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Relationship between media consumption and generalized trust: evidence from World Values Survey

Thesis Summary
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Statement of research problem

There is an agreement in social sciences that trust is a crucial feature of modern society. Despite the routine attitude that trust might be a bad strategy of behavior related to gullibility [Yamagishi, 2001], academics agree that trust is a positive property of actors. It was shown many times that the high level of trust is related to economic and political growth [Gambetta 1988; Coleman 1990, Putnam 1993; Fukuyama 1995; Knack, Keefer 1997]. It is not only trust within a social group (for example, family, neighborhood, work organizations) that is important for society but also a trust in people in general [Alesina, La Ferrara, 2002; Glaeser et al., 2000]. Trust is a feature of interaction that facilitates transactions based on incomplete contracts when a certain result cannot be granted through formal sanctions. Trust and cooperation are also important for the whole society since they can be considered as an obstacle for individuals to behave solely in their own interests [Coleman, 1990]. Arrow argues that literally every economic transaction includes trust meanwhile the low level of confidence that both sides will behave according to contract lead to low economic performance of the society. According to Coleman trust is a form of social capital that along with other forms of social capital facilitates economic performance and makes group work more effective [Коулман, 2001, с. 126]. Barber notices that trust leads to social solidarity meanwhile distrust causes social atomism [Barber, 1983]. The relevance of trust research is also related to the ubiquity of trust. Interpersonal trust is required in different social interactions and appears in different situations [Simmel, 1950, p. Frederiksen, 2012, p. 734].

Country-level analysis has shown that the high level of trust leads to the high level of legal performance and to decrease of the level of corruption [LaPorta et al 1996]. According to Misztal the role of trust is very important on the micro-level as well. Trust is required for maintaining consistent and firm relationships, cooperation,
exchange and daily-life interactions [Misztal, 2013, p. 12]. Luhman also argues that in society without trust only basic forms of interaction may occur [Luhman, 1982, c. 88].

The fact that trust is crucial for modern society leads researchers to the constant search of the mechanisms of trust creation. Delhey and Newton created a typology of trust determinants by defining two groups of theories. On the one hand, there are personal theories assuming that trust is related to personal features of individuals and societal theories that state that level of trust shown by a particular individual is defined by the context [Delhey, Newton, 2003].

The topic of trust becomes especially relevant due to the technological development of modern society. Sasaki and Marsh argue that the understanding of why some societies have a high level of trust meanwhile others have low one is crucial in the world that constantly globalizes and isolates simultaneously [Sasaki, Marsh, 2012]. Sztompka believes that modern technologies and television in particular significantly reshaped the concept of trust [Sztompka, 1999, p. 42]. Similar ideas were also supported by Luhman who notices that printed media, literacy and information moved the boundaries between known and unknown, therefore changed the concept of trust [Luhman, 2000, p. 101].

The current research combines individual and societal theories of trust. The central idea of the study states that media consumption may be considered as a type of personal experience that can shape the level of trust. It is assumed that individuals can get information about the world through media-channels and that information may differ from daily-life information. It is also expected that the relationship is moderated both by individual characteristics and institutional, economic and social features of countries where individuals live.

The practices of getting information from different media-channels are used as predictors of social trust. In modern society, it is especially relevant to pay attention to the role of the Internet. Dimaggio et al. have shown that internet penetration changes
communities and the process of social capital acquisition [Dimaggio et al., 2001]. Due to the Internet penetration the society transformed from group model to networked-model [Wellman, 2001]. The development of web 2.0 gave more opportunities for users to interact with each other [van der Werff et al, 2018].

**Previous studies of the problem**

The study has a two-fold purpose. On the one hand, it contributes to the discussion around determinants and correlates of social trust. On the other hand, the research explores how media-usage is related to trust as a form of pro-social behavior. Therefore, the literature behind the study comes both from a sociology of trust and media research.

