Barbara Kożuch
Jagiellonian University
e-mail: barbara.kozuch@uj.edu.pl

Regina Lenart-Gansiniec
Jagiellonian University
e-mail: regina.lenart-gansiniec@uj.edu.pl

Katarzyna Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek
Silesian University of Technology
e-mail: katarzyna.sienkiewicz-malyjurek@polsl.pl

SHAPING TRUST IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Abstract

Background. The rationale behind the selection of the topic are the shifts that occur in education institutions. The uncertainty of the environment, progressive demographic decline, and the requirement of remaining competitive are driving schools to seek new ways to survive and present an attractive prospectus. One of the challenges faced by schools, and at the same time a legal obligation imposed by the legislation governing education, is the openness of schools to the environment – understood as the establishment of collaboration by the school with its local environment. The literature emphasises that openness to the environment proves to be one of the factors strengthening trust in the organisation. Trust is crucial in shaping mutual relationships between an organisation and its environment. The paper assumes that the prerequisite for engendering trust on the part of candidates and their parents is the appropriate fulfilment of the mission by schools through their efficient management, which may be easily discerned when observing the quality of education.

Research aims. The paper strives to assess the impact of trust in schools on the enrolment results and to identify which principal contributors to trust are used in the practice of Polish schools.

Methodology. Accomplishing the objective of the paper was made possible by an analysis of the body of literature devoted to public trust, complemented by empirical studies. The studies were conducted on a targeted sample selected in an expert manner, comprising public upper-secondary schools located in the territory of the Silesian agglomeration. These studies used a structured interview methodology. The survey covered students in the first year of three upper-secondary schools (N = 15), their parents (N = 30), and principals of upper-secondary schools (N = 3). While selecting students for the survey, winners and finalists of Olympiads and competitions for schools were taken into consideration.

Key findings. The research process led to the conclusion that trust in schools has a direct impact on their enrolment results. Moreover, the findings show the degree to which the primary trust factors are harnessed in upper-secondary education institutions. Further in-depth research requires identification of interdependencies between trust and enrolment success of the school in the context of its ongoing collaboration with partners. After all, trust management constitutes a promising field of challenges for further detailed scientific research.

Keywords: public trust, trust creation, secondary schools, education.

INTRODUCTION

A high level of competitiveness and shifts in the environment present new challenges for organisations. For many organisations it implies a need to search for new ways to survive and flourish. The issue of trust currently receives ample attention from the aspect of organisational theory and research. Trust is both the core and the most useful resource in the organisation. In essence, it generates the value, determines and streamlines team work, drives interpersonal relationships as well as diminishing translational costs and shaping relational capital.[1] Moreover, the area where public trust is shaped and maintained was identified.

Despite research in trust, many questions remain unanswered. Specifically, relatively scant attention has been devoted to building public trust. This paper attempts to fill this research gap by analysing factors that foster trust and linking it with the success of the specific venture. The research problem addressed aims at expanding the current knowledge on trust management.

Educational institutions are subject to manifold changes that take place in all domains. Tremendous importance is given to social, political, and economic transformations that trigger a new manner by which organisations operate across all their aspects. Therefore, under these circumstances, the requirements for educational institutions also alter. Voices have been raised to tailor principles guiding the operations of educational institutions to suit the new requirements. Thus, to survive on the market of educational services, schools need to resort to the management theory and effect changes in their management methods. As a result, the outcome may be seen in the form of successful fulfilment of the school mission due to more effective management. This process may be easily recognised by reviewing teaching standards at a given school.

The literature assumes that the establishment of long-term relationships may become the key for each organisation and act as a remedy to the crisis. Underlying this

---

[1] B. Kożuch, Z. Dobrowolski (2014). *Creating Public Trust. An Organisational Perspective.* Peter Lang GmbH, Frankfurt am Main.

approach lies the idea of building trust.[2] Without trust, it is difficult to expect collaboration with internal as well as external relations of daily operations in the organisation. Hence, trust surges to prominence in contemporary management.

The paper focuses on key aspects concerned with the factors driving effective trust. At the same time, it fits into mainstream contemporary trends in research on inter-organisational relationships and collaboration. When trust is investigated from the perspective of the organisation, it may be structured into: interpersonal, organisational, intra- and inter-organisational trust. This paper puts organisational trust under the spotlight.

To be more specific, the objective of the paper is to empirically assess the impact of trust in schools among students and their parents on the school's enrolment success and to identify the primary trust-building factors which are applied in the practice of educational institutions, illustrated using the example of the upper-secondary school level. In particular, focus was brought to students, and particularly the winners/finalists of Olympiads and competitions for schools. These students enjoy more choice opportunities than the typical candidates. On the whole, they choose a school in a more rational way. Narrowing the research focus to upper-secondary institutions results from the closure of these types of schools which is already underway. According to figures provided by the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS), there is a decline in the number of these schools by 12% on an annual basis.[3] Coupled with this, over recent years the number of candidates for schools is lower than the number of school places offered. Due to the considerable shrinking in population, the market for educational services becomes increasingly competitive.

The paper comprises three sections. The first part provides a critical overview of the literature on the specifics embedded in trust from the organisational perspective. The second part discusses the primary trust-building factors. The third and last section shows the findings from the empirical research conducted among first-year students at upper-secondary schools as well as the parents supporting their decisions and the principals of these schools. The research was explanatory in its nature. The research process yielded the conclusion that trust in schools has a relatively high impact on their enrolment results.

---

[2] A. Wójcik-Karpacz (2014). *Zaufanie w relacjach międzyorganizacyjnych: substytucja i komplementarność*. "Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu", vol. 366; B. Kożuch (2014). *Organizacyjna perspektywa zaufania publicznego. Zarys koncepcji* [in:] Ł. Sułkowski, A. Woźniak (eds.), *Przedsiębiorczość i zarządzanie*, "Zarządzanie Humanistyczne", vol. XV, no. 11, part III; B. Kożuch, K. Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek (2015). *Dimensions of Intra-organisational Trust in Local Public Administration*. Proceedings International Research Society For Public Management Conference, Birmingham.

