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Research Paper

Organizational Trust and its Impact on Strengthening Organizational Identity: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the relationship between organizational trust and organizational identity in selected colleges of the University of Sumer, with organizational trust as the independent variable and organizational identity as the dependent variable. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The (130) questionnaires were distributed, of which (120) valid answers were retrieved with a response rate of (92%). All analyses were conducted using SPSS v.26 and AMOS v.24 using descriptive statistics (arithmetic means, standard deviations, and correlation analysis), inferential statistics (simple and hierarchical regression analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and structural equation modeling (SEM). The results showed that both organizational trust and organizational identity were high among the respondents. The results further indicate a statistically significant positive link between each dimension of organizational trust and organizational identity: as organizational trust increases, structural identity increases. Additionally, regression analysis indicated that a sizable portion of the variance in organizational identity is explained by organizational trust, suggesting that it has an important impact on how employees feel and act while working for the organization. They also showed that effective benevolence had the most powerful impact on improving organizational identity compared to the ability and integrity dimensions. The direct and significant effect of organizational trust on organizational identity was established using structural equation modeling, with acceptable model fit indices. In conclusion, the research provides evidence that strengthening organizational trust is a key means of cultivating organizational identity in educational organizations.

Keywords:

Organizational Trust, Organizational Identity, University of Sumer
Colleges, Organizational Impact, Organizational Commitment

ورقة بحثية

الثقة التنظيمية واثرها في تعزيز الهوية التنظيمية : دراسة تحليلية

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مجلة

تنمية الرافدين

(TANRA): مجلة علمية، فصلية،

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المستخلص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل العلاقة بين الثقة التنظيمية والهوية التنظيمية في عدد من كليات جامعة سومر المختارة، إذ عُدَّت الثقة التنظيمية متغيراً مستقلاً، والهوية التنظيمية متغيراً تابعاً. واعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وجمعت البيانات الميدانية من عينة من الملاكات التدريسية والإدارية باستخدام الاستبانة أداة رئيسة لجمع البيانات. وقد وزعت (130) استبانة، استُرْجعت منها (120) استبانة صالحة للتحليل بنسبة استجابة بلغت (92%). وأُجريت التحليلات الإحصائية باستخدام برنامجي SPSS الإصدار 26 و AMOS الإصدار 24، من خلال استخدام الإحصاءات الوصفية (المتوسطات الحسابية، والانحرافات المعيارية، وتحليل الارتباط)، والإحصاءات الاستدلالية تحليل الانحدار البسيط، وتحليل التباين ANOVA، ونموذج المعادلات الهيكلية (SEM).

أظهرت النتائج ارتفاع مستوى كل من الثقة التنظيمية والهوية التنظيمية لدى أفراد العينة. كما بينت وجود علاقات ارتباط إيجابية ودالة إحصائية بين أبعاد الثقة التنظيمية والهوية التنظيمية، مما يعني أنه كلما ارتفع مستوى الثقة التنظيمية، تعززت الهوية التنظيمية. وأوضح تحليل الانحدار أن الثقة التنظيمية تفسر نسبة كبيرة من التباين في الهوية التنظيمية، وهو ما يدل على أثرها المهم في مشاعر العاملين وسلوكياتهم داخل المنظمة. كما أظهرت النتائج أن بُعد الإحسان كان الأكثر تأثيراً في تعزيز الهوية التنظيمية مقارنة ببُعدي القدرة والنزاهة. وأكدت نتائج نموذج المعادلات الهيكلية وجود أثر مباشر ومعنوي للثقة التنظيمية في الهوية التنظيمية، مع تحقيق النموذج مؤشرات مطابقة مقبولة.

الكلمات الرئيسية:

الثقة التنظيمية، الهوية التنظيمية، كليات جامعة سومر، التأثير التنظيمي، الالتزام التنظيمي

Introduction

Over the past two decades, higher education has experienced rapid change spurred by developments within our environmental context as well as in cognition and technology. Such trends have made it harder for universities to hold together, and ensure that members feel a sense of being valued or identify. Here, organizational trust is one of the core foundations for educational relationships because it helps to form a friendly work environment based on cooperation and information sharing that would lead to stable organizations. It is believed that organizational trust is a contemporary administrative notion, which enhances the relationships individuals build with management. It resembles employee's belief if policies, sincerity of managerial intent and leadership skills to deal with the aftermath. In increased trust in the organization, all such factors will have a positive effect on employees' behaviors and attitudes towards work; it will increase their sense of belonging to the organization and commitment to perform their tasks as required. On the other hand, core organizational identity relates to how individuals within an organization perceive their belongingness and emotional attachment to founding values, purpose and mission of the organizations. An organizational identity reinforces the pride and sense of belonging that you feel, along with fostering a more positive engagement with the work environment which improves the quality of performance and institutional stability. To this end, the finding from an academic institution with a wealth of knowledge and high levels of human interaction makes it pertinent to ask how organizational trust is related to their organizational identity. The current study, which was conducted in the selective colleges of University of Sumer (the College of Administration and Economics, the College of Education and the College of Agriculture), aims to analyze organizational trust and its effect on organizational identity among employees. It aims to help better understand the factors that are conducive to institutional belonging in the context of higher education, and support decision-makers in building a mature, stable organizational configuration. To achieve the study goals, the research is divided into these sections: Section one: Research Methodology , Section two: Theoretical Framework, Section three: Practical Analysis, Section four: Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Research Methodology

1.1. Research Problem

As organizations and administrations continue to undergo transformation on a global scale, by October 2023 you will see how academic leaders are increasingly grappling with how best to foster employees'sense of belonging and organizational commitment. Organizational trust leads to a workplace climate of security, support, and equity in administrative interactions that strengthens positive relationships within the workplace. Organizational identity, on the other hand, refers to the extent that individuals feel included and integrated in their organization so they can actually contribute towards achieving organizational goals. Theoretically and practically, both organizational trust and organizational identity

are essential elements to be discussed together but there is virtually no study that jointly studies these two variables on the context of Iraq universities (to the best knowledge base of the researcher). On the field level, preliminary observations within the colleges under study revealed variability in employees' sense of belonging and administrative interaction, indicating inconsistent levels of organizational trust across departments. On the cognitive level, this variability reflects a clear research gap, as Iraqi studies have rarely examined organizational trust and organizational identity jointly within the higher-education context. Building on this field-based and cognitive embodiment of the problem, the research problem can be formulated through the following main question: What is the nature and level of the effect of organizational trust on organizational identity in a number of colleges at the University of Sumer?

