



Building Trust in Managers Through Agile Practices in a Dynamic Environment

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to examine how six agile practices – team collaboration, competency, flexibility, quickness, changed oriented, result oriented- may support and enhance trust in managers. A quantitative method was used in this study. Based on a sample of 269 employees from Turkey, research analyzed the relationship between study’s variables by using SPSS programs. The study indicates which specific aspects of (women) agile leadership contribute to increasing trust in the managers. Female managers have faced many critical challenges in today dynamic environment. Through the lens of managing effective organizations in a variety of contexts, this study provides important insight into the link between women’s agile leadership behaviors and trust in managers. Because there is limited studies about trust in managers in agile context and agile practices (dimensions) in literature. This research is one of the first study to research the impact of agile practices (dimensions) on trust in managers. While dynamic environmental conditions and team members’ personal attributes must be taken into account, agile women leaders practices may also help to create trust among team members and enhance trust in managers.

Keywords: Agile leadership · Female manager · Trust in manager · Agile women leadership · Dynamic environment

1 Introduction

The Agile Manifesto emphasizes agile teams and the role of team members. Teams must organize and self-manage, include motivated employees, have the environment and support needed, and be trusted to complete the task [1]. In this world of agility, female continue to develop managerial careers and their experiences impact employee trust in managers and practice to create organizational climate. Team members have far more control than they would have had if a plan-driven agile methodology development had been used. This is important for the manager, who has typically served as the principal controller [2]. Managers must, therefore, put their trust in their team members and be trusted by team members to make the correct decisions and finish their jobs on time. There are many studies about trust and managers in literature. Because, trust is essential in every development team, but it is especially important in self-managing teams since team members are so relied on each other. However, there is limited study about agile

women leadership and trust. Agile women leadership are important managerial function and successful for any business functioning in an increasingly dynamic environment. The numerous agile dimensions employed by the agile team are one method to ensure that this occurs. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine how six agile decisions –team collaboration, competency, flexibility, quickness, changed oriented, result oriented- may support and enhance trust in managers.

In other words, the purpose of this study is to investigate how trust may emerge and be developed among agile team members as a consequence of utilizing agile practices/dimensions, which may lead to good team outcomes such as building stronger relationships among team members or enhanced team performance. Previous research has highlighted the significance of trust in agile teams [2–4], but little has been written about how agile methods might improve or reduce trust among team members, that is a motivation for this research.

2 Literature Review

Leadership skills fade and are constantly being replaced by today’s dynamic, challenging and uncertain business conditions. Leaders must be adaptive and flexible enough to change their actions and behaviors as circumstances change in order to be effective. One of the most important success factors for managers and directors is their willingness and ability to learn from experience in combination with changes in the environment [5] and then to utilize that knowledge that learning to perform effectively in new circumstances for agile management. At the organizational level, different types of leadership exist to ensure the survival of the organization. Agile leadership is undoubtedly essential for organizational sustainability in terms of the speed of change. Additionally, in today’s competitive industry, employee engagement is critical to increasing organizational productivity and competitiveness, which is intrinsically related to team performance. Agile leadership has 6 dimensions [6]. These dimensions are to be team collaboration, competency, flexibility, quickness, changed oriented, result oriented.

2.1 Team Collaboration

The agile leader inspires, willingly assembles and motivates his/her teams [7] and strengthens its teams and informs them about technology and the environment. Agile leader creates a team which is collaborative and systematic [8], knows that agility can be achieved with team agility.

2.2 Competency

Competency is the skills, knowledge and abilities required to recognize market possibilities, create a vision to capitalize on these chances, and design realistic strategies to generate organizational and stakeholder value [9]. Competency is the ability of an agile manager that easily adapt to changes both in internal and external of organizations.

2.3 Flexibility

The technology used by the company may change, the location or work of the employees and teams may change, the raw material or finished product used may change, the supplier may change, and the wholesalers may change. Agile leader takes into account unpredictable environmental conditions and adapts to changes [10] and can anticipate and respond to changes [11]. This adaptation is called flexibility skill of agile leader Competency.

2.4 Quickness

It is important for organizations to be able to act quickly to survive in today's competitive environment, especially in terms of the ability to develop new knowledge in the face of change and the ability to innovate. It is stated by Christopher [12] that this basic ability of agile leadership can be realized by the use of appropriate technology and the harmony of all processes.