[3] GUS (2014). *Oświata i wychowanie w roku szkolnym 2013/2014*. Warszawa.

CONCEPT AND ESSENCE OF TRUST

Trust, both in common language as well as in the reference literature is defined and understood differently. As a consequence, many definitions of trust occur, and when analysing them, it is possible to identify a certain common basis for interpreting this concept. Frequently, the emphasis is placed on the issue of characteristics related to uncertainty[4], interdependency, sensitivity[5], credibility[6] as well as reliability, predictability, readiness for collaboration, goodwill, and responsibility.[7] Importantly, definitions of trust also include aspects of trust concerned with: the credibility of the other party[8] and willingness to trust the other party connected with a sensitivity to its activities.[9]

Trust is broadly understood to mean the conviction about the credibility and benevolence of the trusted entity and the decision to take risks with respect to future behaviours displayed by another person (or persons) in a situation of interdependencies and lack of control. From a slightly different perspective, trust tends to be associated with predicting positive effects generated by the activities of others, which is belief in the good intentions and expectation that others will deliver on their promises.[10] More broadly, trust is a subjective perception by a specific individual, being a spinoff of their judgements. It rests on the willingness to trust in the other party, raising awareness of sensitivity to its activities following assessment of the other party's credibility.[11]

Essentially, a great many typologies of trust may be traced in the literature. The paper omits a full exemplification of trust typology, because these may be found in the other works cited above. Attention should be devoted to the form of organisational trust. Basically, organisational trust is defined as the "perceived credibility of an organisation estimated by dimensions of transparency, integrity, competence, benevolence, and reliability, and based on information from the third party (reputation), personal experience, and compatibility of values (identification)".[12]

---

[4] A. Josang, S.L. Presti (2004). *Analysing the relationship between risk and trust* [in:] *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Trust Management*. Springer-Verlag, Berlin–Heidelberg, pp. 135–145.

[5] R.B. Handfield, C. Bechtel (2004). *Trust, power, dependence, and economics: Can SCM research borrow paradigms?*. "International Journal of Integrated Supply Management", vol. 1, no. 1.

[6] R. Hardin (2006). *Trust*. Polity Press Cambridge.

[7] B. Kożuch, *op.cit.*

[8] S.B. Sitkin, N.L. Roth (1993). *Explaining the limited effectiveness of legalistic remedies for trust/distrust*. "Organization Science", vol. 4; K. Blomqvist, P. Stahle (2000). *Building Organizational Trust*. 16th Annual IMP Conference, Bath, UK; L.G. Zucker (1986). *Production of trust: Institutional sources of economic structure*. "Organizational Behavior", vol. 8; A. Zaheer, B. McEvily, V. Perrone (1998). *Does trust matter? Exploring the effects of interorganizational and interpersonal trust on performance*. "Organization Science", vol. 9; B. Kożuch, Z. Dobrowolski, *op.cit.*

[9] R.C. Mayer, J.H. Davis, F.D. Schoorman (1995). *An integrative model of organizational trust*. "Academy of Management Review", vol. 20, p. 712.

[10] W.M. Grudzewski, I.K. Hajduk, A. Sankowska, M. Wańtuchowicz (2009). *Zarządzanie zaufaniem w przedsiębiorstwie*. Wolters Kluwer, Kraków.

[11] A. Sankowska (2011). *Wpływ zaufania na zarządzanie przedsiębiorstwem. Perspektywa wewnątrzorganizacyjna*. Difin, Warszawa, p. 34.

[12] M. Pirson (2008). *Facing the Trust Gap Measuring and Managing Stakeholder Trust*. SVH, Saarbrucken, p. 60.

Trust has an immense significance for an organisation's operations. First, trust is seen as the reason for establishing relationships and collaboration.[13] Trust is a force facilitating and simplifying coordination of social interactions and processes. Trust promotes collaboration while accomplishing the objectives set, and emerges as the requirement for integration, effective learning, and exchange of knowledge and experience.

Second, trust is a contributor to the reduction of transactional costs[14], risk[15], as well as uncertainty in terms of the organisation's operations in an unstable and unpredictable environment.[16]

Third, trust has key implications for interpersonal contacts inside the organisation. Overall, this refers to relationships, it inspires reciprocity and may enhance the quality and quantity of social interactions.[17]

As previously noted, organisational trust is a specific manifestation of an organisational climate.[18] Principally, this is associated with credibility, and more specifically, with the conviction about credibility represented by the other party. Thus, when deliberating the concept and essence of trust, it is vital to take into account its implications for generating collaborations, based on benevolence and integrity.

SHAPING TRUST IN PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS

The identification of the drivers of trust affects the manner by which the problems concerned with organisational trust are addressed.[19] Essentially, these drivers are volatile, they continually evolve and advance, thereby creating new solutions for a specific problem. Of importance, however, are two conditions that constitute a specific toolbox. When structuring them, it should be kept in mind that trust is largely

---

[13] P.C. Early (1986). *Trust, perceived importance of praise and criticism, and work performance: An examination of feedback in the United States and England*. "Journal of Management", vol. 12; J.L. Badaracco (1991). *The Knowledge Link: How Firms Compete Through Strategic Alliances*. Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA; J.L. Bennett (1996). *Building Relationships for Technology Transfer*. "Communications of the ACM", vol. 39, no. 9; G. Hamel (1991). *Competition for Competence and Inter-Partner Learning within International Strategic Alliances*. "Strategic Management Journal", no. 12; J. Paliszkiewicz (2013). *Zaufanie w zarządzaniu*. PWN, Warszawa.

[14] C. Handy (1995). *Trust and the virtual organization*. "Harvard Business Review", vol. 73, no. 3.

[15] P.S. Adler (2001). *Market, hierarchy, and trust: The knowledge economy and the future of capitalism*. "Organization Science", vol. 1, no. 2, p. 217.

[16] R.M. Morgan, S.D. Hunt (1994). *The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing*. "Journal of Marketing", vol. 58, no. 3, July, pp. 24–38.

[17] *Ibidem*.