This question is further splitting into this sub-questions:

- What is the level of organizational trust in the colleges studied?
- What is the level of organizational identity among the staff of the colleges studied?
- Is there a significant correlation between organizational trust and organizational identity?
- What is the level of the effect of organizational trust on organizational identity among the colleges studied?

1.2. Importance of the Study

At the field level, this study responds to a genuine institutional need, as the colleges of the University of Sumer currently lack any applied assessment of organizational trust and organizational identity levels among their staff, despite the pivotal role both play in supporting administrative stability and institutional performance. The importance of this study is significant because it concentrates on the two key dimensions of organizational behavior (organizational trust and sense of organizational identity) which play a crucial role in increasing the stability of job or in enhancing performance, particularly for educational institutions. By fostering a fair, transparent, and supportive working relationship between employees and management, organizational trust helps build positive new relationships that create an employee's sense of belonging and loyalty to the organization. Additionally, the nature of this study comes because it tackles the university environment in Iraq specifically Colleges of University of Sumer (College of Administration and Economics and College of Education and College of Agriculture) which have not been studied sufficiently on the relationship between these two variables. It is anticipated that this study will yield valuable empirical findings to help university decision-makers foster administrative practices that can improve organizational trust, which in turn serves as a facilitator of enhancing employees' organizational identity.

1.3. Research Objectives

1. To identify the level of organizational trust among the academic and administrative staff in the colleges studied.

2. To identify the level of organizational identity among the academic and administrative staff in the colleges studied.
3. To examine the nature of the correlation and the level of effect of organizational trust on organizational identity in the colleges studied.
4. To formulate recommendations that contribute to enhancing organizational trust and organizational identity within the university context.

1.4. Research Method

The descriptive-analytical method has been chosen as an appropriate methodological framework that could examine the phenomenon in question as accurately and objectively as possible. This method helps in analyzing systematically along different dimensions of the phenomenon and help identify the nature of the relationships between study variables through data collection and contextualization from relevant indicators with accurate interpretation leading to reliability or results.

1.5. Data Collection Method

Theoretical Aspect: A qualitative theoretical matrix framework was developed through a review of studies that helped identify variables dimensions to underpin scientific analysis about topic.

Practical Aspect: A questionnaire form was designed was formulated based on the objectives of this study. It had three parts: the first was demographics; the second was independent variable (organizational trust) measured using its three dimensions (ability, integrity, benevolence), measured by 12 items based on the scale of Mayer & Davis (1995); and the third is dependent variable (organizational identity): treated as unidimensional construct measured using 6 items by Mael & Ashforth (1992). All variables in the study were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The original Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) scale was retained as the sole measurement instrument for organizational trust in this study, rather than the later refinements proposed by Dirks & de Jong (2021) or Fulmer & Gelfand (2021).

1.6. Conceptual Research Model

Figure 2 demosntrate the conceptual research model

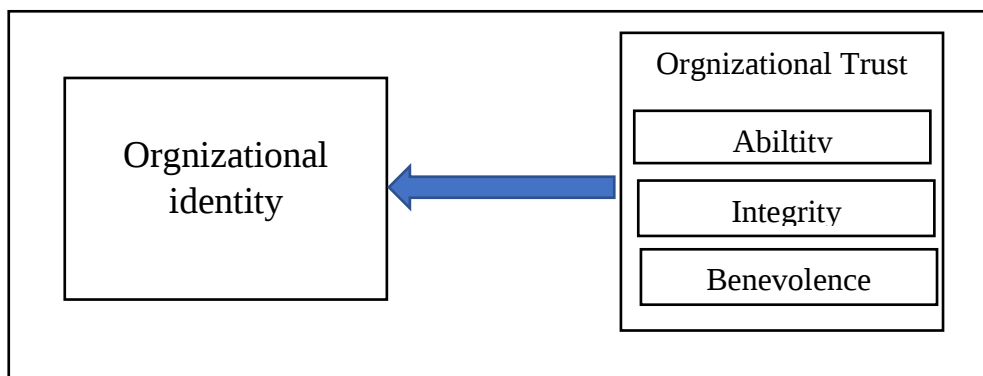


Figure (1). Hypothetical Research Model

1.7. Research Hypotheses

Main Hypothesis: Organizational trust has a statistically significant effect in enhancing organizational identity in the colleges of the University of Sumer.

Sub-hypotheses:

Hypothesis H1: There is a statistically significant correlation between organizational trust and organizational identity.

Hypothesis H2: The dimensions of organizational trust (Ability, Integrity, Benevolence) have a statistically significant effect on organizational identity (organizational identity).

Hypothesis H3: There are statistically significant differences in the levels of organizational trust and organizational identity attributable to college affiliation (College of Administration and Economics, College of Education, College of Agriculture).

1.8. Spatial and Temporal Limits

The scope of this research is concern only three colleges at University of Sumer in Iraq which the College of Administration and Economics, the College of Education, and the College of Agriculture. Collection and analysis of data were done from January–April 2026, thus respondents views reflect these perceptions at that specific time frame.

