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A systematic scoping review and textual narrative synthesis of trust amongst staff in higher education settings

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ABSTRACT

Trust is an essential underpinning foundation of effective functioning amongst all staff in higher education. However, there is limited knowledge on the ways in which trust operates, including the extent to which it exists, is recognised, can be built, or lost. This article systematically scopes the international literature on trust amongst staff in higher education institutions, the value of that literature, the research methods used, areas of research focus involved, and overall findings. A systematic scoping literature review, combining descriptive synthesis and textual narrative synthesis, was undertaken. As far as we are aware, this is the first review of this type to be undertaken on trust amongst all types of personnel in the higher education workforce. The review followed a data-based convergent synthesis design, identifying qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies in a single search, integrated throughout analysis, synthesis, and presentation. PRISMA and ENTREQ reporting guidelines were followed: 512 records were identified in two search phases (2020, 2022). Findings revealed relatively little research on trust amongst all types of staff in HE, with a surprising lack of research on trust relating to remote working during COVID. The heterogeneity of papers was striking, yet a wide variety of perspectives on trust tended to be located in single institutions or situations and provided little robust empirical evidence linked to theoretical definitions of trust. Qualitative papers were generally more thoughtful in investigating the complexity of trust. Further research on the relatively neglected but essential field of trust amongst staff in higher education is recommended.

Introduction

Trust is an interactive relational phenomenon involving the willing belief of *trustors* (individuals making a judgement) in the integrity, competence, and benevolence of *trustees* (those trusted) to act appropriately in given circumstances, despite vulnerability to risks of loss and betrayal (Jones and Shah 2016; Gheorghe 2020). An extensive multidisciplinary field of research on trust has evolved in past decades, investigating diverse aspects of deterrence-based trust, calculus-based

trust, relational trust, and institution-based trust (Rousseau et al. 1998). This large literature includes psychological, philosophical, educational, organisational, health-related, and economic research investigating numerous perspectives across a continuum of trust and trustworthiness. In a cross-disciplinary organisational context, trust has been defined as: 'a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another' (Rousseau et al. 1998, 395). Trust is both an enabler and by-product of cooperative behaviour (Gambetta 1988) that promotes adaptability in organisations and is important for leadership effectiveness, having both direct and moderating effects on organisational functioning (Dirks and Ferrin 2002). The presence or absence of trust is particularly significant during organisational crises (Mishra 1996; Bachmann and Zaheer 2006), but to be effective, trust needs to be well placed in those that are trustworthy (O'Neill 2020).

However, this body of work on trust does not include much research on trust amongst the staff workforce in higher education institutions (HEIs) or indeed on education in general (Niedlich et al. 2021). Studies carried out on trust in higher education, although average to good overall, are variable in quality as regards contributing to data analysis on trust. Lacunae also exist regarding theoretical sufficiency of definitions of trust and the rigour of research methods in the few available empirical studies. Although trust is recognised as essential for effective staff functioning, there is a tendency to take this at face value. There is therefore limited knowledge of how trust operates or not. Although a recent systematic review has been carried out on trust and barriers to student engagement in higher education (Jones and Nangah 2020), as far as we are aware, this is the first review of this type to be undertaken into trust amongst all staff in the higher education staff workforce.

Background

High trust organisations tend to provide a reliable, benevolent, and open working environment in which staff feel they can depend on each other with little risk of betrayal. A trusting organisational culture encourages reciprocal, harmonious working relationships amongst staff (Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman 1995). Interpersonal and group trust underpins staff productivity, open ideas exchange (Politis 2003), and informal learning of tacit, situated knowledge and knowledge sharing for synchronous organisational knowledge creation (Lave and Wenger 1991; Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995).

Trust as a 'mental state and social attitude' is in fact vital for effective task delegation (Castelfranchi and Falcone 1998), operational speed (Covey and Merrill 2006), economic success (Fukuyama 1996), organisational competitiveness (Pyöriä 2007) and interdependent democratic teamwork (Costa 2003; Politis 2003). Trust is also essential for leadership effectiveness (Bennis and Nanus 1985), organisational quality (Peterson 1998), and smooth functioning (Bennis and Nanus 1985; Bijlsma and Koopman 2003) without unnecessary interaction (Pyöriä 2007). If trust is well-placed, despite risks of betrayal, it enables mutual reciprocity, reduced need for regulatory control and increased cost-effectiveness (Creed and Miles 1996; Fukyama 1996; Hasnain 2019), preventing time-wasting delays of distrust.

Increasing interest in organisational trust in HE has recently emerged (Tierney 2006), as academic unease about controlling audit, new public management and neo managerialism has grown in institutions driven by government-led economic mandates (Carson 2020). Higher education literature critiques a rise in distrust amongst staff and a trend towards disempowering academic collegiality in favour of market-led management control by corporate bureaucracies focused on employment outcomes (Clarke and Newman 1997; Deem 1998; Deem and Brehony 2005; McNay 2005; Lea 2011; Lucas 2014; Jameson 2019). Collective leadership models to redress this and restore trust have been proposed via differing forms of academic collegiality (Tapper and Palfreyman 2002; Bolden, Petrov, and Gosling 2008; Elton 2008; Jameson 2008, 2012, 2018; Bacon 2014) or a more pragmatic compromise between academic and management power (Tight 2014).

Since staff trust in organisations cannot be forced but is voluntary, some researchers view trust as an alternative to control, though others regard trust as complementary to control (Das and Teng

1998). Bijlsma and Koopman (2003, 543) discuss positive links between trust and control, citing Tyler's view that 'trust is a key to organisational performance because it enables voluntary cooperation. Such cooperation becomes … important when [controlling] management [is] … no longer effective' (Bijlsma and Koopman 2003, 544; Tyler 2003). In the context of the putatively autonomous nature of academic workforces, notably during COVID-19 and beyond, a review of trust in the HE workforce seems particularly apposite.

Given that all categories of HE staff are increasingly working online, in distributed teams, sometimes at home or from international locations, performance management of staff through monitoring systems is a relatively weak form of control. The nature of HE work has also rapidly changed to enable diverse, independent, networked intellectual labour, in which staff voluntary commitment to undertake additional tasks is increasingly essential. There is an observable tension here between the need for trust amongst staff, the increasing academic and professional services workloads in HE and the concomitant problem of a rise in staff distrust in management and governance in HE. The economic rationalism of corporatisation is ill-suited to the charitable status of HE knowledge-producing organisations aiming to foster both public and private good (Marginson 2011).

Trust linked to staff voluntary commitment in a trusting culture (Tierney 2006), rather than untrustworthy economic systems, is therefore a key issue for successful organisational performance in an environment which enables voluntary cooperation, rather than reductively rule-based behaviour (Bijlsma and Koopman 2003) or rational choice theories of trust (Tierney 2006). Willing commitment of staff can be difficult to achieve if controlling management systems are perceived as exploitative by highly qualified, critical, independent-minded staff such as academics. If we apply Fukuyama's (1996, 7) view that 'a nation's well-being, as well as its ability to compete, is conditioned by … the level of trust inherent in the society' to higher education, it is clear that HE institutional competitiveness is likely to be related to a highly trusting culture. Yet if trust is at risk from corporate governance and top-down management systems at odds with the academic mission of staff (Parr 2013), the resultant tensions from conflicting values may increasingly erode the working environment. A predominantly economic rationale for the marketisation of HE therefore threatens to undermine voluntary cooperation and knowledge sharing, upsetting the fragile balance of trust in the management of interactions and performance expectations across hierarchical HE workforce relationships.