[18] A. Sankowska (2013). *Further understanding of links between interorganisational trust and enterprise innovativeness – from a perspective of an enterprise*. "International Journal of Innovation and Learning", vol. 13, no. 3, p. 9.

[19] S. Bibb, J. Kourdi (2004). *Trust Matters for Organizational and Personal Success*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 161–167; B. Kożuch, *op.cit.*

based on the subjective conviction that the other party will not harness its advantage. At that point, elements related to the sense of safety and voluntary participation come to the foreground.

Drivers of trust may be divided by diverse criteria. Given the fields of their application, the following are distinguished: those concerned with (1) competences, (2) intra-organisational circumstances and (3) collaboration with the environment (table 1). Though, it is increasingly stressed that trust is built upon compliance with the reciprocity basis while exchanging values. For instance, Zucker argues that the following factors are significant: previous exchange, reputation, professionalization, and authority of institutions.[20] Other authors point out: attractiveness, dynamism, expertise, belief, intentions, reliability, and social responsibility.[21] It is revealed that core to organisational trust are the attitudes shown by senior management staff and employees towards clients.[22] From among numerous studies, the work by R.C. Mayer et. al. should receive attention.[23] From these authors three common factors have been identified: ability, benevolence, and integrity.

Competences[24] are a combination of different abilities, including capabilities of acquiring knowledge, which is crucial for the creation of competitive advantage, reputation, participation in projects, awards, mentions, new technologies, holding membership in organisations, or recommendations.[25] Of notable significance are reputation and opinions, as found in publicly available sources such as: mass media, publications issued by consumers' organisations, and certification authorities. Equally important are also individual sources of information, i.e.: friends, family, or acquaintances.[26]

Ability to inspire others[27] stems from the fact that superiors have a high impact on building trust in the organisation. All in all, providing the patterns for positive relationships starts from the top management and then permeates through

---

[20] L.G. Zucker, *op.cit.*

[21] W. Grudzewski, I.K. Hejduk, A. Sankowska, M. Wańtuchowicz (2007). *Zarządzanie zaufaniem w organizacji wirtualnej*. Difin, Warszawa, p. 136.

[22] L. Young, G. Albaum, (2003). *Measurement of trust in salesperson-customer relationships in direct selling.* "Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management", vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 253–269.

[23] R.C. Mayer, J.H. Davis, F.D. Schoorman, *op.cit.*

[24] R.C. O'Brien (1995). *Employee involvement in performance improvement: A consideration of tacit knowledge, commitment and trust.* "Employee Relations", vol. 17, no. 3; A.K. Mishra (1996). *Organizational responses to crisis: The centrality of trust* [in:] R.M. Kramer, T.R. Tyler (eds.), *Trust in Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA; K. Blomqvist (1997). *The many faces of trust*. "Scandinavian Journal of Management", vol. 13, no. 3.

[25] J. Rokita (2005). *Zarządzanie strategiczne. Tworzenie i utrzymywanie przewagi konkurencyjnej*. PWE, Warszawa, p. 143; W. Czakon (2009). *Przedsiębiorstwo oparte na wiedzy w kontekście międzyorganizacyjnym* [in:] R. Krupski (ed.), *Zarządzanie strategiczne. Problemy kierunki badań*. Prace Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Zarządzania i Przedsiębiorczości. Wydawnictwo Wałbrzyskiej Wyższej Szkoły Zarządzania i Przedsiębiorczości, Wałbrzych, p. 289.

[26] M. Sander, B. Weywara (2006). *Markenvertrauen im Rahmen des Markenmanagements, Konsumentenvertauen: Konzepte und Andwendungen für ein nachhaltiges Kundenbindungsmanagement*. Vahlen Franz Gmbh, München, p. 254.

[27] S.M. Covey (2009). *How the best leaders build trust. Leadership now*. http://www.leadershipnow.com/ CoveyOnTrust.html (access: 22.11.2015).

Table 1. Factors in building trust

Author/authors	Factors	Manifestation
O'Brien 1995 Mishra 1996 Sydow 1998 Kożuch, Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek 2015	Capabilities	Technological capability
		Business capability
		Meta ability to cooperate
Covey 2009	Ability to inspire others	Benevolent atmosphere
		Security and stability
		Honesty
Luhmann 1995 Ståhle 1998 Dodgson 1992 Sydow 1998 Creed and Miles 1996 Jones and George 1998 Zucker 1986 Nonaka 1996 Tyler, Kramer 1996 Hardy et al. 1998	Goodwill	Credibility
		Reciprocity
		Common values
		Accepted code of behaviour
		Personal mutual liking:
		Organisational identity
		Organisational culture
Luhmann 1979 O'Brien 1995 Mishra 1996 Das and Teng 1998 Sydow 1998 O'Brien 1995 Swan 1995 Whitener et al 1998 Jones and George 1998	Specific competences and experience	Sharing knowledge
		Internal communication
		Direct meetings
		Continuous interaction
		Transfer of key personnel
		Involvement

Source: own development based on literature.

middle management level and finally affecting behaviours among employees. This has a particular influence on sharing knowledge, fair conduct while competing, and no resistance to decisions made. Whereas, the ability to exert an influence by superiors and to inspire others is closely linked to the benevolent atmosphere prevailing in the company.

Goodwill is related to building the climate and culture of trust which includes, among others: structural factors[28], comprising: normative cohesion, organisation's transparency, stability of the social order, and employees' responsibility. Normative cohesion may be understood to mean a lasting system of applicable rules that determine the sense of order among the members of the organisation and their certainty of their identity with the company.[29] The literature highlights the conviction

---

[28] P. Sztompka (2002). *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa*. Znak, Kraków, pp. 318–319.

[29] M. Maccoby (2003). *To Build Trust, Ethics Are Not Enough*. "Research Technology Management", vol. 46, no. 5, p. 60.

that interpersonal trust positively affects the quality of the group communication, their abilities to work at and solve problems, their involvement and their propensity to share knowledge.[30] Overall, this enhances the predictability of their partner's behaviours.