2. Theoretical Background of the Study

2.1. Organizational Trust

2.1.1. Concept of Organizational Trust

One of the most vital concepts in modern organizational behavior literature, organizational trust embodies the basis for an interactive relationship between employees and management inside the organizational entity. This means the extent to which people are willing to depend on the organization or its leaders in situations where uncertainty is present because their view of either party has both integrity, fairness, competence and ethical commitment when dealing with person-to-person. A positive psychological state that exists among employees as a result of their expectations that managerial behaviors and the decisions they make will be characterized by credibility and integrity, and made in a manner that is aligned with organizational interest/public interest on behalf of themselves (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 2020), is defined as organizational trust. Organizational trust, therefore, is not a byproduct of a momentary attitude but rather an ongoing cognitive–affective construct that develops over time from repetitive experiences and the daily performance of work-related interactions. Dirks & de Jong (2021) in their article contextualized one of the factors for creating a stable environment work necessary to produce a very important answer to this question, on entrance organizational trust will be needed facilitator engines that will also help with reducing uncertainty presented by the organization itself, may contribute positively as it helps cooperation between individuals and improves job commitment from

employees adding that when is present contributes positively Building based on understanding and mutual support. Rousseau et al. The work of (2019) also affirms this, with organizational trust being viewed as an informal regulatory mechanism inside the firm that helps to constrain behavior through strengthening positive expectations and reduced need for strict control, in turn positively affecting overall performance.

2.1.2. Previous Studies on Organizational Trust

The literature shows that organizational trust is one of the most studied variables in organizational behavior, a role it assumes due to its central position as an explanatory variable of individual behavior within organizations and because its absence is generally reflected directly on results, commitment and institutional stability (Kahn et al., 2017; Zhan et al., 2021). Recent research has examined organizational trust as a multi-dimensional variable variables associated with leadership characteristics, organizational justice, structural supports and organizational culture. As presented in Fulmer & Gelfand (2021), According to Ha & Lee (2022), one of the most prominent precursor of organizational trust is contented procedural justice, which explains that employee believe process fairness induces trust in management. The findings further revealed that organizational trust mediated the relationship between procedural justice and sustainable performance. Yan et al. Such researchers (2022) who also discovered that high organizational trust leads to better organizational reputation, and the ability of an organization to build sustainable relationships with stakeholders. Turkgur et al. Demirtaş et al (2024) highlighted the important mediating effect of organizational trust in the relationship between organizational support and job commitment, and its direct contribution to developing a strong organizational identity. Verburg et al. (2018) verified that low organizational trust severely reduces job performance and increases tendency towards organizational conflict, whilst high trust promotes psychological & behavioral stability in the organization. A range of scientific indicators can be derived from this examination of previous studies, most strikingly: Trust in an organizational context has transformed to a multiple-level phenomenon (individual, group, organizational).

2.1.3. Importance of Organizational Trust

Introduction to Organizational Trust The concept of organizational trust is one of the cornerstones of organizational behavior, as it reflects an employee's confidence in their relationship with management. It is crucial in terms of improving the stability of an organization and helping it perform better overall. A high degree of trust within an organization reflects a high level of cooperation among staff members, better decision-making and reduced conflict in the workplace, which also contribute to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, organizational trust leads to lower perceptions of risk and greater psychological safety in the workplace (Joo et al., 2022). Furthermore, many

studies show that more trusting organizations perform better and are more sustainable due to the positive effect of increased trust on close relationships within organizations (Erat et al., 2020).

2.1.4. Characteristics of Organizational Trust

From the point of view of (Gün et al, 2024). There are several characteristics of organizational trust, as shown in the following diagram, Figure 2 demonstrate the characteristics of organizational Trust

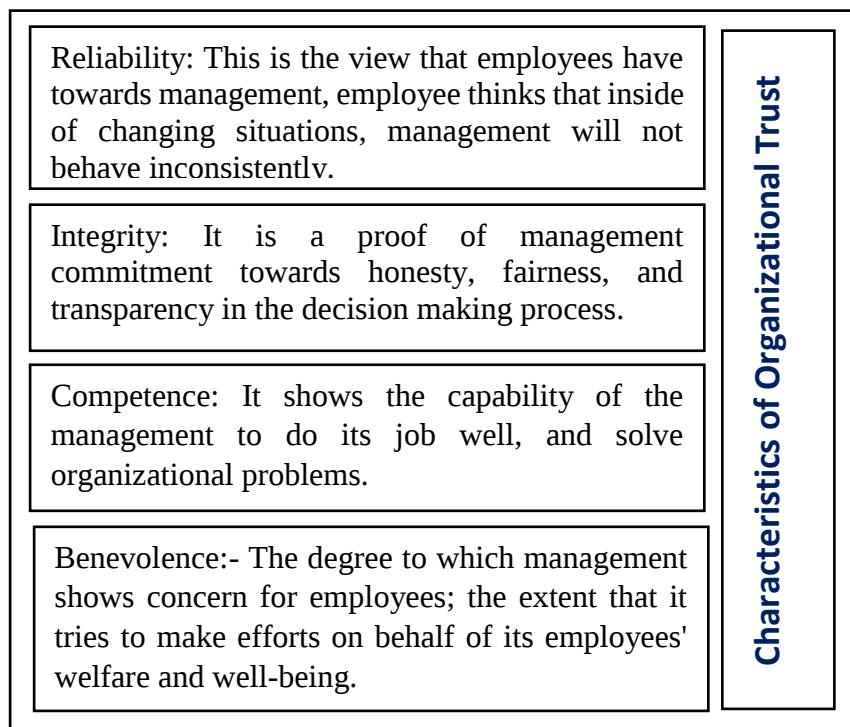


Figure (2). Characteristics of Organizational Trust

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on Gün, G., Arslan, M., & Demir, H. (2024). Organizational trust characteristics and employee commitment. International Journal of Management Studies, 15(2), 60–72.