Researchers in various international contexts, including in South Africa and Australia, have investigated differing links between trust, knowledge sharing, and numerous related concepts and issues in higher education institutions in ways that are of general interest to this article, but did not meet the inclusion criteria for the review. This includes research on trust and knowledge management, ethics, communities of practice and employment relationships, the findings of which demonstrate the importance of trust for knowledge production, staff performance, governance, and management in HEIs (see, for example, research by Buckley 2012; Grierson 2018; Le Grange 2003; Popoola and Chinomona 2017; McKenna and Boughey 2014; Vidovich and Currie 2011; Woelert and Yates 2015). A further important strand of work relating directly or indirectly to trust that investigates community cohesion and knowledge sharing has developed in Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine (Alijla 2020). Although the multiple strands and significance of this wider literature cannot be investigated within the inclusion criteria of this review, this literature reinforces the resonance of trust as a subject area of vital interest. Hence it is increasingly essential to review research on trust amongst staff in HE to gain an in-depth understanding of this important phenomenon.

Materials and methods

Aims

The aim of this systematic scoping review is to summarise and synthesise prior literature on trust amongst staff within higher education institutions. The overarching research questions for this

investigation are thus concerned with the nature of research on trust amongst all types of higher education staff personnel, the institutions researched, the methodologies used, the outcomes examined, the shortcomings of this literature and the recommendations for research and policy emerging.

Design

Given the above aims, a systematic scoping review was utilised to examine the extent, range, and nature of research activity in this field and to identify research gaps in existing literature (Arksey and O'Malley 2005). This involved the following steps: (1) identification of area of interest; (2) systematic literature search; (3) data extraction; (4) data synthesis and write-up. This review follows a results-based convergent synthesis design. That is, qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies were identified in a single search, and integrated throughout analysis, synthesis, and presentation (Noyes et al. 2019). PRISMA and ENTREQ reporting guidelines were followed (Moher et al. 2009; Tong et al. 2012).

Search methods

Thirteen reference databases were searched, using preliminary search terms to reflect the population of interest. A first stage search was carried out in May 2020. Results were collated, duplicate articles removed, and 246 articles found. Following journal review, and taking account of COVID effects on higher education, a second stage updated search was carried out in February 2022, from which a further 266 articles were found. A revision of search terms was considered but rejected as inappropriate to meet PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al. 2021). A research assistant carried out the initial reviews, removing duplicates, irrelevant results, and those not meeting the inclusion criteria, as illustrated in Figure 1. Following screening of 27 studies in the first stage and 70 articles in the second stage, relevant studies were identified (*n* = 25) and explored for references meeting the inclusion criteria that were not included in the search. The full version of one doctoral dissertation was unobtainable (Brooks Collins 2015), and therefore had to be excluded (*n* = 24). A further article from reference lists on trust was identified and included, resulting in 25 articles to be included in the review.

Data extraction

Data from the included studies was extracted by two authors (RE & NR) and categorised according to the source, country in which the research took place, study aims and objectives, research methods/ design and sample information, participants, measures of analysis, main outcomes, and issues (see Figure A2a–g). The authors worked independently to check results in an unbiased way and were open to the inclusion of any articles from any country that met the search criteria.

Quality appraisal

Two researchers (TG & NR) independently assessed the included articles twice (May 2020, and 11th February 2022) using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT), Version 2018 (Hong et al. 2018). This tool assesses the quality of research studies, focusing on five core methodological quality criteria, including clarity of research questions, adequacy of rationale, appropriacy and sufficiency of data collection, etc., for the following five categories of study designs: (a) qualitative, (b) randomised controlled, (c) nonrandomized, (d) quantitative descriptive, and (e) mixed methods (see Figure 2). Articles were segregated according to whether they were of quantitative (descriptive; non-randomised; randomised), qualitative or mixed methods design and assessed using the criteria for their category within the tool.

Keywords used in search:

(trust OR mistrust OR distrust OR trustworthiness) AND (staff OR employee OR academi* OR research*) AND (university OR college OR higher education)
Phase 1 search May 2020
Phase 2 search Feb 2022

Inclusion/exclusion criteria:

Inclusion

Trust amongst all categories of university/HE staff as this relates to colleagues, university management or the institutions itself; Primary empirical research

Exclusion

Studies that examined the trust of students in lecturers, university management or the institution itself; Studies that examined trust between universities and/ or researchers and industry or other external partners; Studies that were not available in English; Conference papers

Potentially relevant studies identified by search: n=512

13 search databases: Business Source Premier, Regional Business News, Academic Search Premier, CINAHL, Education Research Complete, Humanities International Complete, Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection, PsycInfo, Teacher Reference Center, Web of Science, SAGE, Science Direct, Scopus.

Studies selected for screening (n=97) **before full text retrieval** (n=39)

Studies potentially relevant for the systematic review (n=24) **analysed through the extraction table**

Studies included in the initial systematic review (n=24) **+ Records identified through reference review** (n =1) **Studies included in the final systematic review** (n=25)

Excluded after screening for duplicate records (n=179) **and irrelevant articles** (n=294)

Excluded after full text screening on inclusion criteria (n=6) **Not assessed because no full text obtainable** (n=3)

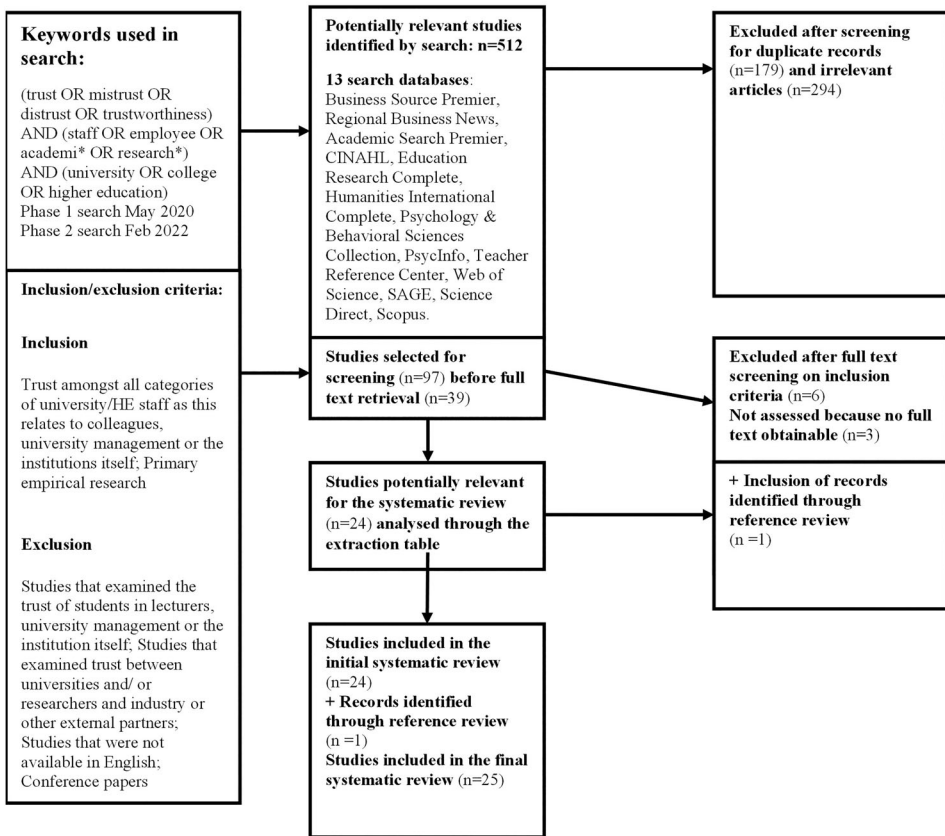**+ Inclusion of records identified through reference review** (n =1)

