7. **Objects of political and social trust: scales and hierarchies**

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**INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, *empirical* trust research has made significant progress. Whereas theoretical concepts and empirical evidence about causes and consequences of political and social trust in democratic societies once hardly fitted together, better measures of trust in comparative datasets now allow for refined studies that have disentangled at least some of the associations and hierarchies of the objects of different types of trust. In particular, three major questions that had dominated scholarly work now seem settled. The first concerned the relationship between political and social trust and found little evidence to confirm the idea that they were positively correlated and mutually reinforcing. The second revolved around the relationship between general and particular social trust, particularly whether they were associated or mutually incompatible. The third question focused on the role of trust as cause and effect of good government, especially the role of trustworthy impartial institutions as a necessary, though not sufficient, foundation of political trust. As a consequence of the clarification of at least some of these matters, the *hierarchy* of a wide range of objects of trust emerged as a subject of research.

This chapter seeks to contribute to research by, first, providing an overview of past empirical investigations that resulted in theoretical controversies. Second, it discusses three theoretical approaches that underlie the scales and hierarchies of political and social trust. And, third, it tests these theoretical propositions against the most recent World Values Survey (2010–14 – sixth wave). In doing so, this chapter builds on previous empirical research conducted by the two authors (Newton and Zmerli, 2011; Zmerli and Newton, 2011). The new work covers a different and wider array of countries and covers the period of the financial crisis starting in 2008. It also confirms the conclusions of the previous research.

The theory that democratic stability rests on a foundation of both social and political trust was called into question by the failure of empirical research to find a positive correlation between the two at the individual level (Kaase, 1999, p. 13; Rothstein, 2002, pp. 320–21; Delhey and Newton, 2003; Mishler and Rose, 2005), although it had been found at the aggregate level in cross-national comparative studies (Newton and Norris, 2000). Moreover, despite the popular distinction between particular social trust and general social trust, little to nothing was known about the associations between the two or about the conditions in which they flourished. General trust seemed to be of crucial importance in large scale, economically developed societies (Granovetter, 1973, 1983) and it was widely assumed that particular trust was a characteristic of small, isolated face-to-face communities and of rural societies. Consequently, particular trust was thought to be of less importance in the developed world and therefore there was little research interest in it and even less empirical data about it.
Objects of political and social trust

However, subsequent research found robust evidence that social and political trust are indeed associated at the individual level – as social capital theory predicts – when the two are measured carefully with batteries of questions and 7- or 11-point rating scales (Freitag, 2003a, 2003b; Jagodzinski and Manabe, 2004, pp. 85–7; Glanville and Paxton, 2007; Zmerli and Newton, 2008; Freitag and Bühlmann, 2009; see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). Moreover, for the first time in any large-scale comparative questionnaire the World Values Survey (WVS) of 2005–09 asked batteries of questions about particular social, general social and political trust, and found that all three are positively correlated with each other. Furthermore, there is strong evidence that particular trust is not only compatible with general social trust, but also forms a platform on which the latter can be developed (Newton and Zmerli, 2011; Zmerli and Newton, 2011). Accordingly, the work of the last decade or so has injected fresh life into the subject of both political and social trust and the importance of both for politics, democratic stability and social cohesion.

In the following theoretical section, we sketch the nature and potential hierarchy of particular, general and political trust objects and propose three models of the relationship between them. The next empirical section inspects the dimensionality and hierarchy of the measures of trust included in our analyses. The final section of the chapter draws out some of the broader implications of the findings for the study of political trust and its important associations with social trust.

THE NATURE OF TRUST

Particular and General Social Trust

For some, particular trust is based on knowledge of and close contact with others. Hence Hardin states: ‘For me to trust you, I have to know a fair amount about you’ (Hardin, 2000, p. 34), suggesting that it should generally refer to a fairly small circle of family, friends, neighbours and work colleagues (see also Luhmann, 1979, p. 43; Yamagishi and Yamagishi, 1994). Others disagree, arguing that trust of any kind may be vested in unknown others who are like us in some way – language, ethnicity, class, appearance, sex or status, for example.

In this chapter we try to avoid empirical speculation by defining particular trust in a neutral way. Following the standard Oxford English Dictionary definitions of ‘particular’ and ‘trust’ we use the term ‘particular trust’ to refer to trust in specific people or groups of people, whether they are known personally or are of our ‘own kind’. Defined in this way, the circle of particular trust has a comparatively small radius in the sense that its objects are specific others and not a larger group of general others (Delhey et al., 2011). General trust is not restricted in this way and has a broad radius. It extends to people as a whole in an unselective manner. It is more inclusive than exclusive in the sense that it is less dependent upon distinctions between in-groups and out-groups. It involves the feeling that most people can be trusted, even if they are not known personally and even if they are not similar socially. However, particular and general social trust are not either/or categories. They range along a continuum from the personal and particular to the abstract and general (Misztal, 1996, p. 72).
Political Trust

Political trust, as already outlined in Chapter 1 by Van der Meer and Zmerli and in Chapter 2 by Norris, is embedded in the concept of political support and is probably the best single indicator of it. However, there are a multitude of objects of political trust and each elicits a different level of public trust that may also be more or less volatile. Trust in presidents or prime ministers can fluctuate quickly while trust in parliaments is usually more stable, and trust in democracy as a system of government may fluctuate by no more than a few percentage points over long periods of time. There may also be a virtuous circle in which the more trust there is in government, the more effective and efficient it is, and the more citizens trust their government. The same sort of logic may also apply to impartial institutions such as the police, courts and civil service.

