

SESSION: SUSTAINABILITY AND CORPORATE SOCIAL  
RESPONSIBILITY

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS  
IN INFORMAL FREIGHT TRANSPORT:  
EXPLORATION OF NIYA VIRTUE

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**Abstract**

Trust is a complex concept that has been studied extensively by scholars in various fields, including sociology, psychology, economics, and political science. There are many different definitions of trust, and the concept can have different meanings in different contexts. It is also important to consider cultural and institutional factors when studying trust, as these can significantly influence the way trust is perceived and experienced. It is often seen as a fundamental element of social and economic interactions, as it can facilitate cooperation and coordination among individuals and groups. Trust can also be seen as a social capital, as it can facilitate the formation of social networks and contribute to the overall well-being of a society. The first mobilizations of the concept began in the field of psychology and sociology. The first meaning attributed to the concept of trust (Deutsch, 1958; Giffin, 1967; Rotter, 1971) was a firm belief that the partner is reliable and of high integrity. In sociology, it was akin to a fundamental expectation of humanity as to the durability and effectiveness of social orders, whether moral or natural (Barber, 1983). Without trust, society would be much more chaotic and unpredictable, as individuals would be unable to rely on one another or cooperate effectively. Trust is therefore seen as a key element of social order and stability.

The objective of this article is to present the Niya virtue and its influence among road freight transporters who evolve in a context of chaos. The Niya virtue in this type of exchange refers to how the parties involved in a business transaction act to respect Lkelma or the terms of the tacit agreement and behave ethically. This may include honesty, loyalty, and respect for the other party, as well as a desire to maintain the business relationship over the long term. In this context, our results have shown that the dynamics of informal freight transport in Morocco often involves the predominance of interpersonal trust, or more broadly, the community order rather than the judicial order (contracts, official sanctions...).

Indeed, the exchange relations of the informal transport of goods in Morocco, a priori non-contractual, are governed by a “social algorithm” based on interpersonal trust, rather than “blind or calculating” trust.

Trust is an important factor in many business exchanges and has been the subject of much research. Trust is often defined as the willingness of one party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the belief that the other party is reliable, competent, and will act in a way that is fair and honest. Trust is especially important in situations where there is a high level of uncertainty or risk, such as in business transactions where one party is relying on the other to deliver goods or services as promised. Previous research on trust has focused on various aspects of trust, including how it is formed, how it is maintained, and how it can be damaged or lost. However, context is also important in understanding how trust operates in business exchanges. Different industries, cultures, and situations can all affect the level of trust that is present in a business relationship. In his seminal work on transaction cost economics, Williamson (1973) argued that trust plays a key role in facilitating cooperation and reducing transaction costs.

Consequently, opportunism is no longer an obstacle, since the lack of confidence is often accompanied by exclusion from the community (long-term losses greater than short-term gains), through social control exercised by some Daman guaranteeing “best ethical exchange practices”.

According to Williamson (1973), trust allows parties to engage in exchange without constantly having to monitor or verify one another’s actions, which reduces the costs of coordinating and exchanging goods and services. By building trust over time, parties can develop a shared understanding and a willingness to rely on one another, which can lead to more sustainable cooperation. This is especially important in situations where there is a high level of uncertainty or where the costs of verifying information are high. Opportunistic behavior can undermine trust, as it violates norms of honesty and fairness, and it can lead to negative outcomes such as reduced cooperation and increased conflict. In order to build trust, it is important to be transparent and to act in good faith, rather than engaging in opportunistic behavior. Trust and opportunism are often in tension with one another, and managing this tension is a key challenge in many social and economic interactions.

Sometimes going beyond a purely strategic conception of trust, it has attracted growing interest from socio-economists in recent years (Hardin, 2004; Tazdait, 2008) in this context thus inviting us the scientific community to explore the different properties of informal freight trust in Morocco (Chafai, 2021).

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