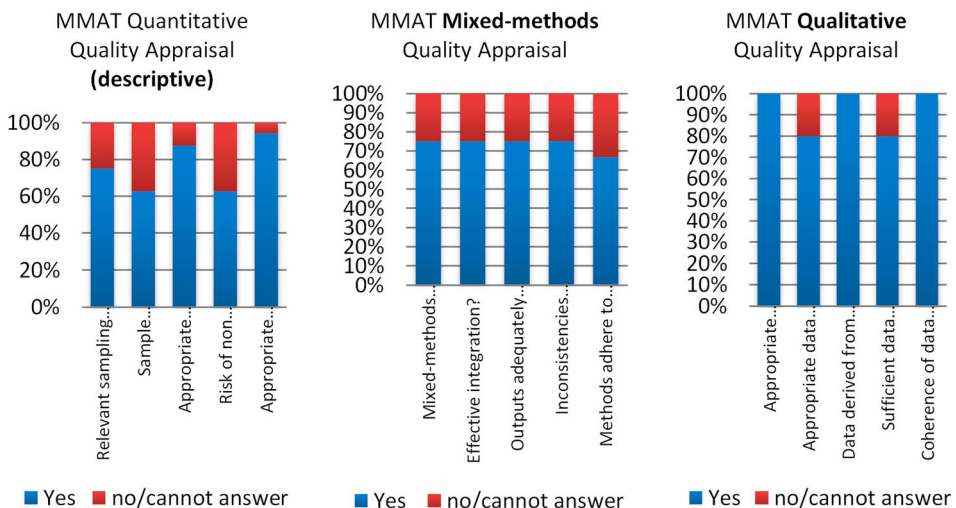**Figure 1.** Search methods, inclusion criteria and results.

Figure 2. Quality appraisal graphs/table.

Data summary and synthesis

Due to the heterogeneity of the data emerging across diverse studies in different higher education institutions (HEIs), even within similar study methodologies, a meta-analysis combining quantitative data for further analysis or meta-synthesis for qualitative data was not possible. Instead, studies were combined to summarise descriptive statistics of study characteristics, followed by a textual narrative synthesis. This approach arranges disparate study types into more homogenous sub-groups, which aids in synthesising different types of evidence. Study characteristics, context, quality, and findings are reported according to a standard format, with similarities and differences compared across studies (Lucas et al. 2007).

Results

Quality appraisal results

Overall, the quality of the studies combined was average to good, with appropriate methods and measurements being used to answer specified research questions. Three methodological approaches were prevalent: mixed methods (4), qualitative (5) and quantitative descriptive (16) (see Figure 2 and Appendices 1–2: Figures A1 and A2a–g). The latter category includes studies that engaged descriptive statistics, factor analysis and/or multiple regression but did not use randomised or non-randomised methodology.

The mixed-methods and qualitative studies were of the highest quality, with quantitative designs having a lower overall quality rating. Individually, there were some issues in quantitative descriptive studies relating to sampling strategy, research representativeness and appropriate size: therefore, these studies had a higher risk of biased responses. Most quantitative studies used established measurement scales and engaged statistical analysis addressing the research questions. Several qualitative studies provided appropriate justification for data collected but did not include any references to key concepts of qualitative methods, such as data saturation.

Of all the studies, one mixed methods study (Aasen and Stensaker 2007) did not meet any of the criteria. Twelve research studies met all criteria for their study type: four qualitative (Hoppes and Holley 2014; Jameson 2012; Awan 2017; Westman, Lewicka, and Rożenek 2017); two mixed methods research studies (Patrick 2016; Okpogba 2012) and six quantitative studies (Abdillah, Anita, and Zakaria 2021; Clément et al. 2020; Cunning 2020; Karim et al. 2021; Smith and Shoho 2007; Yasir and Majid 2017).

Combined study descriptive results

The papers included comprised 16 quantitative studies (primarily involving surveys and questionnaires), five qualitative studies (primarily involving interviews, but also expanding to case studies where observations were carried out and documents reviewed) and four mixed methods studies. In total, the quantitative studies involved 3875 participants, the qualitative studies involved at least 173–178 (one study lacks clarity on numbers of interviewees) and the mixed methods studies involved 542 participants, giving a cumulative total of 4590–4595 participants.

The research carried out was largely based in single countries, with the majority in the USA (9) and Pakistan (4), followed by the UK (2), Syria (2), Denmark (1), Indonesia (1), Bangladesh (1), Canada (1) and Ukraine (1). Of the three remaining papers: one was based primarily in Sweden but had an international and European focus, including Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK and Germany; one involved participants from the Slovak Republic and Poland: and the third described research carried out across Finland, Hungary, and the UK.

Textual narrative synthesis results

This section reports on the aims and objectives of the 25 papers, the methods (including external frameworks) used, and findings. All papers, except for Aasen and Stensaker (2007), set out to explore trust, but beyond this they varied considerably in the extent to which trust was central to research aims and objectives; this variability is used to separate them into four broad groups in this results section.

As regards the types of staff personnel involved in reviewed research, the inclusion criteria encompassed all types of HE staff, but the terms which authors used to describe participants varied across different countries. For example, papers based in Europe tend to use the terms 'lecturers' (e.g. Westman, Lewicka, and Rożenek 2017) or 'academics' (e.g. Jameson 2012); whereas the majority of the other papers tend to use the term 'faculty' (e.g. Smith and Shoho 2007). Similarly, European papers tend to use the term 'managers' (e.g. Blašková et al. 2021) whereas the majority of other papers tend to use 'administrators' (e.g. Okpogba 2012), a term which, in the UK, for example, is now used far more for those who perform clerical functions than managerial functions (Whitchurch 2006). Throughout, we have kept the terminology which individual authors used to describe their participants.

Group 1: trust did not feature in the research aims

Aasen and Stensaker (2007) are the sole occupants of this first group. Through questionnaire-based research, they aimed to explore how participants (from a range of academic leadership positions) in leadership training programmes in HE in Sweden, Denmark, The Netherlands, Germany, and the UK perceived the training programmes they had participated in. Although the paper met the inclusion criteria, trust is not a central feature of this paper, and it is not mentioned (except in the title and keywords) until the discussion section. Here the authors draw on concerns expressed by their participants to suggest that much more collegial governance is needed within HE, such that 'academic leadership can be understood as trustful mediation between external demands and internal institutional values and potentials' (379).

Group 2: research on the existence or extent of trust

Research *on the existence or extent of trust* in specific circumstances was the main aim in four articles. These studies explored aspects of trust such as: the degree of trust staff had: in others at the same level (with lecturers in Finland, Hungary and the UK) (Westman, Lewicka, and Rożenek 2017); in those at various levels of seniority and across ethnic groups (with faculty in USA) (Smith and Shoho 2007); in administrators, and which features fostered this trust (with faculty in USA) (Osburn and Gocial 2020); in their leadership, and how selected aspects of trust could be mapped against organisational models (with senior administrators in USA) (Jones 2002). Research approaches were more variable in this group than in the others, encompassing mixed methods (Osburn and Gocial 2020), quantitative (Smith and Shoho 2007; Jones 2002), and qualitative research (Westman, Lewicka, and Rożenek 2017).

Findings suggested that faculty had more trust in administrators who interacted with them regularly, were competent, reliable, and not perceived as planning to move on (Osburn and Gocial 2020). Those at the lower end of academic ranks demonstrated higher degrees of trust, both in their colleagues and in the dean, than those at the higher end, with 'race' appearing to have no impact (Smith and Shoho 2007). The HE organisation itself (whether collegial, political, or anarchical, as established through Birnbaum's (1988) organisational models) also had an impact on trust, showing a statistically significant relationship with key aspects of trust respondents placed in leaders, specifically loyalty, availability, and openness (Jones 2002).[1] In terms of the significance of trust amongst each other, lecturers emphasised its importance in developing teaching methods, changing organisational structures, and creating welfare (Westman, Lewicka, and Rożenek 2017).