Interactions and experience **are** connected with opening the organisation to its environment. Its level is gauged based on the communication with the environment[31], network links, sharing knowledge and ideas[32], partnership[33], and personal relationships.[34] Also, this refers to personal involvement, sense of belonging, mutual support, and learning from partners.

Recognising the manners by which trust is built and created principally gains in prominence in the context of public trust. This is due to a steady erosion of trust in public institutions. After all, it is widely assumed that public trust may become conducive to not only forging collaboration with partners and accomplishing common goals[35], but also in streamlining the management of contemporary public organisations. It should however be remembered that trust is not a goal in itself for an organisation, but rather a means to achieve and accomplish goals.[36]

Inherent to public trust is the fact that it is produced on the basis of the delivery of public services. Overall, public organisations are involved in the fulfilment of public tasks, the rights of citizens, as well as the satisfaction of their needs and the delivery of services in their favour. Public trust is reflected in internal relations as well as in relationships between citizens and those performing public services. Fundamentally, this is concerned with their belief that public organisations are competent, open, function in compliance with the law and accomplish public goals to the highest standards. Accordingly, public trust is manifested in relationships between public organisations and their stakeholders.

A natural consequence of recognising the importance of trust to the operations run by public organisations is to ensure suitable conditions that facilitate its generation. In conclusion, in the light of the body of literature to date – a variety of factors are seen as necessary for trust to occur in the organisation: starting from appropriate competences[37],

---

[30] L.G. Zucker, *op.cit.*

[31] R.C. O'Brien, *op.cit.*

[32] L.G. Zucker, *op.cit.*

[33] W. Creed, R. Miles (1996). *Trust in organizations: A conceptual framework linking organizational forms, managerial philosophies, and the opportunity costs of controls* [in:] *Trust in Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*. SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 16–39.

[34] L.G. Zucker, *op.cit.*

[35] M. Bugdol (2010). *Zaufanie jako element systemu wartości organizacyjnych*. "Współczesne Zarządzanie", no. 2, p. 28; R. Lenart (2014). *Zarządzanie wiedzą w tworzeniu konkurencyjności szkoły*. Wolters Kluwer, Warszawa.

[36] B. Kożuch, K. Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, *Dimensions…*

[37] R.C. O'Brien, *op.cit.*; A.K. Mishra, *op.cit.*; J. Sydow (1998). *Understanding the constitution of interorganizational trust in trust within and between organizations* [in:] Ch. Lane, R. Bachman (eds.), *Conceptual Issues and Empirical Applications*. Oxford University Press, Oxford; B. Kożuch, K. Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek (2014). *New requirements for managers of public safety systems*. "Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences", no. 149; B. Kożuch, K. Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, *Dimensions…*

through coordination mechanisms[38], and stewardship of essential resources[39], to a positive attitude to stakeholders.[40] From the list, the latter takes on particular saliency. Public trust may be analysed when taking into account the relationships between a public organisation and citizens. This, in turn, requires trust.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research completed was explanatory in its nature and focused on determination of the impact exercised by trust in schools on their enrolment results and identification of which primary instruments intended to create trust are being leveraged in the practice of Polish schools. The survey covered a targeted sample selected in an expert manner, comprising public upper-secondary schools located on the territory of the Silesian agglomeration. When selecting the sample for the survey, the results of the "National Ranking of Upper-Secondary Schools 2015" guided the inclusion decisions.

The survey was conducted consistently with case-study methodology, propelled by the need to define, understand, and interpret trust instruments. As revealed, the survey was of a pilot nature, and thus the authors overlook the problem of sample representativeness. The survey covered 48 respondents, constituting three groups: principals of public schools (N = 3), students (N = 15) and parents (N = 30). When selecting the students for the survey, the highest scores on the lower secondary school graduation certificate as well as winners and finalists of Olympiads and competitions for schools were taken into account. All interviews were carried out in the premises of the educational institutions. Interviews took from 30 up to 45 minutes, while the answers provided by the participants were entered in interview questionnaires on an ongoing basis.

Measurement of public trust presents a challenging task. The challenge is further compounded by the fact that trust is a complex phenomenon. The literature contains numerous approved and recognised methods for gauging trust, including

---

[38] R.C. O'Brien, *op.cit.*; A.K., Mishra *op.cit.*; J. Sydow, *op.cit.*

[39] N. Luhmann (1995). *Social Systems*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA; P. Ståhle (1998). *Supporting a System's Capacity for Self-Renewal*. A Doctoral Dissertation, Research Reports 190, University of Helsinki; J. Sydow, *op.cit.*; R. Creed, W. Miles, *op.cit.*, pp. 16–39; G.R. Jones, J.M. George (1998). *The experience and evolution of trust: Implications for cooperation and teamwork*. "Academy of Management Review", vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 531–546; L.G. Zucker, *op.cit.*; R.M. Kramer, T.R. Tyler, (1996). *Trust in Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*. Sage Publications, California; C. Hardy, N. Phillips, T. Lawrence (1998). *Distinguishing trust and power in interorganizational relations: Forms and facades of trust in trust within and between organizations* [in:] Ch. Lane, R. Bachman (eds.), *Conceptual Issues and Empirical Applications*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

[40] B. Kożuch, *op.cit.*

organisational trust.[41] As a result, in the context of management sciences it is suggested to principally bring focus on to the processes of management and the organisation's operations as well as its formulation and attainment of goals when investigating public trust. Put differently, public trust requires integrity.

Therefore, the analysis of existing methods designed to measure trust leads to the conclusion that there is no tool that fully corresponds to the specifics rooted in works of schools. In consequence, the tool proposed by S.K. Hacker and M.L. Willard was adopted for gauging organisational trust.[42] The research was conducted in September 2015 and it was split into two phases: In the first phase, the survey embraced first-year students of public upper-secondary schools and their parents. The second phase of the survey took place among the principals of public schools located in the Silesian Province.

TRUST IN UPPER-SECONDARY SCHOOLS – SURVEY FINDINGS

The surveys were intended to empirically assess the impact of trust in schools among students and their parents to the enrolment success and to identify primary trust-building factors applied in the practice of educational institutions, illustrated with the example of the upper-secondary level and were conducted in three upper-secondary schools across the Silesian Province.