This distinction between political and impartial institutions has been hotly debated (Marien, 2011; Braun, 2013), and, once again, the empirical evidence is mixed. On the one hand, while a theoretical distinction may be useful in some cases, only one latent dimension appears to underlie them as objects of trust (see Chapter 6 by Marien; Zmerli et al., 2007; Marien, 2011; Zmerli and Newton, 2011). On the other hand, some studies point to the importance of trustworthy and impartial institutions that operate on universal principles (Rothstein, 2011). In fact, it might be argued that impartial and trustworthy public institutions of the state may be one of the foundations upon which trust in political institutions can be built. In this case political trust may best be conceived as a set of hierarchically ordered objects of trust with trustworthy police, courts, civil service and public service agencies as a foundation on which trust in political institutions can be built.

In the following section we discuss the relationships of the three types of trust in more detail and propose three models of trust based on previous theoretical and empirical evidence.

RELATIONSHIPS OF TRUST

Studies of social and political trust are abundant but have failed to produce consistent results so far (see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). For some years, empirical research failed to find convincing evidence that social and political trust are associated at the individual level (Kaase, 1999; Newton, 1999, pp. 180–85; 2001; 2006, pp. 84–5; Torcal and Montero, 1999; Newton and Norris, 2000, pp. 62–6; Uslaner, 2000–01, p. 586; 2002; 2008, p. 111; Delhey and Newton, 2003), but were found to be significantly and positively associated at the aggregate level (Newton and Norris, 2000, pp. 52–73; Newton, 2001; Delhey and Newton, 2005).

More recent studies, however, have found substantive and consistently significant associations between social and political trust at the individual level. Country studies in the USA, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden and Japan find a close tie between general social and political trust when they are measured more precisely with batteries of questions and 7- or 11-point rating scales (Freitag, 2003a, 2003b; Rothstein and Stolle, 2003; Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005; Mishler and Rose, 2005; Glanville and Paxton, 2007; Bäck and Kestilä, 2009; Schiffman et al., 2010; Suh et al., 2012; Sonderskov and Dinesen, 2014; Tao et al., 2014). Cross-national studies have produced similar evidence (Jagodzinski and Manabe,
The conclusion that social and political trust are, indeed, associated at both individual and cross-national aggregate levels revives a range of research questions concerning the importance of social trust for democracy. Moreover, the associations between social and political trust at the aggregate level appear to be complex and asymmetrical and not entirely supportive of the theory that declines of social trust are a cause of the erosion of political trust. Some Western countries (Finland, Sweden, New Zealand and Japan), for example, that suffered profoundly from political crises and showed steep falls in political trust in the 1980s and 1990s showed little or no sign of declining social trust, civic engagement or membership of voluntary associations. On the contrary, measures of trust, civic engagement and voluntary membership remained among the highest in the world in spite of political crises (Newton, 2006). Similar findings also pertain to several mostly Southern European countries. Those that have been particularly affected by the ongoing financial and economic crisis concomitantly experience a stark decline in political trust. By contrast, levels of social trust have, by and large, remained stable even during the financial crisis that broke in 2008 (Zmerli, 2016).

Although bits of the trust picture have been filled in, crucial gaps remain and there is no general agreement about the associations, not least the hierarchies, between different kinds of social trust and between them and political trust. Earlier we defined three main models, based on a reading of the large and growing literature (Newton and Zmerli, 2011). One claims that different kinds fit together in a mutually reinforcing pattern. Another argues the opposite, seeing particular and general social trust as mutually exclusive and political trust as incompatible with particular trust. A third school of thought suggests a more complicated pattern in which some but not all forms of trust go together depending on conditions. We refer to these as the compatible, the incompatible and the conditional models.

The Compatible Model

The simplest model presents all three types of trust as a single unified combination in which those who are trusting in one realm of life are usually trusting in the others. Two main schools of thought support this view. The first is the macro approach to social capital, arguing that social and political structures and institutions are major influences on individual levels of trust. Societies with dense networks of social relations and voluntary associations, and with institutions that enforce or encourage trustworthy social behaviour (police, courts, civil service, welfare institutions), will develop high levels of social trust. On the political side of the coin, democratic systems will generate high levels of political trust that, in turn, make it easier to create effective and efficient political institutions operating for the public good. These two processes will, in turn, feed back into the system, reinforcing the institutions and norms of civil society and so create a virtuous spiral of social and political trust (Putnam, 1993, 2000; Rothstein, 1998; Tyler, 1998; Rahn et al., 1999; Knack, 2000; Levi and Stoker, 2000; Newton and Norris, 2000; Paxton, 2002; Delhey and Newton, 2005).

This is a top-down view of trust that emphasizes the importance of institutions and shared cultures. It is supported by the evidence that social trust in individuals is strongly
associated with trust in the social and political institutions whose function is to reinforce trustworthy behaviour among citizens – the courts, police, civil service. It is also consistent with the theory of the rainmaker effect, which argues that a culture of trust will have an impact on all individuals whatever their individual inclinations towards trust or distrust may be. Trust, like the gentle rain from heaven, falls upon the just and the unjust alike and so creates social climates of trust that affect the whole society.