Papers in this category made use of Shoho and Smith's Higher Education Faculty Trust Inventory (Jones 2002; Osburn and Gocial 2020; Smith and Shoho 2007), Birnbaum's 1988 organisational models (Jones 2002), and Butler's Conditions of Trust Inventory (Jones 2002).

Group 3: research on the relationship between trust and other variables

In the 16 papers in the third group, the main aim was to explore quantifiable aspects which are key to staff performance in HE, such as job satisfaction, social cohesion, motivation, creativity, organisational commitment, knowledge sharing, self-efficacy, and the reduction of bullying and ostracism. The research either explores the impact of trust on these variables, or the impact of the variables on trust. In this context the research in this group explored *the relationship of trust with other quantified variables*.

Nesterova et al.'s (2020) paper and Cunning's (2020) doctoral thesis straddled the line between Group 3 and Group 2. Nesterova et al. (2020) aimed to identify the level of trust amongst academic staff and students in two universities in Ukraine and to identify where this required improvement through 'appropriate training and other social and educational tools' (17). However, it is placed in Group 3, as an exploration of social cohesion was its overall main focus, with trust playing a key role in this. Nesterova et al. (2020) found that: trust at both universities was at a 'stable average level' (22); the trust individuals had in each other was related both to the extent of interpersonal interaction they had and to their perceptions of the competence of the other person; and that levels of social cohesion and trust were directly correlated. Cunning (2020) explored the perceptions of presidents of Christian universities in the USA on the levels of trust in their organisations and the effectiveness of their advancement efforts, i.e. the efforts they made (such as fundraising) to ensure the financial health of their institutions. The interest here was partially in the levels of trust and advancement efforts themselves (making this like a Group 2 paper), but more substantially in the relationship between the two, i.e. in whether institutional trust can build financial health by encouraging presidents' advancement efforts; hence this work is placed in Group 3. There was no significant relationship between the two measures, but Cunning (2020) highlighted inconsistencies in the presidents' views and behaviours around trust, and the need for training in this area. The other 14 papers belong more securely in Group 3. For example, Fatima, Shafique, and Ahmad's (2015) research with faculty members in Pakistan aimed to explore how HR practices supported staff performance, and how job embeddedness, organisational support and trust mediated that relationship. Their research established that HR support such as training and technology helped promote staff performance, either partially or fully mediated by job embeddedness, perceived organisational support and trust.

Blašková et al. (2021) also explored the mediating effect of trust on staff performance. They use the term 'sustainable academic trust' to encompass the ongoing trust of pedagogical, scientific, management and administrative university staff in, for example, their own skills and experience, their colleagues, and the university. Through surveys with HE employees and managers in Poland and the Slovak Republic they aimed to explore the viability of their model, in which motivation, creativity, trust and principles of sustainability interact in spirals. Their research suggested that the model was viable, and, amongst other findings, that there is a 'substantial dependency' between trust and motivation, and that 'a trustworthy environment and relations of partnership and belonging are important motivating elements, supporting both the overall work motivation and the creativity of individual and groups' (19). They emphasise that this trust must be 'constantly supported, shared, developed, anchored, i.e. sustained' (13).

Clément et al. (2020) take a similar approach in their paper from Canada, proposing and testing their model which examined the dynamics of relational trust (in this case meaning the willingness of college[2] teachers to rely on administrators, colleagues and students) and their own work outcomes, or 'optimal functioning' (511) (such as their vigour, job performance and commitment to the college). The model proposes that basic psychological needs (specifically, for staff to experience a sense of their own relatedness, competence, and autonomy) play a mediating role in the connection

between relational trust and work outcomes. The findings did not support a relationship between teachers' trust in administration/management and the satisfaction of their psychological needs; the authors suggest (as with Nesterova et al. 2020) this may be because of the working distance between teachers and administrators. However, they did show relationships between teachers' trust in their colleagues and their organisational commitment and vigour (e.g. energy at work), which appeared to be strongly influenced by their need to experience both relatedness (to their environment and others) and autonomy (e.g. possessing freedom of action). The findings also revealed relationships between teachers' trust in students and their job performance, which appeared to be strongly influenced by their need to experience a sense of their own competence.

Trust in leaders and organisational commitment were also explored by Abdillah, Anita, and Zakaria (2021), but here with the emphasis on how they affected employee silence behaviour. They surveyed non-managerial faculty members (junior and senior lecturers and associate professors) in Indonesian universities and found that trust in leaders had a positive impact on their commitment to their universities and on their willingness to 'voice their best ideas and opinions' (11). They also established that organisational commitment played an important mediating role in reducing employee silence behaviour.

Gratz (2018) focused on faculty members' readiness to implement change, exploring the impact on readiness of trust staff had in each other, in deans and in the institution (USA); but survey data revealed no statistically significant relationship between respondents' trust in colleagues, or in deans, and their readiness for change, contrary to Westman, Lewicka, and Rożenek's (2017) mixed-methods research.

Similarly, Okpogba's (2012) thesis focused on faculty teaching self-efficacy and aimed to explore how organisational structure and trust in colleagues impacted this (USA); survey data found only weak relationships between respondents' perceptions of organisational structure (i.e. whether faculty members felt their organisation to be enabling or hindering), trust in colleagues and their own self-efficacy. However, interview data suggested a stronger relationship between these variables and emphasised the importance of collegial trust.

The relationship between trust and knowledge sharing provided the focus for three papers in this third grouping. Jonasson, Normann, and Lauring (2014) examined how knowledge sharing can be influenced by interpersonal trust, group role conflict and group task conflict amongst associate or assistant professors. The research also examined how this was affected by the percentage of 'foreigners' in various departments of a Danish university; their findings suggested a positive association between knowledge sharing and interpersonal trust, although this was less marked in departments with greater cultural diversity, whereas group emotional conflict (e.g. personal clashes over personality) had a negative association with knowledge sharing.

Yasir and Majid (2017) explored knowledge sharing behaviour amongst faculty members at research universities in Pakistan and considered how knowledge management enablers and trust supported this behaviour; they concluded that enablers (such as face-to-face communication, and effective Knowledge Management structures) promoted knowledge sharing and that trust played a partially mediating role here. Rehman, Khawaja, and Ali (2019) were also interested in knowledge sharing, though the primary focus here was on the absorptive capacity (knowledge acquisition and assimilation) of all categories of university employees in virtual universities in Pakistan; the aim of the research was to explore the relationship between communication and absorptive capacity, and to investigate the mediating role of trust and knowledge sharing in that relationship. They found communication had a significant role to play in absorptive capacity, and that trust and knowledge sharing had a positive influence on that impact.

A fourth paper (Dalati and Alchach 2018) explored knowledge sharing and trust (leader and organisational), with a primary focus on how these affected attitudes and job satisfaction among academic and administrative staff in Syrian universities; they found that trust in leadership and knowledge sharing was strongly associated with job satisfaction amongst employees.

Job satisfaction was the focus for two additional papers. Afridi and Baloch (2017) explored the relationship between organisational justice (employee's perceptions of workplace fairness) and job satisfaction amongst teaching and non-teaching staff at universities in Pakistan; the researchers investigated the mediating role trust played, finding that although organisational justice was a strong predictor of job satisfaction, trust appeared to play only a weak mediating role in this relationship. Dalati, Raudeliūnienė, and Davidavičienė (2017) surveyed academic and administrative staff to explore the relationship between sustainable leadership in HE, staff organisational trust and job satisfaction (Syria), finding that sustainable leadership and organisational trust had independent positive effects on staff job satisfaction.