2.5 Changed Oriented

Today, in an uncertain and turbulent environment in which telecommunication and information systems are changing quickly it is an inevitable result that companies will also change. For this reason, being focused on change and change oriented is one of the main requirements for companies to continue their survival. The agile leader adapts to innovations and changes [13]. The agile leader considers changing environmental conditions and adjusts to them [10] and is a leader who can foresee and respond to changes [11].

2.6 Result Oriented

An agile leader is a leader who quickly implements the necessary directions by focusing on the conclusion of the project s/he is working on. Uncompleted works and project, uncompleted tactics and policies, effective and inefficient ways of doing business mean failure for the agile leader. Therefore, agile leader is result oriented leader [14].

2.7 Trust

Trust is not a new subject in the world of management and has many definitions in literature. According to Lewicki [15], the confident positive prediction of another's behavior, such as words, acts, and decisions, is referred to as trust. Trust is a critical component of every effective organization [16]. Researchers in management studies, particularly those interested in organizational and management behaviour, have made trust a top focus. It is the level of confidence one person has in another's ability and desire to behave honestly and predictably [17]. There are two elements of organizational trust to examine in the context of an organization. These are trust in the organization and trust in the manager [18]. The employee's belief in the administrator's ability to keep commitments, act fairly, and provide honest and right answers is referred to as trust in supervisor [19].

3 The Link Between Agile Leadership and Trust

As organizational teams become more diverse, with team members from a variety of backgrounds and cultures, creating trust among all members is crucial for them to function successfully together [20, 21]. The link between leadership and work engagement is influenced by trust in leadership [22]. People are more likely to be engaged at work when they have more confidence in their leaders. According to research, trust in managers is vital in developing employee trust [23].

Several studies have found that trust-building is associated with decreased resistance to change [24, 25]. Oreg [25] discovered a link between cognitive, emotional, and behavioral resistance and action against change attempts. Trust in management has also been linked to a higher level of commitment to change [26]. In addition, trust in managers has been demonstrated to mediate the link between openness to change and variables such as management communication and involvement [27]. The agile literature, according to Iivari and Iivari [28], is extremely people-oriented, with trust being one of the fundamental cultural attributes. The agile literature, according to Iivari and Iivari [28], is extremely people-oriented, with trust being one of the fundamental cultural traits. In the agile literature, trust is frequently characterized in terms of teams requiring trust from managers in order to work in an agile manner [29]. It is also stated that it is critical for teams to establish consumer trust [30]. The need of trust within agile teams has also been discussed with agile practices such as daily stand-ups and sprint planning being recommended to improve team trust [3].

Agile leadership is adaptive to unique difficulties or possibilities, and it operates with a high level of adaptability, learning, and development [31], as well as building companies' ability to survive in uncertain competitive settings [32]. The majority of agile executives are doing an outstanding job in their respective firms [33]. Agile leaders prioritize teamwork over individual performance. Because collaboration has received a lot of attention in management science. Teamwork is essential for job and personal fulfillment [34]. Thus, agile leadership may be characterized as a set of tactics that influence managers' trust in terms of achieving desired goals. To promote their team vision and corporate goals, they must maintain ongoing group motivation and trust in their supervisors. This will act as a guide and motivation to their staff, increasing their degree of confidence in managers.

Other studies on agile leadership connected diverse factors are accessible in the literature; however, past studies overlook the consideration of the function of agile women leadership in manager trust. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Agile leadership practices have positive and significant relationship with trust in manager.
- H1a: Result orientation has positive and significant relationship with trust in manager.
- H1b: Team collaboration has positive and significant relationship with trust in manager.
- H1c: Competency has positive and significant relationship with trust in manager.
- H1d: Flexibility has positive and significant relationship with trust in manager.
- H1e: Quickness has positive and significant relationship with trust in manager.
- H1f: Change orientation has positive and significant relationship with trust in manager.

4 Results

4.1 Data Collection and Procedures

This research has been carried out using quantitative method. The questionnaire was conducted on a sample of 269 employees from business enterprises in Turkey. All respondents had female superiors. The survey was conducted online from January to July 2021. The sample selection was conducted according to the convenience sampling technique [35].

4.2 Measures and Analytical Method

Two scales were used to collect data. Questionnaire on agile leadership is replicated from previous research [6]. It has 6 dimensions including 32 items. The other scale is about interpersonal trust in managers [36]. Five-point Likert scale was used to ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = Strongly Disagree - 5 = Strongly Agree).