There is also a bottom-up approach that argues for the compatible model. Glanville and Paxton (2007) call this ‘the psychological propensity model’. It argues that trust is a core personality characteristic, learned mainly in childhood in a safe and secure family environment, and intimately linked with other personality characteristics, especially a sense of control over life, a belief in interpersonal cooperation and a sunny and optimistic disposition (Erikson, 1950; Rosenberg, 1956; Allport, 1961; Uslaner, 1999, p. 238, 2002, pp. 79–86; see also Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache). Trusting personalities with this syndrome of dispositions are likely to express relatively high levels of trust of different kinds, because it is in their nature and by the same token the misanthropic personality is likely to express distrust across the board.

The proposition to be drawn from the compatible model, therefore, is that the three forms of trust will be positively correlated because their causes lie either in individual personality development or social and political institutions or both.

**The Incompatible Model**

The second theoretically conceived model is almost, but not quite, the reverse of the compatible model. In his influential study of a fictitious town in Southern Italy called Montegrano, Banfield (1958) argued that the local culture of amoral familism entailed trust in the family and automatic distrust of all others, including politicians who are presumed to be corrupt and self-interested. Similarly, there is a strong school of sociological and anthropological thought treating particular trust, also known as thick trust, as a characteristic of primary and face-to-face relations between people who know each other well and interact on a regular basis (Gambetta, 1988). It is most likely to be found in small, rural and isolated communities of which Banfield’s Montegrano was a prime example.

Despite the lack of substantiated empirical evidence, the incompatible model has a *prima facie* plausibility. The authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al., 1950) found that those with strong in-group identities were distrusting of out-group members; nationalism is often (not always) associated with chauvinism; tribal and ethnic conflict is common; the code of honour known as *omertà* is based on deep-rooted in-group trust and out-group distrust, and, paradoxically, there is often more distrust between political factions and religious sects that are most like each other than between those that are most unlike. This is anecdotal evidence but there is little theory or evidence to tell us how particular trust is extended or converted to a general form, which leaves a hole in the theory claiming that these two are closely connected and mutually reinforcing.

The empirical implications of the incompatible model are that there will be a negative correlation between particular and general social trust because they are mutually exclusive and because anthropology, psychology and anecdotal evidence suggest that particular trust is often combined with general social *distrust*. The model also proposes that particular social trust will tend to be high and general trust low in small, isolated and rural
areas, compared with large and developed societies, where particular trust will be low but general trust high. And insofar as particular trust is thought to be part and parcel of a misanthropic, uncooperative and pessimistic outlook, it will go hand in hand with political distrust. Hence those with strong particular trust will be short on general social trust and political trust.

The Conditional Model

The third model of trust suggests that there is no necessary compatibility or incompatibility between particular and general social trust, and that the two may be positively associated with each other and political trust in some cases but not in others. In other words, the associations between different kinds of trust or distrust are conditioned by circumstances in which they are found. There are three reasons for advancing this possibility, one logical and two empirical. The logical argument is simple: there is no necessary incompatibility between particular and general trust because those who trust generally must necessarily trust particular others as well. The reverse is not true, however: to trust particular others does not automatically entail trusting or distrusting people in general. Therefore, those with general trust must also have particular trust, but those with particular trust do not necessarily have general trust.

The second argument for the conditional model is drawn from social psychology. For some time it has been assumed, at least implicitly, that in-group identity is necessarily associated with out-group hostility (cf. Brewer, 1999, p. 430), which supports the incompatible model, but recent work shows that in-group attachment may also be independent of attitudes towards out-groups and does not, therefore, preclude or exclude general trust in out-groups (Yamagishi et al., 1998; Brewer, 1999, 2007; Voci, 2006).

A third argument concerns the wider cultural and institutional context in which trust and distrust are expressed. It argues that trust is not a unitary or general phenomenon that is automatically bestowed on different people or in different circumstances. It depends upon the specific others and particular circumstances (Cohen, 1999, p. 221). The evidence suggests that general social trust and political trust tend to be higher in established democracies with low levels of corruption and inequality, Protestant traditions, a strong rule of law and universal social services (Freitag, 2003a; Rothstein and Stolle, 2003; Delhey and Newton, 2005; Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005; Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005; Freitag and Bühlmann, 2009; Newton and Zmerli, 2011). Non-democratic countries, on the other hand, usually have low levels of political and general social trust and are dependent on high levels of very particular social trust. As Rose (1994, p. 29) puts it, East Europeans under communist rule ‘know who they can trust and trust who they know’. We expect political trust to be low in authoritarian and totalitarian societies, and are not surprised to find that it is high in democratic ones (see also Chapter 26 by Závecz on post-communist countries and Chapter 28 by Park on Asian societies). And we expect general social trust to be low in political systems where spies, informers, corruption and arbitrary power is the norm, and are not surprised to find that it is generally high in democratic societies run according to the rule of law and impartial policing, legal and bureaucratic systems.

According to the conditional model, therefore, we should expect all individuals with general trust to express particular trust, but the reverse is not necessarily true. At the societal level the model suggests that citizens in open, democratic and egalitarian societies...
with impartial institutions operating within the rule of law, will combine all three forms of trust, while in non-democratic societies low political and general social trust will not necessarily preclude high levels of restricted particular social trust that are necessary to get by in everyday life. According to this model there is no reason to believe that particular social trust will be low in developed societies and democracies and no reason to believe that general trust will be high in small, rural and isolated societies.