The final two papers in this group focus on bullying (Patrick 2016) and ostracism (Karim et al. 2021). Patrick focused on bullying amongst faculty members in a private US university, aiming to establish whether workplace bullying impacted organisational trust, commitment, and job satisfaction. The research also explored how faculty perceived bullying behaviours, finding that those who had experienced bullying had less trust in the organisation and poorer job satisfaction. Karim et al. (2021) explored the perceptions of organisational politics amongst faculty members in Bangladeshi HE, how these perceptions promoted workplace ostracism and how interpersonal distrust played a mediating role in this. Findings revealed that where respondents had a greater sense of the existence of organisational politics (e.g. unofficial, self-serving behaviours) they experienced a greater sense of organisational distrust. The findings also showed that perceptions of organisational politics led to a greater sense of workplace ostracism, with interpersonal distrust acting as a significant intervening variable here, as individuals were less likely to maintain workplace relationships with those they distrusted.

The research in this group had a strong focus on quantitative research, with 13 papers carrying out quantitative surveys and questionnaires..[3] Of the other two, one (Patrick 2016) was based on a largely quantitative survey containing additional qualitative elements which were used (mostly) to explore the main focus of the paper (bullying) rather than trust. One further paper (Okpogba 2012) outlined a mixed methods study.

As might be expected with this quantitative orientation, these papers made use of a range of external measures of trust, including DeFuria's Interpersonal Trust Surveys (Cunning 2020), Cook and Wall's Organisational Trust Scale (Dalati, Raudeliūnienė, and Davidavičienė 2017; Fatima, Shafique, and Ahmad 2015); Shoho and Smith's Higher Education Faculty Trust Inventory (Okpogba 2012); Martins et al.'s Trust scale (Jonasson, Normann, and Lauring 2014); Nyhan and Marlowe's Organisational Trust Inventory (Dalati and Alchach 2018); and Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's Trust Scale (Afridi and Baloch 2017; Clément et al. 2020; Okpogba 2012).

Group 4: trust in complex environments under external challenge

The final four papers explored aspects of trust in complex environments under external challenge. They took either a qualitative (3) or mixed methods approach (1) to explore trust within complex and shifting environments; none of these papers made use of external measures of trust.

For example, Hoppes and Holley (2014) aimed to explore how 'organisational responses to external challenges impact the relationship between faculty members and administrators' (201). They carried out qualitative case study research to explore how individuals working in a small, private American college during 'a time of organisational challenge' (201) perceived workplace trust, and how trust between faculty members and administrators, which had been severely damaged within this institution, impacted on sustainability. Their conclusions were broad ranging, encompassing the significance of transparency and community input in decision-making, the need for institutional leaders to show demonstrable competence and integrity, the role trust played in reducing the need for controls between staff/ faculty and managers/ administrators, and the importance of formal and informal networks in challenging times.

Awan's (2017) doctoral dissertation focused on American community colleges, aiming to 'document steps, behaviours, and methods for rebuilding trust', noting it was not uncommon for these

to receive public sanctions and subsequently experience trauma and reduced public trust. The research drew on interviews with eight community college presidents regarding trust rebuilding measures. Complex strategies emerged from this, with several findings in line with Hoppes and Holley (2014), addressing the need for clear, accurate, regular communication, consistent cross-management messages, transparency on key topics such as budgeting, clearly defined staff roles, and demonstrable reliability, competence, and integrity of leaders.

Jameson (2012) aimed to explore issues of leadership values and trust in HE management in England during 'sectoral uncertainty' (392) through qualitative research involving interviews, qualitative surveys, and a focus group with university experts, managers, and academics. Findings highlighted concerns participants expressed about how far academic leadership could be trusted in a 'greater climate of suspicion and 'managed accountability' to government performance targets' (410). Participants explored the shifting concept of HE, challenges to its values and purposes, but also the resilience of institutions and staff. The author concluded that the concept of 'negative capability' in leadership was helpful in describing the 'ability to resist the 'false necessity' of deterministic solutions in building staff trust to cope proactively with ambiguity and change' (392).

The final paper, by Hoecht (2006), examined UK quality assurance processes and their negative effect on trust and professional autonomy, primarily through conceptual research but drawing on interviews with academic staff at two universities. The research overlaps with Jameson's (2012) in that the author examines how quality assurance processes affect 'issues of trust, control, professional autonomy and accountability' (541). Pre-echoing later findings of Hoppes and Holley (2014), Hoecht (2006) concluded that quality assurance processes enabling transparency and accountability were important but needed to be based on trust and professional autonomy of academic staff. UK HE quality assurance was characterised in his paper as largely audit-based (although previously light-touch) and experienced by academics as a 'form of control and an encroachment on their professional autonomy' (556).

Summary

Drawn together, a summary of the systematic review search results suggests trust is important in several ways, encompassing the trust that all categories of staff have or do not have in leaders and organisations (see Figure 3):

Discussion

Several striking aspects emerged from the analysis of the 25 papers. Firstly, despite broad inclusion criteria, and despite the apparent focus on trust as an important workplace issue, so few papers met the inclusion criteria, leading to the conclusion that relatively little research focusses on trust amongst all categories of staff in HE. In addition, surprisingly, papers published during the COVID pandemic, which was marked by a sudden global move to deliver online remote higher education working and teaching in 2020–22, did not address COVID and remote working issues in relation to trust in higher education, possibly because the effects of this were still being processed at the time of this review.

Secondly, the heterogeneity of papers was striking regarding both methodology and findings, meaning a true synthesis of findings was not possible. This was particularly so in quantitative papers, as explored under Group 3. For example, several papers revealed the role trust played in knowledge sharing and acquisition, whether through an apparently direct relationship between trust and knowledge sharing (Jonasson, Normann, and Lauring 2014), or indirectly through the influence of trust on other key variables such as communication (Yasir and Majid 2017; Rehman, Khawaja, and Ali 2019). Jonasson, Normann, and Lauring (2014) highlighted the complexity of this in their research exploration of the role of 'foreigners', finding 'several reasons to assume … trust and conflict will be less important … [regarding] … willingness to use each other's knowledge in

Trust of staff in their leaders and institutions:	Trust of staff between each other:	Erosion of trust between staff, managers, and institutions:	Trust is supported if managers:
• Is strongly associated with organisational commitment (Abdillah, 2021) and job satisfaction (Dalati & Alchach, 2018; Dalati et al, 2017), as is employee perception of workplace fairness; trust plays a mediating role in this (Afridi et al, 2017) • Plays a role in reducing the need for controls between staff and managers (Hoppes & Holley, 2014) • Plays a mediating role in the relationships of organisational initiatives, e.g. HR practices and staff performance (Fatima et al 2015) • Is influenced by the nature of the organisation (Jones, 2002)	• Increases with increased interaction (Nesterova et al, 2020: Clément et al, 2020) • Supports knowledge-sharing (Jonasson et al, 2014), knowledge acquisition and assimilation, possibly because it supports enablers of knowledge-sharing, e.g., communication (Yasir & Majid, 2017; Rehman et al, 2019). • Is associated with staff self-efficacy (Okpogba, 2012) • In partnership with feelings of belonging, supports motivation and creativity (Blašková et al, 2021) • Leads to organisational commitment and work-related vigour, via the satisfaction of psychological needs of relatedness and autonomy (Clément et al, 2020) • Supports organisational change, developing pedagogy and welfare (Westerman et al, 2017) • Is directly correlated with social cohesion (Nesterova et al, 2020)	• Occurs as staff become more senior (Smith & Shoho, 2007) • Occurs when staff experience bullying (Patrick, 2016) • Occurs when staff perceive organisational politics (e.g., self-serving behaviour) in operation, leading to ostracism (Karim et al, 2021) • Happens when organisations and managers respond poorly to external challenges, including: - to the existence of the organisation (Hoppes and Holley, 2014) - by adopting deterministic responses to government performance targets (Jameson, 2012) - by failing to resist the erosion of staff professional autonomy (Hoecht, 2006; Jameson, 2012)	• Are accessible, communicate clearly and regularly, and have demonstrable competence (Osburn and Gocial, 2019; Hoppes and Holley, 2014; Awan, 2017) • Are reliable (Osburn and Gocial, 2019; Awan, 2017) and consistent (Awan, 2017) • Demonstrate integrity and transparency in decision making (Hoppes and Holley, 2014; Awan, 2017) • Support levels of autonomy in their staff (Hoecht, 2006: Blašková et al, 2021) • Mediate between external demands and internal institutional values (Aasen & Stensaker, 2007; Jameson, 2012) • Resist deterministic solutions to externally set targets (Jameson, 2012) • Engage in more collegiate governance (Aasen and Stensaker, 2007)

