables:

Trust Reliance, Trust Disclosure, Trust in Organisation, Change, Perceived Character, Communication, Participation, OCB, Job Satisfaction, Support for Change Direction and Affective Commitment. As seen in above, two demographic variables were included – gender and supervisor.

Turning first to the 'validity' of the questions: The initial testing addresses discriminant validity, ensuring the questions are more strongly related to the variable they seek to capture, rather than any other question or variable. This testing is initially conducted by checking the cross loadings for all of the questions against all of the other questions (the monofactorial cross loadings). Each question loading on its own variable must be the highest number both across that row and down that column. A second test of discriminant validity is recommended using Fornell and Larcker's (1981) Average Variance Explained (AVE) [31]. The latent variables should be greater than the square of the correlations among the latent variables. Chin (2010) recommends that the AVE should also be higher than 0.5 for all questions, meaning that questions should account for at least 50% of the variance [30].

Once the discriminant validity has met the benchmarks, the next test considers the consistency of the questions within the variable using Cronbach's Alpha. The calculation of Cronbach's Alpha holds all of the paths from the questions to the variable as equal, although some questions may be stronger representatives of the variable than others. PLS accounts for this by giving each question a weighting that maximises the variance explained for the prediction of the variable. Therefore, a better measure of internal consistency in PLS is Composite Reliability which allows

variable path weights. However, due to Cronbach's widespread use, and for comparability with other studies, both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (Dillon-Goldstein's rho) are reported here. It should be noted that Composite Reliability will always be higher than Cronbach's Alpha and sometimes markedly so. For example, if there are two questions that are very strongly related to the variable, and a third which is very weak. In those circumstances Cronbach's Alpha will give each question an equal weighting of 33.3% to each relationship, whereas Composite Reliability will use a weighting based on strength of relationship, say 45% for the two strong measures, and 10% for the weak one. Finally, the weighting in PLS also enables the retention of weaker questions because the weighting minimises those questions, or those questions can be removed. On balance, a superior internal 'reliability' can often be obtained in PLS by removing problematic questions.

The literature and the Australian research suggested an exploratory theoretical model for examining trust in knowledge-based workplaces. Due to the small sample size, the combined maximised model was tested. Participation and Change were combined, Communication and Character were assessed using the two different referents of the immediate work area and the organisation. The various sub components of trust were combined to provide an overall assessment, and to allow the removal of questions from the construct. Because all of the testing mentioned so far is done in the context of a structural model, the theoretical model is specified as a statistical model in XLStat, 2017, version 19.01. The theoretical model is assumed until both discriminant validity and Composite Reliability have been established, although the poor questions relating to a variable may be removed. Only then does the testing of the statistical model itself commence. The model as specified is shown at Figure 1.