Statistical analysis was performed using linear regression analysis [37]. Correlations were analyzed to estimate the assumed hypotheses. As a result of doing multivariate regression, it is verified which elements of agile leadership are predictors of trust in managers.

4.3 Data Analysis and Results

Table 1 shows the results of Person correlations between variables. The analysis of the results indicates relationships between the various dimensions of agile leadership and trust in managers.

To test the H1 hypothesis, a multivariate regression analysis was conducted. The results support this hypothesis and indicate that selected dimensions of agile leadership have a positive effect on trust in managers ($F(1,201) = 124; p < 0.001$) (H1a). In particular: ($\beta = 0.353; p = 0.045$). In addition, competence also has an effect on trust in managers ($\beta = 0.215; p = 0.006$) (H1c). Finally, flexibility is the dimension of agile

Table 1. Correlation among study variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Result Orientation	1						
Team Collaboration	0.901***	1					
Competency	0.889***	0.853***	1				
Flexibility	0.875***	0.882***	0.861***	1			
Quickness	0.853***	0.813***	0.863***	0.807***	1		
Changed Orientation	0.059	0.105	0.064	0.058	0.075	1	
Trust in Managers	0.816***	0.796***	0.814***	0.830***	0.766***	0.092	1

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2. Standard recommendation of average lighting level

Source	B	SE B	β	t	p
Intercept	0.5266	0.2310		2.280	0.023
result orientation	0.1639	0.0815	0.1820	2.010	0.045
team collaboration	0.0425	0.0754	0.0465	0.563	0.574
Competency	0.2152	0.0780	0.2228	2.759	0.006
Flexibility	0.3586	0.0732	0.3750	4.897	<.001
Quickness	0.0710	0.0636	0.0755	1.116	0.265
changed orientation	0.0491	0.0446	0.0351	1.101	0.272

Note. B: the unstandardized beta; *SE B*: the standard error for the unstandardized beta; β : the standardized beta; t : the t test statistic; p : the probability value.

female leadership that has the greatest effect on trust in managers ($\beta = 0.358$; $p < 0.001$) (H1d). Moreover, it explains the 77% of variance in trust in managers ($R^2 = 0.773$) which is a very significant result. The multivariate regression results are presented in Table 2.

The above results positively verified hypotheses H1a, H1c and H1d. Furthermore, they supported the relationship between women's agile leadership capabilities and trust in managers.

5 Conclusion

Current study researched the link between agile women leadership capabilities and trust in managers. Female leaders' agile capabilities have a significant impact on trust of workers in management, and they are likely one of the most successful strategies for enabling high success in today's hyper-dynamic environment. Investigate how each different agile practice may contribute in the optimization of an agile team's performance [38].

This study has some important implications and findings for managers' practices and management field theory. First, agile women leadership practices can increase the perception of trust employee in managers. This result is in line with McHugh, et al. [3] and McHugh, et al. [3]. They found that agility leadership positively related with trust and is also line with Shamani & Abbas and Akkaya & Bagieńska [39, 40]. They resulted that effect agile leadership in reducing work pressure that agile leadership negatively affected work press which is closely related with trust in mangers. Those research supported this research hypothesis. Second, the attributes of an agile leader enable employee to accept changes in the environment and become more adaptable in their organization's complicated, unpredictable, and dynamic environment. Thus, agile leadership and strategic flexibility are critical for SMEs' digital transformation [13]. The actions of a high-quality agile female leader provide employees with resources that are connected to confidence and trust in managers.

More researches are needed to investigate the influence of agile women leadership on employees' confidence and trust in managers, as leaders play a crucial role in any firm

in encouraging and pushing subordinates to attain their maximum potential. As a result, this study answered the research question by investigating the association between agile female leadership practices and trust in managers. In today's changing climate, female managers have encountered several crucial hurdles.

This study sheds some crucial insight on the relationship between agile women leadership behaviors and trust in managers through the perspective of managing efficient organizations in a variety of circumstances.

Despite the research is originality, it has some limitations. These limitations are associated with the quantitative analysis of respondents' perceptions of the issues under investigation. Furthermore, limiting the research sample to only organizations in a single country restricts the breadth of the findings. Further research should include an examination of the relationship between agile women leadership and trust in managers in different countries, an in-depth examination of respondents' perceptions using qualitative tools, and an examination of specific instruments promoting the formation of agile leaders in the context of trust.

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