2.1.5. Dimensions of Organizational Trust

From an empirical perspective, organizational trust is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that captures employees cognitive and affective perceptions of management's trustworthy behavior. A common framework is that proposed by Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) that breaks trust into three primary dimensions: ability, integrity and benevolence. This model remains contemporaneously the theoretical basis of empirical research, with recent literature

refining this even further (Dirks & de Jong, 2021:12–18; Fulmer & Gelfand, 2021:420). It is worth noting that the present study adopts the original three-dimension framework of Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) as the primary basis for measurement, while the refinements introduced by Dirks & de Jong (2021) and Fulmer & Gelfand (2021) are cited only to support the theoretical discussion.

1-Ability

Ability is the conviction of employees that organizational leaders truly have the skills, knowledge, experience and technical competencies to perform their roles effectively and make sound decisions. Mayer et al. According to (1995), ability is the "that cluster of skills, competencies, and traits which give a party influence over some particular domain." An emphasis on the fact that trust is not generalised but context dependent based on perceived managerial competency for relevant operational domains. Managing the uncertainty arising within the decision-making arena has been posited as one of the structural elements enabling managerial ability (Dirks and de Jong, 2021), which further serve to assures employees about what is considered effective organizational goals along with legitimizing leadership inclination. In the same vein, Fulmer and Gelfand (2021) assert that what they call competence-based trust is strongly positively connected with perceived organizational effectiveness and better coordination of employees.

2-Integrity

Integrity is the degree to which employees feel that management operates with integrity, whether your company walks the talk by adhering to fundamental principles like honesty, fairness, transparency, and consistency. It is the "foundation" of organizational trust and ensures that leadership behavior is predictable, principled, and aligned with organization values. Mayer et al. (1995) characterize integrity as how trustworthy the trustee seems to be based on his consistent performance of commitments that the trustor finds acceptable. As Dirks and de Jong (2021) state, "trust takes a long time to develop but can be demolished in an instant if leaders behave unethically or inconsistently regardless of their competence". Following the same trend, Colquitt et al. Proc and int justice (2012)

3-Benevolence

Benevolence is employee's perception of management going above and beyond to demonstrate concern towards the overall interests, well-being, growth, and development of personnel. Antinomi is carrying the affective and relational facet of trust, which focuses (i.e., on emotional bonds and perceived organizational support either RN2. Mayer et al. (1995) refers to benevolence as "the degree of perceived goodwill that a trustee has towards the trustor, i.e., apart from a distinctly egocentric profit motive." As Nguyen and Lee (2022) conducted an exploration, the substantial role of perceived supportive leadership was notable regarding emotional trust and organizational commitment. Likewise, Verburg et al. Benevolent Leadership reduces stress at work, increases satisfaction and engagement, (2023).

2.2. Organizational Identity

2.2.1. Concept of Organizational Identity

Organizational identity is a basic concept in contemporary studies of organizations and represents the shared cognitive and social belief that employees have about their organization (Gioia, et al., 2013), answering the central question: "who are we as an organization? It is defined as the central, enduring attributes of an organization that provide it with a sense of continuity, uniqueness and anchoring psychological ownership (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Ashforth et al., 2020). Brown (2021:0) asserting that organizational identity relates to the collective self-perception which is a determinant of behavior and psychological engagement. Organizational identity is dynamic rather than stable, with Melewar & Nguyen (2022) show that the image of an organization is the result of interaction between organisational culture and external communication; not independent concepts.

2.2.2. Previous Studies on Organizational Identity

Past researches have proved that organizational identity is one of the key behavioral variables, as much in management as well as in organizational behavior literature. Research have aimed to comprehend the link between the identified organizational identity and numerous crucial variables, including job performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. A study by Rovetta et al. (2024), we found a strong organizational identity directly enhances positive behaviors in the organization (cooperation, individual initiative, and organizational citizenship behavior) thereby impacting overall institutional performance. Similarly, Weisman et al. Organizational identity develops employees behavior within an organization (2023) by causing the feeling that it makes us more committed to organizational values and goals also create a strong sense of internal unity between employees. Similarly, Melewar & Karaosmanoglu (2018) contend that due to the higher internal cohesion of their members, organizations that have a high level of organizational identity are in a better position to withstand environmental changes and thus continue through time.

2.2.3. Importance of Organizational Identity

Organizational identity is a strategy which defines how employees see their organization, as well as how they connect with it psychologically. (Rovetta et al., 2024). Furthermore, because it directly affects employee behavior organizational identity can lead to stronger commitment of employees towards organizational values and objective with a higher degree of fit among internal organizational participants (Weisman et al., 2023). Research has also shown that organizations with a strong identity better survive and adapt to environmental changes, thanks to greater internal cohesion between members Similarly, (Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2018).

2.2.3. Correlation Between Organizational Trust and Organizational Identity

Psychological and emotional attachment to the organization is created when employees are assured that the organization will take beneficial actions based on his or her work. This confidence originates from shared beliefs rooted in core values and has an impact on the seamless operation of the establishment. Yes, the organizational trust is viewed as an important source of competitive advantage and it is known to those that when members do not trust enough the organization they are not likely to comply with its norms of behaviour or take initiatives towards problem-solving (Ha & Lee, 2022) Trust in management has a significant effect on employee attitude, and these factors play a huge part of their organizational identity especially procedural and distributive justice. Such expectations not being met can lead to negative feelings in the workplace (Yan et al., 2022). Organizational identity itself is described as a core, unique, and stable concept formed by the understanding of an organization members to identify who they are as an organization and how their organization relates to other entities (Kyrdoda et al., 2024).