At this stage, the statistical model itself is not being tested, rather the discriminant validity and reliability of the variables are being assessed. Given the small sample size, weaker questions were eliminated and then reliability assessed. The questions which make up the variable Affective Commitment and Support for Change Direction did not meet the statistical criteria and so were removed.
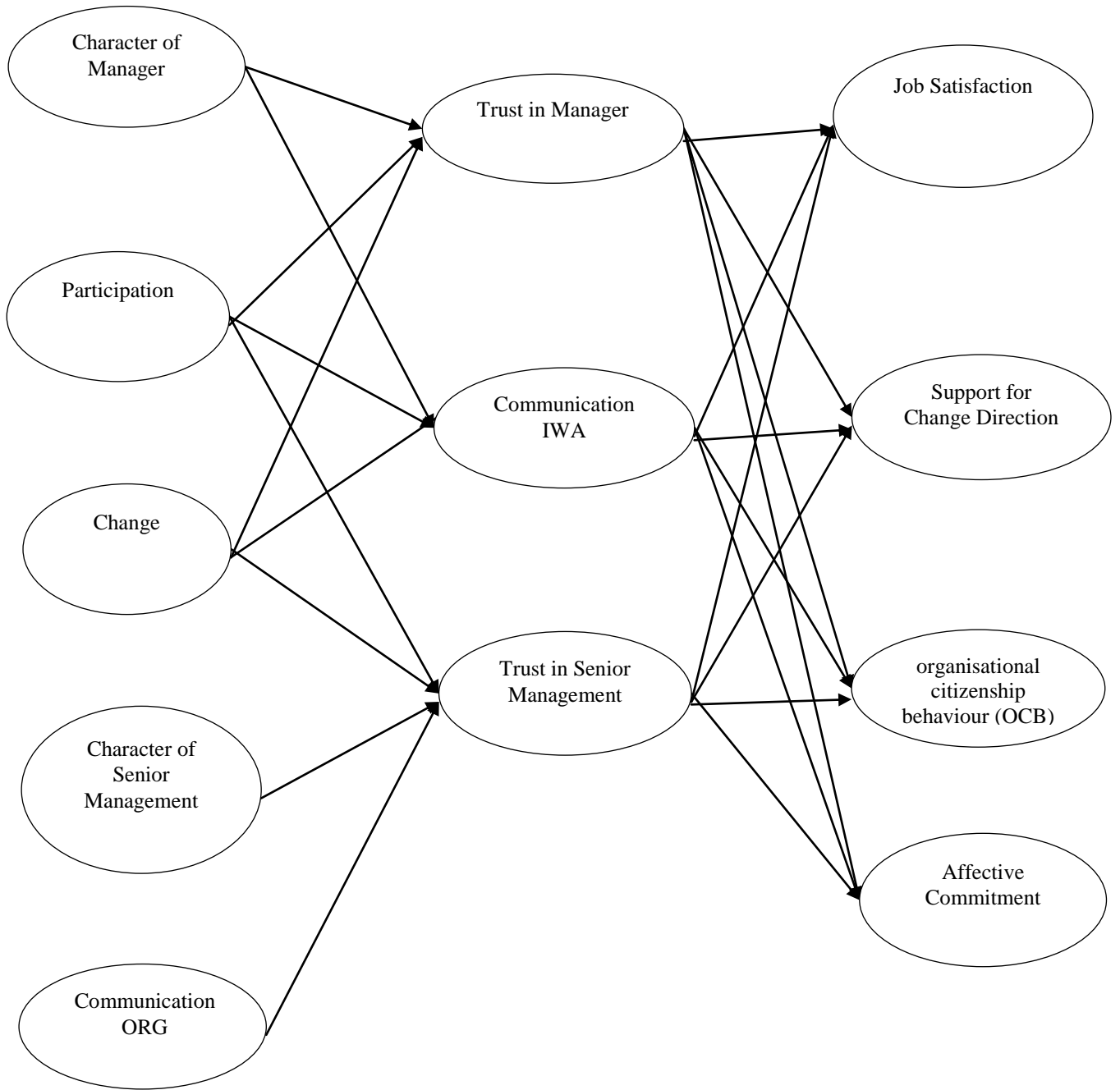
Figure 1. Initial Statistical Model in PLS (based on the Australian maximised model)

Table 1 indicates that the variables that do meet the reliability criterion with D.G. rho above 0.7, with conventional Cronbach's Alpha comparison.

Table 1

Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

n=100

Latent variable	Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha	D.G.rho (PCA)
Change	4	0.86	0.90
Character of Manager	5	0.73	0.82
Participation	3	0.64	0.81
Communication IWA	3	0.6	0.79
Trust in Manager	7	0.77	0.84
Communication ORG	2	0.59	0.83
Character of Senior Management	3	0.68	0.83
Trust in Organisation	7	0.89	0.91
Job Satisfaction	3	0.59	0.78
OCB	3	0.66	0.81

Therefore, statistical support for the validity and reliability of the initial variables created for this research is established. **Table 2** reports on the Descriptive Statistics.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Code	Standartized Loading
Change	CHG_SP1	0.846
	CHG_EX1	0.774
	CHG_SP1_ORG1	0.873
	CHG_EX1_ORG1	0.857
Character of Management	CHAR1	0.492
	CHAR2	0.674
	CHAR3	0.710
	CHAR4	0.710
	CHAR6	0.860
Communication	CMN1	0.800
	CMN2	0.746
	CMN3	0.688
Trust in Manager	TrustD1	0.738
	TrustD2	0.631
	TrustD4	0605
	TrustR1	0.717
	TrustR3	0.216
	TrustR4	0.744
	TrustR5	0.749
Job Satisfaction	JSAT2	0.860
	JSAT3	0.610
	JSAT4	0.719
Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)	OCB2	0.787