The problem of determinants of trust arises in social sciences in the second half of the XX century. Ideas of Giddens, Luhman, Sztompka and other authors emphasized the fact that trust is crucial for social, economic and political efficiency. This fact has risen the interest in finding ways of trust's creation within different societies. Scholars have also shown that the level of trust is declining in the modern society [Putnam, 2000] therefore the importance of defining key factors related to the higher level of trust both on individual and country level. A separate discussion appeared around the idea whether the trust can change through the life course of an individual or it is formed in the early childhood and remain stable during the rest of individual life [Delhey, Newton, 2003].

Another scope of literature relevant to the study comes from the field of media research and deals with media-effects on prosocial behavior. Expansion of every new media channel questioned the existence of older channels and make the scientific community think about how the media-use can or will change social life. Such discussion arose especially vividly around the Internet expansion [for example, Kraut R. et al., 1998; Nie, 2001; Neves, 2013], though the TV expansion was not left
without attention [Norris, 2006; Besley, 2006; Gentzkow, 2006]. Quan-Haase and Wellman argue that the discussion around the Internet is a part of a wider discussion about industrial revolution effects [Quan-Haase, Wellman, 2004]. Verboord notices that there is a lack of cross-country studies focusing on internet use and its effects on the population [Verboord, 2017].

The relationship between trust and media-consumption was explored by a variety of empirical studies. For example, in political science social trust is usually treated as a part of civic engagement (along with political trust and participation) therefore the assumption is made that media-consumption is an important predictor of how trustful people might be [например, Scheufele, Shah, 2000; Shah et al 2001 b; Firat, 2014]. In the sociological study, there also was a plethora of attempts to explore the relationship between social trust and different forms of media-use [for example, Shah, Kwak, Holbert, 2001; Valenzuela, Park, Kee, 2000; Geber et al, 2016].

The research combines two theoretical premises. On the one hand, trust considered to have a cognitive background [Yamagishi, 2001; Yamagishi, Kikuchi, & Kosugi, 1999; Sturgis, Read, & Allum, 2010, p. 52; Govier, 1998], on the other hand, media use has cognitive effects [Ball-Rokeach, DeFleur, 1976; Gerbner et al, 1986; Bandura, 2001; Perse, 2001; McQuail, 2010, p. 624]. Therefore, there are evidences to hypothesize that practices of obtaining information through different channels might be related to the level of social trust.

The problem of trust as a product of information use became especially relevant to the spread of the Internet as a new source of Information. Trust is formed under stable traditions, norms and institutions [Beckert, 2005; Штомпка, 2012], however, it may be supposed that such norms are not yet formed for the Internet. Following the idea of McLuhan [McLuhan, 1994], it was hypothesized in the study that obtaining information from different sources may be differently related to trust.
This idea was mostly supported by a “mix of attributes” approach that states that it is important to take into account the source of media information [Eveland, 2003]. Current research is aimed at comparing the relationship between practices of daily use of media channels and social trust.

The discussion around the relationship between media use and level of trust may be considered as a part of a wider discussion around the relationship between media and social life in general. At the end of the XX century, the attention of scholars was driven to the Internet effects on prosocial attitudes and behavior. The discussion goes around the Internet effects and whether it leads to social isolation or gives people opportunities to communicate more. On the one hand, a group of scholars supporting cyber-pessimism has shown that frequency of Internet use is related to decline of political participation, level of trust and social capital [for example, Kraut et al, 1998, Nie, 2001]. On the other hand, a group of authors shows that internet is an easy and cheap way to maintain social contact and participate in political life [for example, Scheufele, Shah, 2000; Shah et al, 2001b, Tolbert, McNeal, 2003].

The aim and objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between trust and obtaining information from different media-channels for different social groups and under country-level contexts.

The aim is reached through the following objectives:

- To define the general direction of the relationship between social trust and the practices of obtaining information through Internet, television, radio and newspapers
- To compare the relationship between practices of obtaining information through different media-channels and in-group and out-group trust
- To estimate the variability of the relationship between trust and practices of obtaining information through different media-channels across different social groups

- To estimate the effect of country-level context on the variability of the relationship between trust and practices of obtaining information through different media-channels across different social groups

**The scientific novelty of the study**

- Two new indicators of trust are analyzed in the study. The comparison is made how practices of obtaining information through different media channels are related to the in-group and out-group trust. It is found that television use is positively related to trust in known people whereas it is negatively related with trust in unknown people.