3. Results and Discussion

with analyzing the correlation between independent variable organizational trust and dependent variable Organizational Identity through testing a main hypothesis of research based on selected colleges of University of Sumer (College of Administration and Economics, College Of Education and College Agriculture) This study used the descriptive-analytical method, where data were gathered using a structured questionnaire that was based on validated measurement scales from previously listed studies. Data were analysed by means of SPSS Version 26 and AMOS Version 24. Statistical analysis was performed to first describe the data (descriptive statistics), followed by correlation analysis, regression analysis to check the effect of organizational trust on organizational identity, ANOVA for examining differences between colleges and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test and confirm the proposed research model.

3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Study Sample

The study sample consists of a sample of academic and administrative staff in selected colleges at the University of Sumer (College of Administration and Economics, College of Education, and College of Agriculture). Out of 130 questionnaires distributed, 120 valid responses were collected representing a high and suitable response rate of 92% for statistical analysis. Demographic data were used to describe the characteristics of the sample and check its representativeness.

Table (1). Demographic Characteristics of Study Sample

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Male	70	58.3%
	Female	50	41.7%
Age	20-29	28	23.3%
	30-39	44	36.7%

	40–49	32	26.7%
	50+	16	13.3%
Qualification	Diploma	12	10.0%
	Bachelor	55	45.8%
	Master	38	31.7%
	PhD	15	12.5%
Job Title	Lecturer	48	40.0%
	Assistant Lecturer	36	30.0%
	Administrative Staff	36	30.0%
Experience	1–5 years	30	25.0%
	6–10 years	42	35.0%
	11–15 years	28	23.3%
	16+ years	20	16.7%

Findings suggest that the sample, (n = 120), is considered balanced and representative for both academic and administrative staff of several colleges at University of Sumer. Females make up 41.7% and men makes up The sample is slightly more dominated by males (58.3%). Adeptica Research Data Most respondents are aged between 30–39 years (36.7)a mid-career workforce The qualification-wise majority (45.8%) holds a Bachelor's, followed by Master's (31.7%) suggesting an academically qualified sample on this factor as well. A more detailed breakdown by job title finds that 40% are lecturers, the largest group, which provides academic coverage along with administrative staff. In conclusion, the majority of participants had experience from 6–10 years (35%) indicating a moderate level of experience among the respondents thus contributing to better validation/reliability of the data.

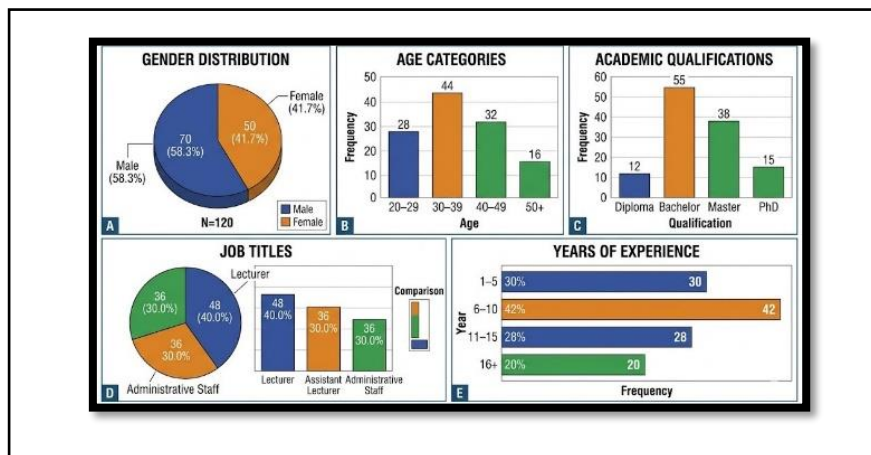


Figure (3). Demographic Characteristics of Study Sample

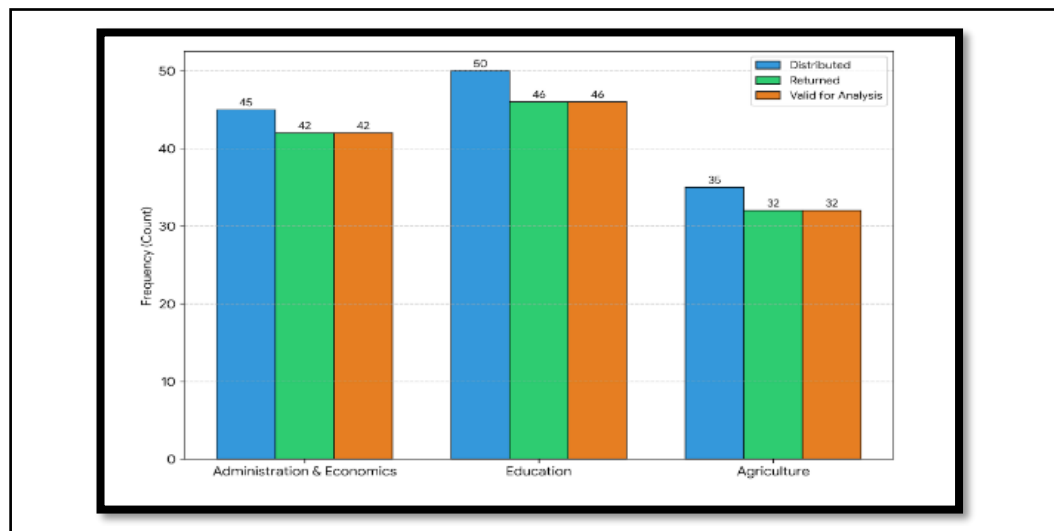
3.2.1 Sample and Questionnaire Distribution

Table 2 presets the sample and questionnaire distribution

Table(2). Sample and Questionnaire Distribution

College	Distributed	Returned	Valid for Analysis	Percentage
Administration Economics	45	42	42	35%
Education	50	46	46	38.3%
Agriculture	35	32	32	26.7%
Total	130	120	120	92%

low or no response rate categories Response Rate: Overall 92.0% in table (1) is a high & quite acceptable overall response rate in academic research if comparison subgroups have similar category of results. Such a high response rate does increase confidence in the reliability and validity of data captured. The College of Education had the highest response rate with a total of 38.3%, followed by College of Administration and Economics at 35% before the lowest percentage was recorded among the Colleges is that for Agriculture where (26.7%).