In the same vein, we can also make assumptions about the expected trust hierarchies. We believe that general social trust rests on the existence of solid particular trust relationships. By the same token, trust in impartial institutions, such as the legal system, police or the civil service, lays the foundation for trust in representative political institutions such as parliament, government or political parties.

Empirical analysis of the WVS 2005–09 data supports these expectations. First, the results suggest that the conditional model is the most suitable one and second, they show that both social and political trust are, indeed, hierarchically structured (Newton and Zmerli, 2011; Zmerli and Newton, 2011). The following analysis in this chapter replicates these findings with the latest WVS 2010–14 data and inspects the distribution, dimensionality and hierarchy of political and social trust. Given a different set of countries and a different set of economic and political circumstances we may uncover different results but, in addition, the present analysis explores the data in two further ways. It examines differences in trust levels among different groups and strata within countries and it takes a closer look at countries that deviate from the general cross-national pattern.

DATA, CASES AND METHODS

Data

The WVS of 2010–14 repeated a set of six questions about social trust and six questions about political trust that had previously been asked in the WVS 2005–09 wave. The most recent wave provides the data for the subsequent analyses.

The corresponding social trust question wordings are as follows:

I’d like to ask you how much you trust people from various groups. Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group completely (4), somewhat (3), not very much (2) or not at all (1)?
Your family
Your neighbourhood
People you know personally
People you meet for the first time
People of another religion
People of another nationality.

The first three items deal with forms of particular trust involving known others with whom respondents have close ties (family and those they know personally) or who live in their neighbourhood. The last three questions cover general trust in people who are either unknown personally or not members of the same social group.

These six forms can be distributed along a single radius of trust from the most
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particular to the most general. Trust in the family is the narrowest and most particular, followed by people known personally, and then by others in the neighbourhood. People of other religions and nationalities are more general, although the assumption is that something (perhaps quite a lot) may be known or believed about them. People met for the first time, about whom nothing may be known, lie at the most general point on the radius and entail the highest degree of risk. We also explore whether the different types of trust form a hierarchy, in the sense that one is founded upon another in the same way that each stone in a pyramid rests upon the stones below it.

The WVS 2010–14 asks the same question about political trust in a set of six political and governmental institutions as follows:

I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: Is it a great deal of confidence (4), quite a lot of confidence (3), not very much confidence (2) or none at all (1)?

The police
The courts
The government (in your nation’s capital)
Political parties
Parliament
The civil service.

As confirmed by Marien in Chapter 6 (see also Marien, 2011), these questionnaire items usually load on one latent dimension. Therefore, while it may be theoretically useful to distinguish between impartial public institutions, such as police and the justice system, and political institutions such as parliament, political parties and governments, these are strongly linked in the minds of citizens (for a theoretical discussion of the usefulness of conceptual distinctions see also Chapter 3 by Warren). Nevertheless, this says nothing about possible hierarchical patterns of political trust.

Case Selection

Since this chapter is concerned with both political and social trust, it selects from the WVS 2010–14 a set of countries with the highest democratic scores in the Polity IV Project: Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800–2013. Problems of validity and reliability arising from measuring political trust in authoritarian regimes are outlined elsewhere in this Handbook (see Chapter 4, by Rivetti and Cavatorta, Chapter 27 by Hutchison and Johnson, and Chapter 28 by Park). We therefore refrain from analysing survey responses to questions about political trust in non-democratic countries, where, apart from anything else, the absence of freedom of speech makes it difficult to give honest answers, perhaps even to make informed judgements about the state of democracy in their country.

Combining the highest Polity IV democracy scores of 8, 9 and 10 and the WVS 2010–14 data on trust produces a list of 23 democratic countries distributed across Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania, and North and South America (see note 3 and Electronic Appendix Table A7.1). The 23 selected democracies comprise 35,042 respondents aged 18 or older. Since the purpose of the present study is to generalize as broadly as possible about the populations of modern democratic states, we pool the individual data in order to examine
patterns in all modern democracies. Subsequently, we carry out similar analyses by countries and on subgroups of populations (for further details on analyses by countries see Table 7.4 below and on analyses by subgroups see Electronic Appendix Tables A7.9 to A7.28).4

Hierarchical Latent Dimensions: Mokken Scale Analysis

The task of the next section of this chapter is to establish the distribution of the three kinds of trust in the 23 democracies before going on to test the three theoretical models. Is there an underlying latent pattern to responses to the six social and the six political trust questions or are these distinct forms of trust? In other words, do different forms of social and political trust lie on the same radius from particular to general, or are they distinctive and unrelated? And are the trust items ordered in an invariantly hierarchical manner?

Mokken scale analysis shows whether a set of measures loads on a single, latent dimension. It also orders the measures in terms of their positions in a hierarchy so that more difficult items will include easier ones in such a way as to form a set of nested variables. This is particularly useful for present purposes because it ranks items from the most to the least common and thereby allows us to explore which variables may be causally prior to others. It is similar to Guttman scaling, but whereas Guttman scales are deterministic, Mokken scales have a probabilistic basis, that is, for random errors. The robustness of the hierarchical item scaling is examined by testing the monotonicity as well as the non-intersectionality of these items, as addressed below.