The first aspect of the survey was to determine the degree to which trust affects the enrolment success achieved by educational institutions. Success is commonly associated with victory, prosperity, or positive outcomes of efforts. However, it is difficult to unequivocally define the term. It is rather more about defining certain factors that illustrate the complexity underpinning the term. The measure of success may be the degree by which internal conditions are aligned to external conditions[43], and above all, the capability of collaboration.[44]

---

[41] L.L. Cummings, P. Bromiley (1996). *The organizational trust inventory (OTI): Development and Validation* [in:] R.M. Kramer, T.R. Tyler (eds.), *Trust in Organisations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 302–331; B.D. Adams, J. Sartori (2006). *Validating the Trust in Teams and Trust in Leaders Scales*. DRDC No. CR-2006-008. Defence Research & Development, Toronto; H. Tan, A. Lim (2009). *Trust in co-workers and trust in organization*. "The Journal of Psychology", vol. 143, no. 1, pp. 45–66; R.B. Shaw (1997). *Trust in the Balance: Building Successful Organizations on Results, Integrity, and Concern*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco; S.K. Hacker, M.L. Willard (2002). *The Trust Imperative: Performance Improvement through Productive Relationship*. American Society for Quality, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; G.L. De Furia (1997). *Facilitators Guide to the Interpersonal Trust Surveys*. Pfeiffer & Co, London; M. Pirson, *op.cit.*; D.R. Spitzer (2007). *Transforming Performance Measurement: Rethinking the Way we Measure and Drive The Organizational Success*. Amacon, New York, pp. 230–231.

[42] S.K. Hacker, M.L. Willard, *op.cit.*

[43] A. Pabian (1998). *Uwarunkowania sukcesu przedsiębiorstwa na rynku. Zarys problematyki*. Wydawnictwo Politechniki Częstochowskiej, Częstochowa, p. 7.

[44] B. Kożuch, W. Zaremba (2005). *Czynniki sukcesu organizacji publicznych*. "Prace i Materiały Wydziału Zarządzania Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego", vol. 4, pp. 125–135.

In accordance with the guidelines released by the Ministry of National Education, winners of school Olympiads are awarded the privilege of priority in their selection of a public upper-secondary school. Some schools set their own admission examinations as the basis of entry in a bid to assesses the abilities required by the school.

The analysis of the demographic projections[45] shows that changes occurring in the size of the available student population considerably influences the enrolment process, thereby affecting the network of schools. A decrease in the number of children has been, and will continue to be the reason for the closure of some schools. According to data published by the Educational Research Institute, the major cause underlying the closure of schools is the demographic decline. The number of candidates available to schools over recent years is lower than the number of school places being offered. Due to the significantly diminished population of pupils, the market of educational services is becoming increasingly diversified (table 2).

**Table 2.** The number of students at the school surveyed over 2010–2015

School year	Number of first-year students			Number of winners of theme competitions/ school Olympiads among first-year students		
	School X	School Y	School Z	School X	School Y	School Z
2010/2011	100	80	50	50	65	29
2011/2012	98	80	50	50	65	25
2012/2013	80	78	45	55	60	30
2013/2014	50	55	40	35	29	35
2014/2015	45	60	30	40	30	29

Source: own survey 2015.

In the first place, the survey centred on the propensity of parents and students to make a decision on the choice of the upper-secondary school surveyed. Students and their parents were asked which factors had influenced their choice of school. These were open questions and the respondents were not given any criteria or factors. They provided their own factors of choice (figure 1). Interviews were conducted individually: with students first and then with their parents.

The initial overview of data corroborates a relatively high number and diversity of listed factors that determine the school selection by both students and their parents. In the responses, parents indicated from 2 up to 6 factors. Some of factors listed, due to their similarity, were classified in common groups. When analysing and assessing values distinguished, it is likely to produce several synthetic evaluating criteria. The first criterion is designed by a positive attitude and consistency of values expressed and the organisational practices of the school. Respondents-parents underlined the relevance of credibility and organisational transparency which manifested itself in recommendations and references in favour of the educational institution. The second criterion applies to competences and attitude to stakeholders, which is related to a high level of management skills and technical expertise.

---

[45] GUS, *op.cit.*
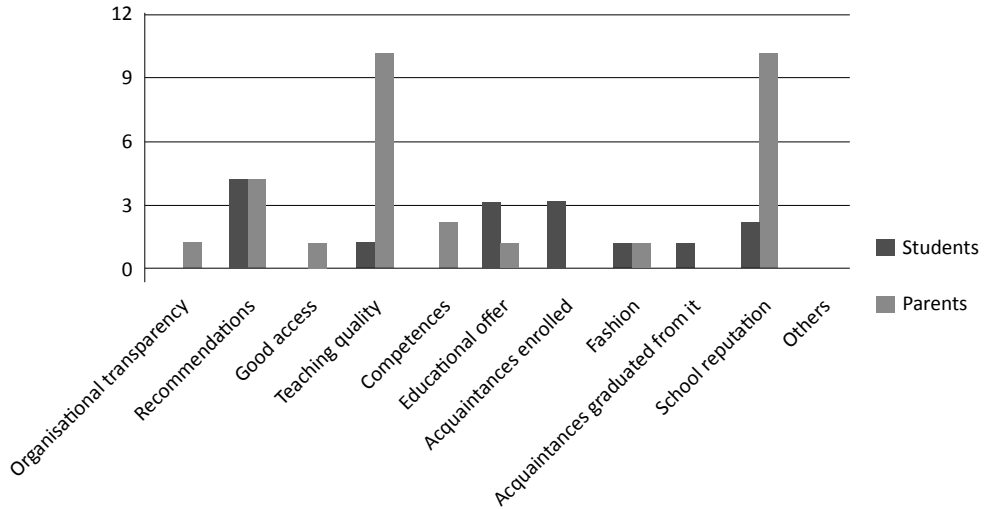
Figure 1. Factors driving selection of the school
Source: own study.