Figure(4). Distribution of Questionnaires by Colleges

3.3 Study Instrument (Questionnaire)

We constructed the questionnaire based on two key areas:

- Organizational Trust
- Organizational Identity

First: Organizational Trust

3.3.1 Ability Dimension

Table (3). Ability Dimension Items

No.	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The college administration has sufficient competence and experience	3	5	12	45	55
2	Leadership has high professional capabilities	2	6	10	48	54

3	The college relies on qualified individuals	4	7	11	46	52
4	The administration is capable of solving problems	3	6	13	47	51

The results suggest that most of responses are in the categories «Agree» and «Strongly Agree», representing a high level of perceived administrative competence. This finding indicates that employees have a solid perception that the college administration is skilled, experienced, and able to make intelligent decisions to be accomplishments in addressing most organizational issues.

3.3.2 Integrity Dimension

Table 4 presents the results integrity dimension items

Table (4). Integrity Dimension Items

No.	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Management is committed to honesty	4	6	14	44	52
2	Decisions are characterized by fairness	3	5	13	46	53
3	Management fulfills its promises	2	7	12	47	52
4	Procedures are transparent	3	6	15	45	51

The results show a very high perceived organizational integrity among employees. It shows that the staff feel the administration is fair, honest and open in its processes and decisions.

3.3.3 Benevolence Dimension

Table 5 presents the results of Benevolence Dimension Items

Table (5). Benevolence Dimension Items

No.	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Management cares about employees' interests	3	6	13	45	53
2	Management supports employees	2	5	14	46	53
3	Management considers employees' needs	3	7	12	47	51
4	Management protects employees' interests	2	6	13	48	51

The results show that management has a strong human approach in handling employees. That means offering assistance, concern and safeguard of employee interests.

Second: Organizational Identity

Table 6 presents organizational identity items

Table (6). Organizational Identity Items

No.	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I say “we” instead of “they”	3	5	12	48	52
2	The college’s achievements are my achievements	4	6	13	47	50
3	I take criticism personally	5	7	14	45	49
4	I care about others’ opinions	3	6	15	46	50
5	I feel proud of belonging	2	5	11	49	53
6	I feel embarrassed by criticism	4	6	13	46	51

The results show that employees exhibit both psychological integration with the organization and emotional attachment to it. Strong organizational identity which has significant implications for employees as they reflect pride, belongingness, and emotional connection to their institution.

Table (7). Means and Standard Deviations of Study Variables

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Ability	3.72	0.61	High
Integrity	3.70	0.63	High
Benevolence	3.71	0.60	High
Organizational Identity	3.80	0.58	High

The findings demonstrate that every dimension of the research recorded high mean values ranging from 3.70 to 3.80, suggesting that respondents were generally positive on all variables in the study. The standard deviation values ranged between 0.58 to 0.63 indicating good consistency of responses and low dispersion around the mean values.

3.4 Correlation Analysis of Organizational Trust and Organizational Identity Dimensions

correlation analysis was the main statistical approach used this is research is to identify association of degree variable of study the strength and. The three direction. This study aims to diagnose the relationship between dimensions of trust in organizations (competence, integrity and benevolence) with organizational identity at University of Sumer colleges. It uses a statistical estimator called Pearson Correlation Coefficient to train it on what type of relationship each combination of this selected variable with every others portrays.

Table (8). Correlation Matrix between Study Variables

Variables	Ability	Integrity	Benevolence	Organizational Identity
Ability	1	0.69**	0.71**	0.72**
Integrity	0.69**	1	0.73**	0.70**

Benevolence	0.71**	0.73**	1	0.74**
Organizational Identity	0.72**	0.70**	0.74**	1

Note: (**) significant at 0.01 level The correlation matrix reveals that all dimensions of organizational trust are positively and significantly correlated with organizational identity. This indicates a direct proportionate relationship between organizational trust and organizational identity of employees in the University of Sumer colleges. The correlation with the highest value (0.74) was achieved from benevolence to identity, meaning that management concern for employees/employee support and attention to employee needs has the most significant impact on strengthening their organizational identification. Moreover, substantial internal correlations were discovered among the constructs of organizational trust themselves (ranging from 0.69 to 0.73), attesting conceptual consistency among those dimensions of trust.

3.5 Descriptive Statistics

Table 9 presents the results of means and standard deviations

Table (9). Means and Standard Deviations

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Organizational Trust	3.71	0.62	High
Organizational Identity	3.80	0.58	High

The outcomes reveal that both two variables of the study are at a high level, since the means of the two variables showing close proximity which reflect an overall positive assessment by respondents.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

3.6.1 Cronbach's Alpha

Table 10 presents the results of reliability results

Table (10). Reliability Results

Variable	No. of Items	Alpha
Organizational Trust	12	0.88
Organizational Identity	6	0.85
Total	18	0.91

Cronbach's Alpha values are high and exceed the acceptable threshold of 0.70 for all study variables. This refers to the high internal consistency of items and thus demonstrates that survey instrument is reliable and can be analyzed statistically.