In Mokken scale analysis, reproducibility is measured by Loevinger’s coefficient $H_i$ for each item $i$, and $H$ for the entire scale. The calculation of $H_i$ and $H$ compares the probability of errors in ranking with the probability of such a ranking occurring among unrelated items. $H_i$ and $H$ values range from 0 to 1. $H$ scores of 0.30 to 0.39 indicate weak scales, 0.40 to 0.49 are of medium strength, and 0.50 and more are strong (Van Schuur, 2003).

The items of each resulting scale are then tested for monotonicity, that is, the necessary precondition that ‘the probability of answering positively to an item step is a non-decreasing function of the latent trait value’ (Molenaar et al., 2000, p. 66). In practical terms, the likelihood to dominate each particular item (i.e., to trust each particular object) should never decrease with higher values on the underlying trust dimension. The corresponding Mokken test procedure calculates a diagnostic Crit value for each item based on the combined results on its $H_i$, its frequency, as well as the size and significance of its violation of monotonicity. For our analysis, a Crit value exceeding 80 indicates a serious violation (ibid.).

Testing for non-intersectionality of item step response functions (ISRFs) investigates whether the hierarchy of the 12 trust items (i.e., the ranking of the trust items by the share of respondents that trust each of the 12 objects) is more or less the same at all positions of the underlying trust dimension (i.e., similar for high and low trusters). This is called an invariant item ordering (ibid., p. 7). In a doubly monotone item set, the monotonically non-decreasing ISRF, or trace lines, do not intersect (ibid., p. 18). However, violations of non-intersectionality, that is, intersecting trace lines, do not constitute a violation of Mokken scaling’s core assumptions. Several test procedures have been developed which yield Crit values similar to the monotonicity diagnostic value where values exceeding 80 indicate serious violations. Besides, one common pro-
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The procedure inspects the items’ $P^{++}$ matrix (or $P^{- -}$ matrix for that matter), which will also be considered subsequently.6

THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL TRUST AMONG DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES

Table 7.1 shows how the 12 forms of social and political trust are distributed in society. Those who claim that everyone must trust someone are correct. The figures show that for most people this is trust in the family, which is virtually universal among the 35,042 individuals in the 23 democratic nations (97 per cent).7 This means that the most particular form of social trust is also the most widespread. Other forms of social trust are then less widespread as they move out on the trust radius from people known personally and neighbours to people of different religions and nationality, and finally to those met for the first time. The more specific the form of social trust, the more widespread it is likely to be, and vice versa.8

The logic of political trust is not the same but there is a pronounced difference between the comparatively impartial public institutions of police and the justice system (which are trusted the most) and political institutions of government, parliament and political parties (which are trusted less). It is noticeable, however, that the civil service, which is supposed to be an impartial institution, is deemed trustworthy only by a minority of people. The figures in Table 7.1 also show that particular trust is widespread in the 23 advanced democracies. Even the least widespread form, trust in neighbours, is expressed by 67 per cent of the populations.

With a few exceptions (e.g., particular trust in India), we find similar patterns of trust

Table 7.1 Distribution of social and political trust (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>34,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People known personally</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>34,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbours</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>33,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religion</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>31,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other nationality</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>31,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People met for the first time</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>33,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>33,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courts</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>33,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil service</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>32,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>33,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>33,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political parties</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>33,368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
All descriptive tables in this chapter are based on equilibrated data in which $N = 1500$. The percentages depicted here are based on respondents who score 3 or 4 on the trust rating scale.

item rankings in all 23 democratic countries. Notwithstanding, the distributions of the different types of trust can vary substantially between countries. For example, nearly 60 per cent of Swedes are trustful of unknown others while less than 10 per cent express a similar trustful attitude in Cyprus, Peru, Romania, or Slovenia (see Electronic Appendix Table A7.3). Similarly, the police are trusted by more than 84 per cent of Australians but only a quarter of Argentinians (see Electronic Appendix Table A7.4).

To uncover the nature of the relationship between the two forms of social trust and between social and political trust we turn to the next stage of the analysis – simple cross-tabulations between the three types of trust shown in Figure 7.1 and Table 7.2. For this purpose, we construct three trust indices that comprise trust in people known person-ally and trust in neighbours into an index of particular trust, trust in people of a different religion or of a different nationality and in people who are unknown into an index of general trust and the six political trust items into an index of political trust. These show the following main findings:

- High particular trust is very widespread (82 per cent) in stable democracies, but different combinations of high and low particular and general social trust are not uncommon either. Nearly half the population expresses high particular trust but low general trust (47 per cent) and 35 per cent combine high particular and general trust, while 17 per cent are not particularly trustful in either category (Figure 7.1).
- Almost all (92 per cent) of those with low particular trust also have low general trust but almost half (43 per cent) of those with high particular trust also have high general trust.
- Virtually all of those with high general trust also have high particular trust (96 per cent) but only 27 per cent of those with low general trust also have low particular trust.

![Figure 7.1 Distribution of particular and general social trust (bars add to 100%)](image-url)
The same asymmetrical relations appear when social and political trust are cross-tabulated:

- Because particular trust is almost universal in democratic societies it makes very little difference to the distribution of political trust in the cross-tabulations, with 90 per cent of politically trustful people also expressing particular social trust (Table 7.2). In contrast, 25 per cent of people with low particular trust express politically trustful attitudes.