	OCB4	0.713
	OCB5	0.801
Participation	PAR_CHG1	0.847
	PAR_CHG2	0.616
	PAR_CHG_ORG1	0.797
Communication ORG	CMN_ORG2	0.775
	CMN_ORG3	0.900
Character of Senior Managememnt	CHAR_ORG2	0.614
	CHAR_ORG3	0.885
	CHAR_ORG4	0.846
Trust in Senior Management	Trust_Org_BO1	0.890
	Trust_Org_BO2	0.756
	Trust_Org_BO3	0.801
	Trust_Org_CO1	0.584
	Trust_Org_CO2	0.857
	Trust_Org_CO3	0.680
	Trust_Org_SN1	0.845

RESULTS

From Figure 2, it can be seen that this research follows the Australian research. Trust is examined as trust in the immediate manager and trust in senior management. Comparison of the direct effects model, the partial mediation model, and the trust mediated model in that research completed the three steps recommended by **Baron and Kenny (1986**) to demonstrate mediation [**32**]. Those tests revealed that the 'trust only' mediated model did not provide the best fit with the data. As expected, this research also meets the established benchmarks – the path coefficients, the mean communality, goodness of fit (GoF) and variance explained (R^2).

The Australian research (n=225) established a GoF of 0.940 and the mean R^2 of 0.493. In this research, testing of relationships between the variables, identifies the model which most robustly represents the data collected. It shows the highest GoF of 0.903 (the recommended standard of 0.90 and significant at the 0.05 level) and the mean R2 of 0.512 (higher than any other model, as is the mean Communality (AVE) at 0.557. **Chin (2010)** recommends bootstrapping for testing significance [**30**]. The number of re-samplings recommended for confidence intervals is 1000 [**33**]. Confidence interval testing produces a lower and an upper bound (at the 95% level for this research) and neither bound should contain zero for the benchmark to be achieved.
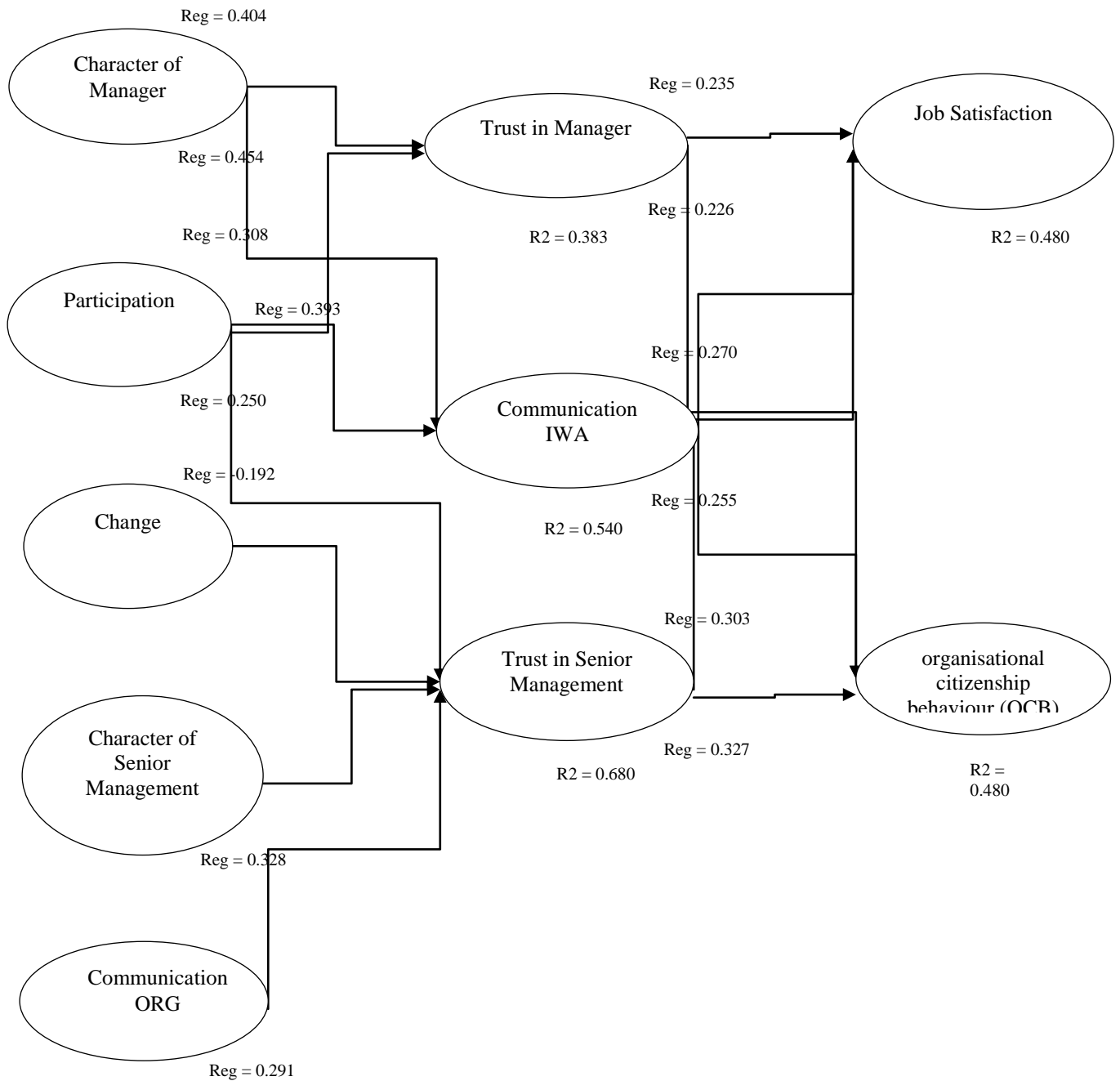
Figure 2. Relationships for Maximised Ukrainian Model