Figure 3. Summary of results.

very heterogeneous university departments … because … knowledge from foreigners is more valuable for improved results' (5). However, they also observed that the moderating effect of a heterogeneous department did not occur in relationships between group emotional conflict and knowledge sharing, leading them to wonder if trust and emotional conflict might not be 'directly oppositional' (9), as first assumed. Jonasson, Normann, and Lauring's (2014) comments highlight the complexity of trust, suggesting other variables such as pragmatism may have significant mediating effects in trust research.

The over-riding force of pragmatism, or other confounding variables, might also explain why trust appears to play only a partially or weak mediating role in several quantitative research papers in Group 3 (e.g. Yasir and Majid 2017; Afridi and Baloch 2017; Gratz 2018; Okpogba 2012). Gratz (2018) and Okpogba (2012) both address this point; they found no statistically significant relationship between respondents' trust in colleagues, or in deans, and their readiness for change (Gratz

2018), and only weak relationships between respondents' perceptions of organisational structure, trust in colleagues and their own self-efficacy (Okpogba 2012). Both authors noted that research literature suggested this relationship was strongly evident in other organisations (e.g. schools), and that the difference here might be because of, for example, greater autonomy in HE work practices. However, in Okpogba's (2012) case, the interview data demonstrated the more nuanced interactions of these variables. This observation may highlight the relative difficulty in exploring the complexities of trust in HE through correlational surveys alone.

There was more consensus on the significance of trust in the five qualitative and four mixed methods papers. In most of these, the importance of trust was declared as a starting point, with the aim to explore trust outcomes between individuals (e.g. Westman, Lewicka, and Rożenek 2017); complex interactions of trust within organisations (e.g. Osburn and Gocial 2020; Hoppes and Holley 2014; Awan 2017); or in shifting landscapes of professional autonomy, compliance, and accountability (e.g. Jameson 2012; Hoecht 2006). These papers emphasised the need for collegial leadership, and the importance of demonstrable openness, integrity, competence, and reliability in leaders. They also focused on issues of control and power, emphasising the need for managers to support autonomy and meaningful input into decision-making amongst HE staff.

However, possibly the most striking aspect of these papers was in their examination of settings where trust had been damaged, generally by external forces and the institution's or sector's reaction to these. Here the higher education landscape was often represented as a very difficult place to be, where institutions and staff were facing 'increased social, cultural, economic, and political challenges'

Aims	Type of Review	Search Methods	Review findings
• A systematic scoping review, combining descriptive synthesis was undertaken to explore global literature on trust amongst all categories of staff in higher education institutions, the value of the literature, research methods used, and areas of research focus involved. • The inclusion criteria for the review were: primary research reporting on trust amongst all categories of university staff as this relates to colleagues, university management or the institution itself.	• The review followed a data-based convergent synthesis design, identifying qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods studies in a single search, integrated throughout analysis, synthesis, and presentation. • PRISMA and ENTREQ reporting guidelines were followed.	• From an initial 246 studies in the first search in 2020, 20 articles were identified that met the criteria for appraisal and synthesis. Of these, 11 papers were quantitative, five qualitative, and four mixed methods. From an initial 266 studies in the second search in 2022, five articles were identified that met the criteria, all of which were quantitative studies. The final 25 papers included five qualitative, four mixed methods and 16 quantitative studies. • The research took place in 16 different geographical country locations. • In the first phase, the total participant sample was 3449 across all research settings. Across both phases, quantitative studies involved 3875 participants, qualitative studies involved at least 173-178 (one study lacked clarity on interviewee numbers) and mixed methods studies involved 542 participants, giving a cumulative total of 4590-4595 participants.	• The studies that were included were heterogenous in perceptions of trust, and frequently confined to single institutions, geographical locations, or countries. • Studies that described or explored trust as a complex phenomenon using qualitative methods provided more thoughtful insights than quantitative studies that tested levels of trust. • There was a striking lack of attention to empirical research on COVID that directly addressed issues of trust amongst staff in higher education during the pandemic.

Figure 4. Key points from the systematic scoping review.

(Hoppes and Holley 2014) and an 'uncertain future' (213), and where there was evidence of staff trauma and broken trust (Awan, 201). This was a sector where 'ambiguity and change' (392) had led to a 'climate of suspicion [promoted by responses to] government accountability' (Jameson 2012, 410); and where the auditing culture was experienced by staff as 'form of control and an encroachment on their professional autonomy' (Hoecht 2006, 556). Here then, trust must be earned by those who are in a position to mitigate such circumstances, such that 'academic leadership can be understood as trustful mediation between external demands and internal institutional values and potentials' (Aasen and Stensaker 2007, 379).

Conclusion

Overall, this systematic review revealed the heterogeneity of research studies on trust and the relative lack of research in this emerging field of interest within higher education staff research, despite its crucial importance for all HE personnel, particularly during COVID-19 pandemic increases in online working and learning. Key points are summarised in Figure 4.

Trust is essential for effective functioning of HE. However, limited knowledge exists on how trust operates. This systematic scoping review aimed to address this gap. Studies were small or medium sized: the largest number of participants in any one study comprised 550 staff. Overall, studies describing or exploring trust in depth using qualitative methods provided more thoughtful insights than quantitative studies testing only the extent of trust. The variety of perspectives on trust was wide but little empirical evidence linked to theoretical definitions of trust was provided to determine how trust functioned in relation to institutional effectiveness. Future research would benefit from larger scale global and multinational quantitative studies, in-depth qualitative and diverse mixed methods research investigations of trust, including also work on trust and knowledge sharing, across multiple HEIs and countries. Higher education trust research would also benefit from theoretical models investigating a continuum of trust amongst different categories of staff in higher education, including organisational, technological, psychological, COVID-affected well-being and environmental aspects of trust and how these can be determined.

Notes

1. However, the paper requires readers to consult the original to understand the findings fully.
2. classified as higher education by the Quebec government (https://www.quebec.ca/en/education/higher-education/).
3. Nesterova et al. (2020) refer occasionally to 'interviews' and a 'qualitative approach' in their paper, but there is no evidence of qualitative analysis.