- More than two-thirds of those with low political trust also have low general social trust (71 per cent) and nearly half (46 per cent) of those with high political trust also express high general trust. It seems that general social trust is an important concomitant of political trust. Even so, it should be noted that 54 per cent of the politically trusting do not express general social trust.

- Amongst the generally socially trustful, however, 55 per cent also indicate some extent of political trust. One cautious causal interpretation of these distributions suggests that political trust may be more important to build general trust than vice versa.

In sum, these figures suggest that trust is not a general personality trait, as the compatible model suggests, and nor are different types of social trust mutually exclusive, as the incompatible model claims. Individuals mix different combinations of high and low social and political trust, choosing between objects of trust and making distinctions between them according to social and political criteria (but see also Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache). This is consistent with the conditional model of trust as a case of X trusting Y to do Z. But whereas this model could imply that everyone is different with unique combinations of Xs, Ys, Zs, the evidence about the 35 000 citizens of established democracies...
suggests that there are clear social patterns involving graded differences between objects of trust and distrust. The figures also demonstrate the asymmetrical nature of the three forms of trust – if X then Y, but if Y then not necessarily X. It seems that particular social trust is a necessary condition for general and political trust. Similarly, political trust may be a facilitator of general trust but in this case the reverse may also hold true.

Although the cross-tabulations demonstrate an asymmetrical overlap between the three forms of trust, they do not demonstrate a hierarchical relationship between them. To gain more insight, we now turn to Mokken scale analysis of the WVS 2010–14 survey data for the 35 000 individuals in the selected 23 developed democracies.

MOKKEN SCALE ANALYSIS

Mokken Scale Analysis Based on Pooled Data

First, we test empirically the existence of a single trust scale for all 12 trust items, theoretically derived from the compatible model. We do so by carrying out a confirmatory Mokken scale analysis, fixing it on one scale (for further details see Electronic Appendix Table A7.5).10

Although the empirical evidence reveals one latent scale for all 12 trust items, the scale’s $H$ value is weak (0.35). Likewise, only one out of 12 trust items scores above 0.40, which is the threshold value for medium strong scales (i.e., trust in parliament, $H_i = 0.41$). Inspecting the $H$ values by item pairs ($H_{ij}$) confirms this empirical evidence and strongly suggests that the compatible model should be rejected (see Electronic Appendix Table A7.6). A similarly weak $H$ scale value (0.37) is attained when we drop the ‘trust in family members’ item as the single item with an $H_i$ value below 0.30 ($H_i = 0.14$).

We now proceed in an exploratory manner. By choosing the Mokken ‘Search’ procedure, we do not impose any previously fixed number of scales but let the Mokken scale analysis identify the methodologically most appropriate number of hierarchical scales.

Table 7.3 shows that the 12 trust items derived from the WVS 2010–14 data produce two strong trust scales, one for political trust and the other for social trust, with $H$ scores of 0.57 and 0.52 respectively (based on the pooled data). This is strong support for the conclusion that political and social trust can methodologically most appropriately be interpreted as two distinct dimensions of trust, albeit overlapping ones, as the cross-tabulations have already suggested (Table 7.2). However, there is one major exception to this general rule. Family trust does not reach the $H_i = 0.30$ level of relevance necessary for Mokken scaling (trust in family members, $H_i = 0.19$). This is because family trust is virtually universal (97 per cent, see Table 7.1), deviations of family trust tend to be idiosyncratic, and the measure, therefore, does not contribute to the latent hierarchical scale.

The other five social trust measures are organized in hierarchical order from particular to general with trust in known others at the core. Trust in neighbours, in people of another religion, of another nationality and in people one meets for the first time are progressively less pronounced in the general population and hence come lower down the hierarchical ordering. In more figurative terms, the hierarchy of social trust variables can be seen as a set of nested variables or Chinese boxes, one inside the other. Trust in the family is the
largest box and includes the largest section of the population. Inside that box are known others, then neighbours and so on. This suggests that almost all those who trust known others also trust their family, but not vice versa, and so on until the smallest box in the middle that contains trust in unknown others.

The tests for monotonicity and non-intersectionality of the social trust scale yield some ambiguous results though. While no Crit values of 80 or more can be found running the monotonicity check, the non-intersectionality tests suggest that trust in unknown people and trust in neighbours critically violate the corresponding underlying assumption (see also Electronic Appendix Table A7.8 for the check of the P++ matrix).

By the same token, all six political trust items clearly meet Mokken scaling requirements, with trust in the police and courts as the most widespread, followed, in order, by trust in the civil service, government, national parliament and political parties. This suggests that trust in impartial institutions such as the police and the justice system, which are mainly responsible for ensuring trustworthy behaviour on the part of citizens and politicians, are a necessary, albeit not sufficient, foundation on which trust in the institutions of representative democracy can be built.

Yet, as with social trust, testing the underlying model assumptions yields somewhat ambiguous findings. The monotonicity requirement is met by all items of political trust. The two procedures selected for testing the non-intersectionality assumption, however, support slightly deviating interpretations. While the check of the P++ matrix

Table 7.3  Mokken scale analysis, 12 trust items, pooled data (Hi and H scale coefficients and means), ‘Search’ procedure (exploratory)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Trust Scale</th>
<th>Social Trust Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hi (Z scores)</td>
<td>Mean (Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>0.51 (168.76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courts</td>
<td>0.57 (191.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil service</td>
<td>0.55 (185.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>0.59 (200.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>0.62 (207.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political parties</td>
<td>0.59 (190.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People known</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other nationality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H scale</td>
<td>0.57 (330.13)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: N = 28930.
* Hi for ‘trust in family members’ is too low and therefore excluded from the social trust scale in subsequent analyses.