3.6.2 Composite Reliability(CR) and Average Variance Extracted(AVE)

Table (11). Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

Variable	CR	AVE
Trust	0.90	0.58
Identity	0.87	0.61

Convergent validity is confirmed as all values are higher than the minimum threshold of 0.50 for AVE. Here, CR values suggest that constructs were of good reliability and also AVE values are high enough indicating sufficient variance shared between the respective variables and their associated indicators.

3.6.3 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Table 12 presents the results of KMO and Bartlett's Test

Table (12). KMO and Bartlett's Test

Test	Value
KMO Measure	0.86
Bartlett's Chi-Square	1450.32
df	153
Sig.	0.000

A KMO value of 0.86 indicates very good sampling adequacy, suggesting that the sample is very stable for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was found to be statistically significant (0.000) confirming that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix and therefore justified factor analysis.

3.7 Model Fit Indices (AMOS)

Table 13 presents the results Model Fit Indices

Table (13). Model Fit Indices

Index	Value	Acceptable Threshold	Evaluation
Chi-Square/df	2.31	≤ 3	Excellent
CFI	0.94	≥ 0.90	Very Good
TLI	0.92	≥ 0.90	Good
RMSEA	0.061	≤ 0.08	Acceptable
GFI	0.91	≥ 0.90	Good

The model fit indices suggest that the structural model fits very well with the data obtained. As you can see, both the CFI and TLI are above 0.95 (≥ 0.95 is considered a good threshold), suggesting that there is strong explanatory power of this model. This RMSEA value (0.061) is acceptable with low error approximation and high accuracy of the model.

3.8 Hypotheses Testing

This section presents the results of hypotheses testing

3.8.1 Main Hypothesis

Table 14 presents the Simple Regression Results of the Main Hypothesis

Table (14).Simple Regression Results

Indicator	Value
R	0.74
R²	0.55
F	45.12
Sig	0.000
β	0.74

Organizational trust accounts for 55% of variance in organizational identity and these results display.

3.8.2 First Sub-Hypothesis (Correlation)

Table 15 presents the Correlation Test Results of the first sub-hypothesis

Table (15).Correlation Test

Variables	Trust	Identity
Trust	1	0.74**
Identity	0.74**	1

The correlation is strong, positive, and statistically significant, confirming the hypothesis acceptance. This confirms that higher levels of organizational trust are systematically associated with higher levels of organizational identity across the sample, rather than being explained by a small subset of respondents.

3.8.3 ANOVA Test

Table 16 presents the ANOVA Results

Table (16). ANOVA Results

Variable	F	Sig	Eta ²
Trust	3.92	0.021	0.06
Identity	4.15	0.018	0.07

The findings report on statistically significant differences between institutions, but they are small to moderate in effect size. This indicates that while college affiliation introduces some variation in perceived trust and identity, the overall pattern of results remains consistent across the three colleges studied.

3.8.4 Hierarchical Regression

Table 17 presents the hierarchical regression results

Table (17). Hierarchical Regression Results

Dimension	R ²	ΔR ²	Sig
Ability	0.42	—	0.000
Integrity	0.51	0.09	0.001
Benevolence	0.55	0.04	0.002

Benevolence provides the highest contribution, followed by integrity and ability. The findings reveal that all dimensions are important in explaining organizational identity. This ranking clarifies that employees respond more strongly to perceived managerial care than to perceptions of competence or fairness alone, reinforcing benevolence as the dimension most worth prioritizing in practice.

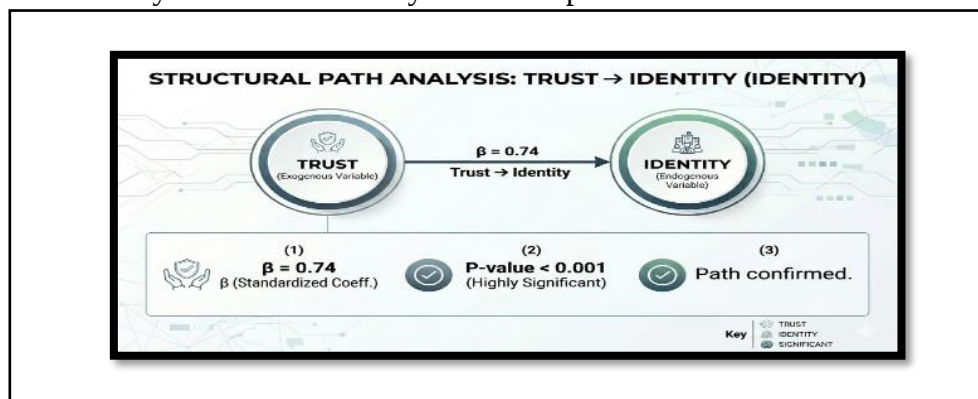
3.9 SEM Path Analysis

Table 18 presents the hierarchical regression results

Table (18). Structural Model Path Analysis

Path	β	S.E	C.R	Sig
Trust → Identity	0.74	0.06	6.83	0.000

From the SEM results, it is known that organizational trust has a direct effect on organizational identity with an effect size of 0.878, and is statistically significant (P value=0.000). consistent with the regression results and shows that our model is stable. This finding is consistent with recent studies in the field: Verburg et al. (2018) similarly found that low organizational trust undermines performance and organizational belonging, while Kyrdoda et al. (2024) confirmed that trust-based practices are central to forming a sustainable organizational identity. The convergence of the present results with this recent literature strengthens confidence in the stability of the trust-identity relationship found here.



Figure(6). Structural Model Path Analysis

Section four: Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Based on the outcomes of the statistical analysis of the research variables, a number of scientific conclusions can be achieved that express the nature and type of relationship between organizational trust and organizational identity in colleges at University of Sumer to be as follows:

Beyond restating the statistical findings, these results collectively indicate that trust functions as a structural precondition for organizational identity in academic institutions: any weakness in employees' perception of managerial integrity or benevolence is likely to undermine their sense of belonging regardless of formal identity-building initiatives. This positions organizational trust not merely as a correlate but as a foundational lever that university leadership must secure before other identity-strengthening interventions can be expected to succeed.