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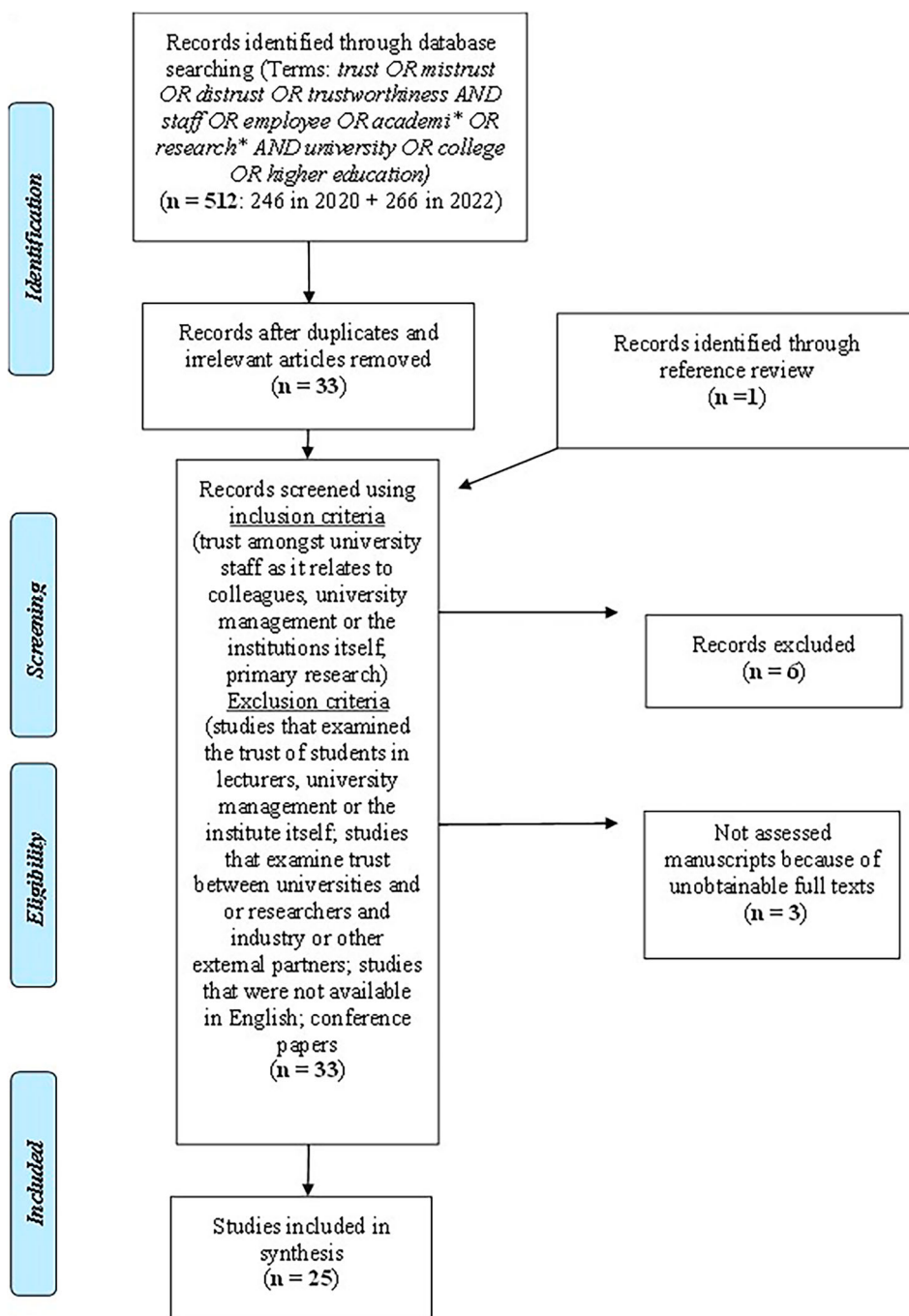
Appendices

Appendix 1

Figure A1. PRISMA flow diagram.

Appendix 2

#	Author	Year	Country	Study aims	Sample: Category of staff; participant nos.	Research methodology	Outcomes or major theoretical contribution
1	Aasen & Stensaker	2007	Sweden and European universities (in Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Germany and the UK).	This study sought to analyse how participants in leadership training programs in HE value and perceive training processes.	N = 120 (participants in three leadership development programmes)	Mixed methods	Results of this study suggest that leadership training programs are important tools in modernising HE, & that leadership can be conceptualised as "trustful mediation between external demands, internal institutional values and potentials"
2	Abdillah, M. R. and Anita, R. and Hadiyati and Zakaria, N. B.	2021	Indonesia	This study aimed to investigate the effect of trust in leaders on employee silence behaviour and the mediating role of organizational commitment within this relationship.	N= 206 (non-managerial faculty members from 11 HE institutions)	Quantitative	Findings confirmed trust in leaders positively affects organizational commitment and negatively affects employee silence behaviour. Results suggested organizational commitment fully mediates the link between trust in leaders and employee silence behaviour, increasing understanding of mechanisms underlying the relationship between trust in leaders and employee silence behaviour, especially in non-profit organizational settings.
3	Afridi & Balocj	2017	Pakistan	This study explored relationships between organizational justice (distributive & procedural justice), job satisfaction & mediating trust among teaching & non-teaching staff of public and private universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.	N = 550 (teaching and non-teaching staff between 6 public and 6 private Universities)	Quantitative	This study found that trust plays a mediating role in relationship with organizational justice, however, relationship of organizational justice and trust is very weak.
4	Awan	2018	USA	This study sought to explore critical components of rebuilding trust within The California Community College (CCC) after trust was broken. Specifically, it focused on practices a CCC administrator can engage in to rebuild trust within his/her institution.	N = 8 (College presidents)	Qualitative	This study identified strategies used to re-build trust: clear, accurate, regular communication, consistent management messages, transparency on key topics, e.g.: budgeting, clear staff roles, reliability, competence and integrity of leaders.
5	Blašková., Tumová, Blaško, & Majchrzak-Lepczyk,	2020	Slovak republic and Poland	The study aimed to introduce two new concepts: sustainable academic creativity (SAC) and sustainable academic trust (SAT), hypothesizing the existence of mutual-spiral-relations of sustainable academic motivation (SAM), sustainable academic creativity (SAC), and sustainable academic trust (SAT). The empirical research aimed to test the validity of this claim in the universities of the Slovak Republic and Poland through surveying a sample of n=181 pedagogical, scientific, management, and administrative staff in higher education to confirm the existence of these spirals.	N=181 (Managers and employees)	Quantitative	Results indicated the spiral effect of motivation when connected with creativity and trust, showing that it is accented by the crucial principles of sustainability (responsibility, novelty, usefulness, progress, etc.). The study explained the potential occurrence of three types of sustainably mutual systems and complexes: (a) individual sustainable systems of SAM, SAC, and SAT; (b) group/sectional sustainable systems of SAM, SAC, and SAT; and (c) the global sustainable complex of SAM, SAC, and SAT in the university.
6	Clément, Fernet, Morin & Austin	2020	Quebec (Canada).	This study aimed to examine the mediating role of the satisfaction of basic psychological needs (need for relatedness, need for competence, need for autonomy), as derived from self-determination theory, between college teachers' relational trust in three main referents (the administration, colleagues, and students) and their optimal functioning (vigour, affective organizational commitment, job performance). The study was conducted among 422 teachers from French-language colleges in the province of Quebec (Canada).	N= 422 (HE) College teachers	Quantitative	The results obtained using structural equations provide support for the proposed model, while identifying specific ways in which trust in the different referents is connected to the satisfaction of psychological needs, as well as to the studied indicators of functioning. Theoretical and practical implications, as well as directions for future research are discussed.
7	Cunning, L. M. J. (2020).	2020A	USA	This study aimed to explore perceptions of university presidents in biblical higher education, i.e., perceptions of trust within the institution and perceptions of university advancement effectiveness, including the Christian university president's role, trust definitions and attributes, re. the question, is there a difference in perceived levels of trust of Christian university presidents and their perceptions of advancement effectiveness?	N = 72 (university presidents)	Quantitative	No statistically significant relationship was found between perceived levels of trust and perceptions of advancement effectiveness, but the author highlights other findings in terms of presidents' views of their own organisational culture. The results of this study may help in furthering efforts that contribute to successful trust cultures and advancement efforts of Christian higher education institutions.
8	Dalati & Alchach	2018	Syria	This study sought to examine effects of leader trust, organisational trust and knowledge-sharing on staff attitudes and satisfaction at work at Syrian universities.	N = 161 (academic and administrative staff in 4 universities)	Quantitative	The findings of this study suggest that both trust in leadership and knowledge sharing behaviours were strongly associated with job satisfaction amongst employees.