The survey findings provided support to conclusions arising from the theoretical discussion on the relevance of trust. As many as 90% of parents surveyed reported that the choice of school depends on many factors. One factor is trust built through positive opinions and recommendations voiced by persons frequently referred to as opinion leaders. Those surveyed were mostly guided by diverse aspects in their school selection. For parents, over 33% of the respondents recognised the impact of teaching quality and school reputation on their selection of a specific school. Whereas, more than 13% of the participants pointed out the importance of recommendation. The lowest number of parents surveyed were driven by the factors such as: good access, educational offer, and social fashion, when selecting the school.

Prior to making a decision on school selection, a respondent-student often inquired about the opinions held by acquaintances, colleagues, and friends. Importantly, views about the school reverberating in the local environments also mattered, though not only were positive opinions relevant, but also unfavourable opinions voiced by students of the school and their parents. Principally, this information was sought on the Internet. Equally significant were the educational offer and school reputation. The respondents also indicated the level of education, extracurricular activities, and achievements boasted by the school. Frequently, student respondents checked the comparative rankings of upper-secondary schools, specifically in terms of the graduation (secondary school final examinations) rate at an advanced level and admission for higher education institutions.

The findings from empirical studies seem to validate the arguments set out in the literature.[46] Central to the creation of public trust are factors concerned with credibility

---

[46] R.C. O'Brien, *op.cit.*; A.K. Mishra, *op.cit.*; J. Sydow, *op.cit.*; B. Kożuch, K. Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, *New Requirements…*, *op.cit.*

and competences. Hence, trust originates (derives, results from) assessment of credibility, which may be considered as the willingness to take risks and raise awareness of its operations.[47]

It was found that parents and students did not use the term "trust" in their responses. Nevertheless, respondents-parents said that the selection of the school had been made by the whole family. They rely on their children's opinions and other parent's impressions. They trust that the effect of school's operations will be appropriate, enabling their children to be promoted to the next grade and move to the subsequent educational stage. During the interviews, respondents-parents highly esteemed the quality of the service offered, positive opinion on the market as well as knowledge, competence and resources held, and recommendation of the school by a trusted partner. The respondents drew attention to references earned and a partnership approach to collaboration. At that point it is noteworthy that parents-respondents distinguish two aspects of trust: trust in the teaching level of the school and trust in the system of values advocated by the school.[48] It is necessary to emphasise the fact that institutional trust has its origins in personal trust and the authority of the school as an institution. The latter is the outcome of effects and the work style displayed by the principal and teaching staff.

The results obtained confirm the theoretical presumptions on the relationship between trust and enrolment success and more specifically, the choice of a school by parents of students; particularly among winners of school Olympiads and competitions. Overall, relationships based on trust generate increased profits from the collaboration. Trust may be manifested as an effect of a positive reputation of the school, its capabilities, and brand. Those parents, who trust the educational institution, are driven by the conditions of work quality as well as the teachers' reliability, their professional, methodical, and educational competences. For the respondent's parents, the possibility of establishing collaboration with the school emerges a natural consequence of recognising the importance of trust.

Another aspect of the research concerned the identification of trust-building factors utilised by upper-secondary schools. The respondents included the principals of schools. Previous studies show that organisations cannot exist without collaboration which, in turn, requires trust.[49] For that reason, it is necessary to create specific conditions that allow stakeholders to become engaged, while organisations attain their planned intentions and goals.[50] As noted in the literature, an underlying factor in building trust is a procedural justice that pertains to consistent, rational, and objective decision-making based on legal regulations observed.[51] This issue was incorporated

---

[47] N. Gillespie, G. Dietz (2009). *Trust repair after an organization-level failure*. "Academy of Management Review", vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 127–145.

[48] M.J. Szymański (1998). *Młodzież wobec wartości*. Wydawnictwo Instytutu Badań Edukacyjnych, Warszawa, pp. 9–21.

[49] B. Kożuch, *op.cit.*

[50] R.C. Mayer, J.H. Davis (1999). *The effect of the performance appraisal system on trust for management: A field quasi-experiment*. "Journal of Applied Psychology", vol. 84, pp. 123–136.

[51] B. Kożuch, A. Kożuch (2015). *Zarządzanie partycypacyjne* [in:] B. Kożuch, Ł. Sułkowski (eds.), *Instrumentarium zarządzania publicznego*. Difin, Warszawa.

while designing the research tool. When asked whether the school harnesses any tools or methods to create trust – 68% of the respondents replied in the affirmative "definitely yes". Therefore, it may be concluded that the school surveyed attaches great importance to active efforts, being aware of building trust. The respondents realise that trust is crucial for fostering a lasting and long-term collaboration with their clients (both students as well as parents are regarded as clients).

During the research process, the respondents were asked about the use of selected trust-building tools in practice. The respondents could choose from among thirteen answers or give their own response. However, the selected factors were previously characterised for the group surveyed and their practical application in the educational institution was demonstrated. Such a move was made on purpose, because it appears that the respondents report a variety of factors, yet they do not have any theoretical knowledge in this field and may be lacking in the relevant terminology (table 3).

Table 3. Application of selected tools in building trust in the views held by the respondents – principals of schools – qualitative comparative analysis

Features	In whole			In partial			In general		
	X	Y	Z	X	Y	Z	X	Y	Z
Empathy	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Formal agreements/contracts	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Quality of information	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Competences	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Confidentiality	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Predictability	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
References	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Style in which operations are conducted	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Successes	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Candour	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
Integrity	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Credibility	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Fulfilment of expectations	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗

Source: own study.

In the ranking of instruments driving trust, credibility and the style in which operations are conducted come into the spotlight. The latter element was specified in–depth by the respondents as openness to the environment, transparency in operations and involving all stakeholders in ongoing activities of the school. At that point, the transparency of operations and decisions made assume prominence. Attention should be also given to the role of references or recommendations, which may imply their significance in building trust. In this situation, support was provided for the previous

supposition that interactions and organisation of events integrating the local community constitute an important trust-building tool. On the whole, it is crucial to ensure that there is an opportunity for the students and their parents to meet with school leaders ahead of the school selection decision phase. School strategies governed by the principle of "open doors" facilitate trust building and help to reassure that they will conduct the partnership in a fair manner at the phase of more advanced collaboration when partners have relevant knowledge about each other.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings from literature and empirical research lead to the formation of the following conclusions.