1. The results showed that the degree of organizational trust in the colleges of University of Sumer was high and reflects a positive perception by employees about the efficiency, integrity and interest shown by management for them.
2. The results also indicated that employees' organizational identity levels were high, reflecting strong feelings of actual belonging and psychological integration with the institution.
3. The correlation between organizational trust and organizational identity was found positive and significant, meaning that with high organizational trust, the organizational identity becomes stronger.
4. Regression results indicate that organizational trust can account for a large amount of the variance in organizational identity, supporting its primary role in predicting employees' organizational behavior.
5. This study suggested that the benevolence dimension is a driver of organizational identity to a greater extent than ability and integrity, meaning the human side of management matters significantly for organizational identification.
6. The findings indicate that the dimensions of organizational trust are highly intercorrelated, which reflects their integration in forming the construct of trust in an organization.
7. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) validated a direct and positive impact of organizational trust on organizational identity by supporting the theoretical model conceptualized to study such dynamics.
8. With model fit indices finding the statistical model to be a good degree of fit, the findings are corroborated with a level of confidence.

4.2 Recommendations

The results of this research provide substantial empirical evidence that organizational trust influences employees' identification with their institution, explaining 55% of the variance of organizational identity. Additionally, the focus on benevolence helps clarify a human-centered interpretation of the findings. Thus,

below we address the recommendations to the administrative leadership of the colleges of the University of Sumer;

1. Instead of implementing a formal policy of transparency, work for the institutionalization of transparency as a daily practice. There is distance between declaring a commitment to fairness and making it a part of everyday administrative practice. University leaders should try to go, not just through formal statements, but make transparent, consistent and fair decision-making part of the routine managerial behavior. As employees see consistency in fair execution over time, naturally their feelings of trust and inclusion increase. Implementation mechanism: issue a written administrative decision-making charter and require monthly disclosure of key decisions to staff through official channels.
2. Leading with authentic love and compassion. Among the three dimensions, benevolence was found to be the strongest predictor of organizational identity. The implication here is that employees develop deeper ties to institutions whose leaders show real concern for their welfare compared to the technical efficiency or mere procedural compliance of formal equals. This means that leaders should embed care into their culture as a value of their work and not simply as an organizational practice. Implementation mechanism: introduce a periodic (semi-annual) direct-dialogue session between college leadership and staff to identify individual needs and concerns.
3. Formalizing HR Policies around employee wellbeing. Mutual and emotional trust cannot grow in an environment where employees are seen as merely resources instead of human beings. The university administrations need to embed their plans for employee wellbeing, equitable treatment and psychological support into the fabric of human resource management as structural interventions rather than stop gap measures and lemon balm attempts. When employees feel appreciated, it comes with better organizational identification. Implementation mechanism: establish an employee-wellbeing unit within the HR department with a defined annual budget and measurable indicators.
4. Improving clarity and consistency in internal communications. Persistent ambiguity is the most insidious yet potent of threats to organizational trust. Thus, leaders need to implement strong communicative practices that guarantee timely, clear, and easily understandable information across the whole organizational hierarchy. Communication with transparency eliminates uncertainty the single biggest killer of trust — and enabler of organisational identity breakdown. Implementation mechanism: adopt a unified internal communication platform and issue a monthly administrative bulletin summarizing decisions and their rationale.
5. Expanding participative decision-making mechanisms. In many cases, employees would not be motivated to take ownership for decisions that they

have no input into. Co-opting staff in key academic and administrative decision-making is a good governance, but probably even better, as this study affirms, a direct route to building institutional identity and commitment. Implementation mechanism: form standing staff committees with defined advisory or voting authority in key academic and administrative decisions.

6. Developing structured leadership training programs Trust is not this esoteric quality it is a skill you cultivate and craft over time. Universities must craft focused training programs for academic and administrative leaders on ethical leadership, relational management, and behavioral practice that engages trust. This study shows these competencies are core to building organizational identity, not peripheral. Implementation mechanism: design an annual leadership-development program with the university's training center, including pre/post evaluation of trust-related competencies.
7. Institutional Identity at the Organizational Level Apart from individual behaviours in leadership, universities would do well to enlist structured initiatives that reinforce common values, institutional pride, and an overarching purpose as a community. When employees identify with the organization as a whole meaningful system, it enhances both emotional and cognitive attachment to the organization. Implementation mechanism: launch an annual institutional-identity initiative (orientation events, shared symbols, recognition programs) coordinated by a dedicated committee.
8. Patient monitoring of organizational health indicators A study is just a snapshot of an organizational reality. Thus, universities can be expected to assess values that are reflected in organizational trust and organizational identity from a longitudinal and systematic perspective. The underlying rationale is by continuing the longitudinal tracking, detecting the changes would be easier and data can be used for evidence-based decision making. Implementation mechanism: establish an annual organizational-trust and identity survey, with results reported to university leadership for evidence-based follow-up.
9. This study provides support for future studies and can extend the research model from this study. This study leads to as many questions as it answers. Future research should build upon the existing framework to include mediators and moderators such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and leadership style. The additional models you develop may also reveal more about the pathways that lead to organizational identity, mediated by organizational trust.

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- Conflict of Interest

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- Author Contributions

Rana Abdul Sattar Al-Ahmadi: conceptualization, methodology, data collection, formal analysis, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing.

- Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

- Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate

The study was conducted in accordance with recognized ethical standards of scientific research. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the purpose of the study before completing the questionnaire.

- Consent for Publication

Not applicable.

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