Interestingly this research also showed that change had a negative impact on trust in manager and on communication in the immediate work area, however it wasn't significant. By contrast, change did have a small negative and significant impact on trust in senior management.

Table 3 shows that the following antecedent associations are significant and positive at the 0.05 level.

Table 3

Significance Testing, R^2 and p value for Maximised Model

Latent variable	Value	Value (Bootstrap)	Standard error (Bootstra	Critical ratio (CR)	Lower bound (95%)	Upper bound (95%)	Depemdent Variable	R^2	p
Character of Manager	0.454	0.462	0.027	16.771	0.406	0.516	Communication IWA	0.540	0.05
Participation	0.393	0.401	0.036	10.937	0.320	0.481			
Character of Manager	0.404	0.416	0.045	8.895	0.328	0.513	Trust in Manager	0.383	0.05
Participation	0.308	0.317	0.046	6.628	0.213	0.417			
Change	-0.192	-0.192	0.024	-8.164	-0.238	-0.131	Trust in Senior Management	0.680	0.05
Participation	0.250	0.254	0.020	12.484	0.215	0.291			
Communication ORG	0.291	0.288	0.022	13.304	0.240	0.331			
Character of Senior Management	0.328	0.327	0.021	16.011	0.289	0.375			
Communication IWA	0.270	0.277	0.027	9.884	0.209	0.329			
Trust in Manager	0.235	0.243	0.038	6.271	0.164	0.314	Job Satisfaction	0.480	0.05
Trust in Senior Management	0.303	0.307	0.020	15.395	0.259	0.363			
Communication IWA	0.255	0.260	0.026	9.859	0.206	0.311			
Trust in Manager	0.226	0.233	0.032	7.145	0.178	0.305	OCB	0.480	0.05
Trust in Senior Management	0.327	0.332	0.034	9.509	0.241	0.397			

Participation, and character of manager are significantly associated with trust in manager and communication in the immediate work area. Participation, organisational communication and character of senior management are significantly associated with trust in senior management. As mentioned earlier change did have a small negative and significant impact on trust in senior management. It also shows that three mediators are significantly and positively associated with organisational outcomes. Communication in the immediate work area, trust in manager and trust in senior management are associated with job satisfaction and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

Conclusion

In concluding this section on the data analysis, there are a number of important implications from the results. First, increased understanding of the antecedents, outcomes, and role of trust in the Ukrainian IT industry. Second, 'who trusts whom' does make a difference as the different operations of trust at different hierarchical levels within the organisation attest. Character of manager is a strong driver of trust for the immediate work area (and communication), perhaps because of the interpersonal dimensions of trust. Character of senior management and participation in decision making are shown to be the strongest drivers of trust for the organisation. High levels of 'change', do initially have a small negative effect on trust in senior management.

The importance of participation in decision making for trust has been highlighted. Communication is clearly important in the workplace, although analysis of the data suggests that communication in the immediate work area operates directly on organisational outcomes, while organisational communication has an impact through trust. Finally, the results from the data also support the importance of trust to the 'soft-focus' organisational outcomes.

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