1. Trust in educational institutions constitutes an essential factor in establishing of collaboration and long-term relationships, forging and building interactions intended to coordinate activities, yet the activities performed may result in their survival on the market and weathering the current crisis.
2. Trust is a phenomenon marked by features of subjectivity. Its creation relies on several key activities – their distinction depends on the manner in which an educational institution is managed. In the respondents' opinion, reliability and competences are significant.
3. Reliability and openness to the environment constituted the main factors driving the selection of the specific educational institution. The respondents attach the greatest importance to open and transparent communication with the environment, ensuring feedback and stepping up the collaboration at specific stages. It may be assumed therefore, that the key imperative for the selection of the place where education will be obtained is trust in the specific school, because out of 30 elements examined, 20 were tied to trust.

The studies completed are not free from certain confinements, notably stemming from the size of the research sample, and thus principally resulting in an absence of opportunities for generalisations. Taken together, the research was rather supposed to delineate the extensive and complex issues that underpin the creation of trust-building tools in public educational institutions. Thus, an additional direction set for further scientific explorations may be the launch of research carried out on a larger, representative sample of educational institutions. The authors argue that research devoted to interdependencies in building trust in relation to the current phase of collaboration between partners may be equally interesting. Nonetheless, trust management constitutes an inspiring area of challenges for further, detailed scientific research.

References

Adams B.D., Sartori J. (2006). *Validating the Trust in Teams and Trust in Leaders Scales*. DRDC No. CR-2006-008. Defence Research & Development, Toronto.

Adler P.S. (2001). *Market, hierarchy, and trust: The knowledge economy and the future of capitalism*. "Organization Science", vol. 1, no. 2.

Badaracco J.L. (1991). *The Knowledge Link: How Firms Compete Through Strategic Alliances*. Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.

Bennett J.L. (1996). *Building Relationships for Technology Transfer*. "Communications of the ACM", vol. 39, no. 9.

Bibb S., Kourdi J. (2004). *Trust Matters for Organizational and Personal Success*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Blomqvist K. (1997). *The many faces of trust*. "Scandinavian Journal of Management", vol. 13, no. 3.

Blomqvist K., Stahle P. (2000). *Building Organizational Trust*. 16th Annual IMP Conference, Bath, UK.

Bugdol M. (2010). *Zaufanie jako element systemu wartości organizacyjnych*. "Współczesne Zarządzanie", no. 2.

Covey S.M. (2009). *How the best leaders build trust. Leadership now*. http://www.leadershipnow.com/CoveyOnTrust.html (access: 22.11.2015).

Creed W., Miles R. (1996). *Trust in organizations: A conceptual framework linking organizational forms, managerial philosophies, and the opportunity costs of controls* [in:] *Trust in Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*. SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Cummings L.L., Bromiley P. (1996). *The organizational trust inventory (OTI): Development and Validation* [in:] R.M. Kramer, T.R. Tyler (eds.), *Trust in Organisations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Czakon W. (2009). *Przedsiębiorstwo oparte na wiedzy w kontekście międzyorganizacyjnym* [in:] R. Krupski (ed.), *Zarządzanie strategiczne. Problemy kierunki badań*. Prace Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Zarządzania i Przedsiębiorczości. Wydawnictwo Wałbrzyskiej Wyższej Szkoły Zarządzania i Przedsiębiorczości, Wałbrzych.

De Furia G.L. (1997). *Facilitators Guide to the Interpersonal Trust Surveys*. Pfeiffer & Co, London.

Early P.C. (1986). *Trust, perceived importance of praise and criticism, and work performance: An examination of feedback in the United States and England*. "Journal of Management", vol. 12.

Gillespie N., Dietz G. (2009). *Trust repair after an organization-level failure*. "Academy of Management Review", vol. 34, no 1.

Grudzewski W., Hejduk I.K., Sankowska A., Wańtuchowicz M. (2007). *Zarządzanie zaufaniem w organizacji wirtualnej*. Difin, Warszawa.

Grudzewski W.M., Hajduk I.K., Sankowska A., Wańtuchowicz M. (2009). *Zarządzanie zaufaniem w przedsiębiorstwie*. Wolters Kluwer, Kraków.

GUS (2014). *Oświata i wychowanie w roku szkolnym 2013/2014*. Warszawa.

Hacker S.K., Willard M.L. (2002*). The Trust Imperative: Performance Improvement through Productive Relationship*. American Society for Quality, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Hamel G. (1991). *Competition for Competence and Inter-Partner Learning within International Strategic Alliances*. "Strategic Management Journal", no. 12.

Handfield R.B., Bechtel C. (2004). *Trust, power, dependence, and economics: Can SCM research borrow paradigms?*, "International Journal of Integrated Supply Management", vol. 1, no. 1.

Handy C. (1995). *Trust and the virtual organization*. "Harvard Business Review", vol. 73, no. 3.

Hardin R. (2006). *Trust*. Polity Press, Cambridge.

Hardy C., Phillips N., Lawrence T. (1998). *Distinguishing trust and power in interorganizational relations: Forms and facades of trust in trust within and between organizations* [in:] Ch. Lane, R. Bachman (eds.), *Conceptual Issues and Empirical Applications*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Jones G.R., George J.M. (1998). *The experience and evolution of trust: Implications for cooperation and teamwork*. "Academy of Management Review", vol. 23, no. 3.

Josang A., Presti S.L. (2004). *Analysing the relationship between risk and trust* [in:] *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Trust Management*. Springer-Verlag, Berlin–Heidelberg, pp. 135–145.

Juchnowicz M. (2007). *Zaufanie organizacyjne*. "Kwartalnik Nauk o Przedsiębiorstwie", vol. 2, no. 3.