							The results of this study suggest that
9	Dalati, Raudeliūnienė & Davidavičienė,	2017	Syria	This study sought to analyse relationships between sustainable leadership and staff members' trust in co-workers in Syrian HEIs.	N = 73 (academic staff)	Quantitative	The results of this study suggest that organisational trust and sustainable leadership are predictors of job satisfaction among academic and administrative staff in HEIs included in this study.
10	Fatima, et. al.	2015	Pakistan.	This study sought to explore how HR practices supported staff performance, and how job embeddedness, organisational support and trust mediated that relationship.	N = 203 (faculty members)	Quantitative	The results of this study suggest that HR support such as training and technology helped to promote staff performance, and that this promotion was either partially or fully mediated by job embeddedness, perceived organisational support and trust.
11	Gratz	2018	USA	This study examined staff/Faculty readiness to implement change, exploring the impact on readiness of staff trust in each other, in deans and in the institution.	N=89 (faculty members)	Quantitative	This study found no statistically significant relationship between participants trust in colleagues, or in deans, and their readiness for change
12	Hoecht	2006	UK	This study explored the impact of quality reforms in HE, discussing accountability, professional autonomy and trust	Between 5 and 10 interviews with academic staff at two business schools	Qualitative	Most of this study is conceptual and draws links between accountability, managerialism and undermining of trust. Interview results illustrate this point.
13	Hoppes & Holley	2014	USA	This study explored trust to understand organizational responses to external challenges and the impact this relationship has on faculty and administrators.	N = 16 (faculty, 8 and administrators, 8)	Qualitative	This study suggests that trust – or the lack thereof – is manifest by the campus environment as well as individual behavior. A common theme throughout the data analysis was the significance of transparency to cultivating organizational trust.
14	Jameson	2012	UK	The study sought to explore leadership values and trust in the management of HE in England at a time of sectoral uncertainty.	N = 6 (interviews) N = 6 (focus groups), n=121 (qualitative survey)	Qualitative (open-ended qualitative text survey, focus groups, interviews)	This study found negative capability' in leadership was helpful in describing the 'ability to resist the 'false necessity' of deterministic solutions in building staff trust to cope proactively with ambiguity and change'
15	Jonasson, et. al.	2014	Denmark	This study sought to examined how knowledge-sharing can be influenced by interpersonal trust, group role and group task conflict; the research also examined how this was affected by the percentage of 'foreigners' in various departments of a Danish university.	N = 489 (Associate or assistant professors)	Quantitative	The results of this study suggest that trust had positive impact on knowledge sharing and that the percentage of foreigners in a department negatively moderated the effect of interpersonal trust on knowledge use.
16	Jones	2002	USA	This study examined the issue of trust in leadership and whether selected aspects of trust are related to organizational models.	N = 272 (senior administrators)	Quantitative	The study found statistically significant relationships between HEIs perceived to conform to Birnbaum's collegial, political, & anarchical institutional models & Butler's loyalty, availability, and openness conditions of trust.
17	Karim, Majid, Omar, & Aburumman	2021	Bangladesh	This study aimed to explore the role of perceived organizational politics in promoting workplace ostracism. Drawing on the social exchange theory, the study also attempts to identify the mediating role of interpersonal distrust in the relationship between perceived organizational politics and workplace ostracism in higher education institutions.	N= 154 (full-time faculty members)	Quantitative	The findings revealed a significant positive association between perceived organizational politics and workplace ostracism & interpersonal distrust plays an intervening role in the relationship. These results highlight the role of perceived organizational politics and interpersonal distrust in shaping academics' workplace ostracism. Based on the findings, the study suggests both practical and theoretical implications with directions for future research.
18	Nesterova, et. al.	2020	Ukraine	This study examined the level of trust connected with social cohesion in university communities, to test the author's questionnaire and determine further steps for enhancing trust in the community.	N = 196 (academic staff, 64 and students, 132)	Quantitative	This study found that although there were some differences between levels of trust of employees of these universities, trust was found to be 'sufficient' between students and staff, which the authors took to reflect their 'readiness for mutual respect and support, acceptance of differences and tolerance'.
19	Okpogba	2012	USA	This study examined whether faculty structure and trust in colleagues were related to self-efficacy and whether institutional type and faculty role impacted this.	N = 29 (faculty)	Mixed methods - Cross sectional survey (n = 29) and interviews (n = 10)	The survey element of this study revealed that, contrary to what might have been expected, neither faculty perceptions of bureaucratic structure of the university, nor the levels of collegial trust among faculty, were powerful antecedents of teaching self-efficacy. Interview data revealed stronger relationships between faculty perceptions of organizational structure and collegial trust and teaching self-efficacy.
20	Osburn & Gocial	2019	USA	This study examined trust between community college faculty and administrators using a multicomponent definition to determine which factors of trust are important for faculty trust in administrators.	N = 247 (faculty)	Mixed methods - Cross sectional survey (collecting quantitative and qualitative data)	This study found that faculty exhibited higher trust levels in administrators who interacted with them regularly, had previous faculty experience, and had been in their position for at least five years. Faculty belief that an administrator was looking to move to a different administrative position negatively impacted trust. Openness, competence, and reliability were the most-cited components of trust in high-trust relationships between faculty and administrators.
21	Patrick	2017	USA	This study examined whether cross-disciplinary faculty-to-faculty workplace bullying in HE impacted organizational trust and commitment in one private, faith-based university in south-eastern United States. It also focused on faculty's perceptions of bullying behaviors.	N = 146 (faculty)	Mixed methods	Among other findings it was concluded that those who were victims of workplace bullying exhibited lower organizational trust following the bullying incident, were committed to the organization the same following the bullying incident, exhibited lower job satisfaction

22	Rehman et. al.	2019	Pakistan	This study applies social exchange theory to examine the mediating role of trust and knowledge sharing as they relate to communication and absorptive capacity in Pakistan's virtual universities.	N = 267 (University employees)	Quantitative	The results suggest that communication has a positive and significant impact on absorptive capacity. Results further prove that trust and knowledge sharing sequentially mediate the relationship between communication and absorptive capacity
23	Smith & Shoho	2007	USA	This study examined faculty trust related to ethnicity and academic rank in a large southwestern institution.	N = 217 (faculty)	Quantitative	This study found significant trust differences among professors of varying academic ranks (i.e., adjunct, assistant, associate, and full professor). We found, however, no significant trust differences in regard to race.
24	Westman et al	2017	Finland, Hungary and the United Kingdom	This study explored horizontal trust among lecturers at universities.	N = 23 (lecturers)	Qualitative	This study suggests trust was critical for a range of reasons. Trust facilitated cooperation between lecturers and other processes such as changes to teaching methods and organisational structures at universities.
25	Yasir & Majid	2017	Pakistan	This study sought to explore Faculty knowledge-sharing behaviors in research universities in emerging economies, considering the predicting role of knowledge management enablers and mediating role of trust	N = 323 (faculty members at research universities)	Quantitative	Trust had a mediating role on knowledge enablers and knowledge sharing provided that university administration and policy makers should create culture which support trustworthy relationships among faculty members where knowledge sharing could flourish.

Figure A2. Articles included in the review.