

The Impact of Employees Trust and Distrust in Organizational Leadership in Transforming the Sri Lankan Private Higher Education Industry

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The purpose of this study is to identify the factors that build employee trust in organizational leadership and the factors that form employee distrust in organizational leadership within the Sri Lankan private higher education industry. In addition, the study also reviewed the relationship between the outcomes of trust in organizational leadership and distrust in organizational leadership with transformative change initiatives within the Sri Lankan private higher education industry. The study reviewed the most recent and relevant literature on leadership trustworthiness to analyze the research problem of transforming the Sri Lankan private higher education industry without compromising the employee's trust. A systematic literature review (SLR) was adopted to identify, appraise, and synthesize all the evidence to answer the purpose of this study. The systematic literature review (SLR) was mainly carried out based on literature published between the period of 1990 to 2020. The critical antecedent factors that were identified to be essential to build employee trust in organizational leadership included the leader's ability, benevolence, integrity, and value alignment. Furthermore, the factors that were identified to break trust or form distrust with organizational leadership included continuous monitoring of employees and lack of autonomy given to employees. Trust in organizational leadership is identified to have various behavioral, performance and attitudinal outcomes in organizations. This included organizational citizenship behavior, organizational performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, learning, knowledge sharing and followership. On the other hand, distrust in organizational leadership is identified to have various negative consequences. This included formation of a culture of parochialism, secrecy, finger pointing, self-protective behaviors and destructive behaviors such as neglect and sabotage. The main contribution of this study is that it enhances the understanding of trust in organizational leadership and its relevance to organizational transformation while adding significant theoretical contribution to theories such as social exchange theory, leader member exchange theory and transformational leadership theory. The limitation of this study is that the employee's trust in organizational leadership literature contains pivotal antecedents related to organizational factors, relational factors and individual factors. However, due to the time constraints of this study, all the pivotal antecedents related to these factors were not identified in this study. Hence, this study only included the antecedents that were only related to organizational leadership behavior.

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