Handbook on political trust

(see Electronic Appendix Table A7.7) points to noteworthy violations of the ‘trust in the police’ item, the rest-score test procedure does not support a similar conclusion.

At this point, the results of the cross-tabulations and the Mokken scales can be combined. The cross-tabulations show that political and social trust are different but asymmetrically overlapping variables. The Mokken scales show that political and social trust are best understood as related but distinct scales and that each is hierarchically ordered. Consequently, particular social trust seems to be the basis on which general social trust can be built, but the particular form is a necessary, not sufficient, foundation of the general form. Similarly, trust in impartial public institutions is a necessary, not sufficient, foundation for trust in the political institutions of representative democracy. Moreover, political trust may facilitate the development of general social trust rather than vice versa.

In sum, this is not consistent with either the compatible or incompatible model. The compatible model predicts a large overlap of all forms of trust and thus a common trust factor rather than a hierarchical order, while the incompatible model predicts no such overlap between particular social trust and either general social trust or political trust, and separate latent dimensions of particular and general social trust. The conditional model alone suggests an asymmetrical overlap and different hierarchical scales for political and social trust.

These conclusions are based on pooled data of 35,000 individuals in 23 established democracies. To be sure that this does not produce false or misleading results and false patterns, the same Mokken scaling procedures were carried out on each country separately and also on subsamples of the 23 nation-pooled data according to a set of objective and subjective independent variables that have often been found to be statistically associated with individual levels of trust. The main aim is to inspect whether all categories of the selected independent variables depict trust dimensions and hierarchies similar to the ones identified for the pooled data. The objective measures are age, education, gender, income, social class, employment status and membership of voluntary associations. The subjective measures are happiness in life, political interest, and materialist vs postmaterialist values.

Mokken Scale Analyses by Countries

For all subsequent Mokken scale analyses the strong two-scale solution of social and political trust was tested. Therefore, the confirmatory ‘Test’ procedure with two fixed scales was applied.

As detailed in Table 7.4, similar Mokken scaling results, including the tests for monotonicity and non-intersectionality, can be replicated for country levels of social and political trust. However, some countries deviate from the general pattern of pooled data for all countries. One notable exception is India where neither the confirmatory nor the exploratory Mokken analysis detects a social trust scale. Instead, the Indian findings reveal an unusual distribution of the three items of particular social trust. Less than 90 per cent of Indians express trust in their family members, while around 75 per cent trust their neighbours but only 60 per cent put trust in people they know personally (see Electronic Appendix 7.3).

The item hierarchy of the political trust scales, on the other hand, shows a larger degree of variation among all the countries. Although in many cases, trust in impartial institutions precedes trust in government, parliament and political parties, there are nevertheless noteworthy exceptions, as for example in Argentina, Mexico or Uruguay (Table 7.4). The subsequent tests reveal indeed that the problem of non-intersectionality
**Table 7.4**  Mokken scale analysis, 12 trust items, by country (Rankings and $H$ scale coefficients), 'Test' procedure (confirmatory)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Friends</th>
<th>Neighbours</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Nation-ality</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>$H$ Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Courts</th>
<th>Civil</th>
<th>Parliament</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>$H$ Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>904</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>1367</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>1408</td>
</tr>
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<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.50</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.48</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>India*</td>
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<td>–</td>
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<td>**</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>**</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>1157</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
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<td>0.38</td>
<td>1193</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>1194</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>800</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>0.49</td>
<td>1301</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>1349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>978</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>0.62</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>3255</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>1083</td>
</tr>
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<td>1078</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>2155</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>2214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>0.62</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>827</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** * In India, no social trust scale emerged; ** dropped due to low $H_i$.

**Source:** World Values Survey (2010–14).
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is mostly violated by the ‘trust in the police’ item. Furthermore, the Indian data produce once again no meaningful results based on the confirmatory scale analysis. Only an exploratory approach yields a one-scale solution comprising trust in courts, the police and government.

Mokken Scale Analyses by Population Subgroups

We now test whether the trust scales can be replicated amongst different groups according to age, education, income, social class, employment status, amongst men and women, and members and non-members of voluntary associations. In addition, we inspect different groups of subjective measures, such as happiness, political interest, and materialists vs postmaterialists.

The tables for all these confirmatory analyses (using the Mokken ‘Test’ procedure on the two-scale solution) are not reproduced here partly because each one conforms in almost all respects to the patterns of the pooled data as shown in Table 7.3 and partly because there is a huge volume of tables (but see Electronic Appendix Tables A7.9 to A7.28 for detailed information).11 The only noteworthy difference from the pooled data results is the test of non-intersectionality for the social trust items which often come close to the diagnostic Crit value of 80.

Three main conclusions emerge from the evidence. First, the subset analysis produces two distinct scales in every case, one for social and the other for political trust. Second, in all cases the political trust hierarchies order in the same way as in Table 7.3, with the most widely distributed (trust in the police and the legal system) to the least (trust in parliament and political parties). And third, in all cases the hierarchy of social trust variables is ranked in the same way as in Table 7.3, from the most specific (people known personally) to the most general (people met for the first time).