Kożuch B. (2014). *Organizacyjna perspektywa zaufania publicznego. Zarys koncepcji* [in:] Ł. Sułkowski, A. Woźniak (eds.), *Przedsiębiorczość i zarządzanie*. "Zarządzanie Humanistyczne", vol. XV, no. 11, part III.

Kożuch B., Dobrowolski Z. (2014). *Creating Public Trust. An Organisational Perspective*. Peter Lang GmbH, Frankfurt am Main.

Kożuch B., Kożuch A. (2015). *Zarządzanie partycypacyjne* [in:] B. Kożuch, Ł. Sułkowski (eds.), *Instrumentarium zarządzania publicznego*. Difin, Warszawa.

Kożuch B., Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek K. (2014). *New requirements for managers of public safety systems*, "Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences", no. 149.

Kożuch B., Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek K. (2015). *Dimensions of Intra-organisational Trust in Local Public Administration*. Proceedings International Research Society For Public Management Conference, Birmingham.

Kożuch B., Sułkowski Ł. (2015). *Instrumentarium zarządzania publicznego*. Difin, Warszawa.

Kożuch B., Zaremba W. (2005). *Czynniki sukcesu organizacji publicznych*. "Prace i Materiały Wydziału Zarządzania Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego", vol. 4.

Kramer R.M., Tyler T.R. (1996). *Trust in Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*. Sage Publications, California.

Lenart R. (2014). *Zarządzanie wiedzą w tworzeniu konkurencyjności szkoły*. Wolters Kluwer, Warszawa.

Luhmann N. (1995). *Social Systems*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.

Mayer R.C., Davis J.H. (1999). *The effect of the performance appraisal system on trust for management: A field quasi-experiment*. "Journal of Applied Psychology", vol. 84, pp. 123–136.

Mayer R.C., Davis J.H., Schoorman F.D. (1995). *An integrative model of organizational trust*. "Academy of Management Review", vol. 20.

Mishra A.K. (1996). *Organizational responses to crisis: The centrality of trust* [in:] R.M. Kramer, T.R. Tyler (eds.), *Trust in Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Maccoby M. (2003). *To Build Trust, Ethics Are Not Enough*. "Research Technology Management", vol. 46, no. 5.

McAllister D.J. (1995). *Affect- and cognition-based trust as foundations for interpersonal cooperation in organizations*. "Academy of Management Journal", vol. 38.

Morgan R.M., Hunt S.D. (1994). *The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing*. "Journal of Marketing", vol. 58, no. 3, July.

Morgan R.M., Shelby D.H. (1994). *The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing*. "Journal of Marketing", no. 58.

O'Brien R.C. (1995). *Employee involvement in performance improvement: A consideration of tacit knowledge, commitment and trust*. "Employee Relations", vol. 17, no. 3.

Pabian A. (1998). *Uwarunkowania sukcesu przedsiębiorstwa na rynku. Zarys problematyki*, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Częstochowskiej, Częstochowa.

Paliszkiewicz J. (2013). *Zaufanie w zarządzaniu*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa.

Pirson M. (2008). *Facing the Trust Gap Measuring and Managing Stakeholder Trust*. SVH, Saarbrucken.

Prognoza ludności na lata 2008–2035 (2014). Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Warszawa.

Rokita J. (2005). *Zarządzanie strategiczne. Tworzenie i utrzymywanie przewagi konkurencyjnej*. PWE, Warszawa.

Sander M., Weywara B. (2006). *Markenvertrauen im Rahmen des Markenmanagements, Konsumentenvertauen: Konzepte und Andwendungen für ein nachhaltiges Kundenbindungsmanagement*. Vahlen Franz Gmbh, München.

Sankowska A. (2011). *Wpływ zaufania na zarządzanie przedsiębiorstwem. Perspektywa wewnątrzorganizacyjna*. Difin, Warszawa.

Sankowska A. (2013*). Further understanding of links between interorganisational trust and enterprise innovativeness – from a perspective of an enterprise*. "International Journal of Innovation and Learning", vol. 13, no. 3.

Shaw R.B. (1997). *Trust in the Balance: Building Successful Organizations on Results, Integrity, and Concern.* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Sitkin S.B., Roth N.L. (1993). *Explaining the limited effectiveness of legalistic remedies for trust/distrust.* "Organization Science", vol. 4.

Shockley-Zalabak P.S., Morreale S., Hackman M. (2010). *Building the High-Trust Organization: Strategies for Supporting Five Key Dimensions of Trust.* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Spitzer D.R. (2007). *Transforming Performance Measurement: Rethinking the Way we Measure and Drive The Organizational Success.* Amacon, New York.

Ståhle P. (1998). *Supporting a System's Capacity for Self-Renewal.* A Doctoral Dissertation, Research Reports 190, University of Helsinki.

Sydow J. (1998). *Understanding the constitution of interorganizational trust in trust within and between organizations* [in:] Ch. Lane, R. Bachman (eds.), *Conceptual Issues and Empirical Applications.* Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Szulczewski G. (2003). *Zaufanie z perspektywy pragmatyczno-transcendentalnej koncepcji porozumienia.* "Prakseologia", vol. 143.

Szymański M.J. (1998). *Młodzież wobec wartości.* Wydawnictwo Instytutu Badań Edukacyjnych, Warszawa.

Sztompka P. (2002). *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa.* Znak, Kraków.

Tan H., Lim A. (2009). *Trust in co-workers and trust in organization.* "The Journal of Psychology", vol. 143, no. 1.

Young L., Albaum G. (2003). *Measurement of trust in salesperson-customer relationships in direct selling.* "Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management", vol. 24, no. 3.

Wójcik-Karpacz A. (2014). *Zaufanie w relacjach międzyorganizacyjnych: substytucja i komplementarność.* "Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu", vol. 366.

Zaheer A., McEvily B., Perrone V. (1998). *Does trust matter? Exploring the effects of interorganizational and interpersonal trust on performance.* "Organization Science", vol. 9.

Zucker L.G. (1986). *Production of trust: Institutional sources of economic structure.* "Organizational Behavior", vol. 8.