CONCLUSION

Some conclusions emerge with ever more clarity from this analysis of the World Values Survey data on trust among 35,000 respondents in 23 democratically developed countries. Contrary to the theories arguing that particular trust is a strong feature of small, face-to-face and isolated communities and of rural and developing societies, different forms of this kind of trust are widely found in all countries. Nor is particular trust incompatible with general social trust. This strongly suggests that the particular is a necessary but not sufficient cause of the general.

Political trust does not seem to follow the same strict logic, but it seems that trust in the police and the legal system – institutions that are supposed to maintain the trustworthiness of politicians and citizens alike – may be a foundation on which the less widespread trust in the institution of government and politics are built. These findings lend strong support for the major importance of the rule of law as a necessary condition for the viability of democratic societies.

Furthermore, the analyses reveal the asymmetrical nature of the relationships between political trust and general social trust. More than two-thirds of those with low political trust also have low general trust, but nearly half of those with high political trust also have
high general trust. This suggests that while general social trust is not a necessary condition for political trust it may be something that helps. Similar if not even more intriguing evidence, however, is also found for political trust as a facilitator of general social trust.

Mokken scale analysis provided evidence that social and political trust are best conceptualized as constituting two separate scales with a robust hierarchical ordering of items. A one-scale solution for all 12 trust items could also be detected but was statistically quite weaker than the two-scales solution. By the same token, the Mokken scale analyses of subgroups in the populations of advanced democracies also display clear patterns of trust. In almost all cases, Mokken scaling of these subgroups reveals two strong scales — social and political — and in almost all cases it shows the same hierarchies, starting with confidence in the police and the legal system and narrowing down to parliament and political parties on the political trust scale, and starting with trust in known others and narrowing down to trust in unknown others in the case of social trust. Considering that these findings are based upon 35 000 individuals in 23 countries, the uniformity of the results across countries and across subgroups of their populations is remarkable and lends strong support to the previous research findings by the two authors.

Thus, the combined evidence of cross-tabulations and Mokken scale analyses suggests that the conditional model of trust best fits the evidence we have. Unlike the compatible model, trust is not a core personality syndrome and individuals high on one measure cannot be expected to be high on others. People combine different forms of trust in different ways although particular social trust seems to be a necessary precondition for general social trust and political trust while the causal relationship between general and political trust is less clear and could go either or both ways. Nor does the data fit the incompatible model. On the contrary, most of those with high general trust also have high particular trust, though the reverse is not true. Similarly, many of those with high political trust also have high general trust, though the reverse is also true. As the conditional model predicts, high levels of particular social trust are also found in developed democracies.

In a nutshell, in developed democracies, the institutions that enforce trustworthy behaviour, encompassing the rule of law, democratic government and egalitarian social policies, combine to create conditions that favour political trust and particular and general social trust. This suggests an important top-down role for institutions and systems of government, but it does not deny individual variations driven by personality factors and life experiences.

We should end with some comments about what this analysis has not and cannot tell us about trust. Because of our interest in political trust we have selected the most advanced democracies in the world according to Polity IV scores, which means that we have not conducted a global comparative study and can say nothing about the non-democratic and developing world. Mokken scale analysis shows a hierarchy of variables that, in turn, suggests a set of necessary causes as one moves up the scale, but it says nothing about the causes themselves or why some, but not all, with particular social trust express general social trust or why some, but not all, with general social trust also express political trust. Previous analyses based on WVS 2005–09 data suggest, however, that material as well as non-material resources may be associated with the development of general social and political trust (Zmerli and Newton, 2011). Moreover, this analysis tells us nothing about how societies move from low to higher levels of trust and which countries find this bootstraps operation easier than others.
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There are still many unanswered questions and many trust puzzles. But whereas trust research seemed to be heading down a blind alley 10 or 15 years ago, it now seems that fresh life has been breathed into it by uncovering associations between and hierarchies among objects of political and social trust.

NOTES

1. Original coding of answers was reversed.
2. Original coding was reversed.
3. The selected countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, United States and Uruguay.
4. For the operationalization of subgroups see Electronic Appendix Table A7.2.
5. A doubly monotone item set satisfies the assumptions of unidimensional measurement, local independence, monotonicity, and non-intersection (Molenar et al., 2000, p. 8).
6. If the model of double monotonicity holds, rows and columns should be non-decreasing for $P(\cdot,\cdot)$ and non-increasing for $P(\cdot,\cdot)$ (Molenar et al., 2000, p. 84).
7. The case number is based on weighted data that show no missing data on the 12 trust items. See also notes to Table 7.1.
8. It is important to note that since trust in the family is almost universal (96.6 per cent) it must be literally useless as a discriminator when run against other variables. This assumption is also confirmed by the subsequent Mokken scale analyses. Therefore, trust in family members has been excluded from all the cross-tabulations that follow, which use only trust in people known personally and in neighbours to measure particular trust.
9. If trust in family members is also included in the index of particular trust this figure would amount to 90 per cent.
10. Confirmatory Mokken scale analyses are carried out by applying the ‘Test’ procedure in MSPWin 5.
11. As mentioned before, however, violations of non-intersectionality, that is, intersecting trace lines, do not constitute a violation of Mokken scaling’s core assumptions.

REFERENCES


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