- The study compares different media-sources of information and juxtaposes television, radio, newspapers and the Internet. It is found that trust in unknown is positively related with newspaper reading but negatively with TV use.

- The variability of the relationship between social trust and the practices of obtaining information through different media channels is taken into account. A detailed description is provided on how the relationship varies across different social groups. It was found that Internet use is negatively related with trust in unknown people only for respondents with lower education.

- The variability of the relationship between social trust and the practices of obtaining information through different media channels on a country-level is taken into account (popularity of each media-channel in a country, political regime and freedom of press are tested as a mediators).

**Brief results of the study**
1. It was found that there are differences between trust in in-group and out-group. Analysis has shown that trust in unknown people is negatively related to TV viewing but positively with newspapers reading. Trust in known people is positively related both to newspapers reading and television watching.

2. It was found that the relationship between trust and practices of obtaining information from media varies for different media channels. The analysis shows that Internet use is not significantly related to both forms of trust, but the significant relationships exist between trust and usage of TV and newspapers.

3. By modeling interaction effects between practices of media use and a set of socio-demographic variables it was shown that media-effects are not constant for different social groups. For example, it was shown that some media-effects differ for people with different education, income or place of residence.

4. It was shown that media-effects vary across countries with different popularity of media, different level of press freedom and different political regimes. The variability applies both for different forms of trust and different media channels.

**Theoretical background**

The main theoretical framework of the research is based on a range of trust theories that relate trust with the amount of information available to individuals. Special attention was drawn by rational and cognitive theories of trust and informational approach towards trust. In particular, the theoretical framework consists of works by Luhman [Luhmann, 1982; Luhmann, 2000], Giddens [Giddens, 2013], Hardin [Hardin, 2002; Hardin, 2006], Yamagishi [Yamagishi, 2011], Heimer [Heimer, 2001], Lewis and Weigert [Lewis, Weigert, 1985], Gambetta [Gambetta, 1988], Barbalet [Barbalet, 2009], Lewicki and Bunker [Lewicki, Bunker, 1995]. In addition to trust theories from media, studies were also used. In order to operationalize media-
effect conditional effects models [Perse, 2001], cultivation theory [Gerbner et al., 2009], media system dependency theory [Ball-Rokeach, DeFleur, 1976] were used.

**Methods of data collection and analysis**

The empirical section of the research is based on secondary data analysis. Probably the best data sources for analysis of generalized trust on an individual level are cross-country surveys [Asadullah, 2016]. The main data source for the study is the 6th wave of the World Values Survey. Fieldwork for the survey lasted from 2010 to 2014. The current survey is the latest available cross-country dataset including both questions on social trust and media-use.

Totally the survey includes data on 90350 respondents from 60 countries, however, after listwise deletion procedure approx. 60000 respondents from 44 countries are left for the analysis. The variety of countries under analysis is quite suitable since it combines both developed, developing and under-developed countries.

Multilevel regression modeling is used in the study as a major method of analysis. The method is widely used in cross-country studies of trust [for example, Delhey, Welzel, 2012; Gheorghiu, Vignoles, Smith, 2009; Robbins, 2011]. The level of trust in the society is not only defined by individual characteristics of trustors (her/his social position, personal experience, psychological features, etc.) [Delhey, Newton, 2003, p. 95; Robbins, 2011, p. 33] but also by the context [Delhey, Newton, 2003, p. 97; Alesina, La Ferrara, 2002]. Multilevel modeling also allows to take into account the variability of individual variables and their relationships and explain that variation by country-level characteristics.

Technically multilevel modeling allows taking into account variation of individual effects across countries. The idea of clusterization of the level of trust in

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1 Due to the absence of relevant questions data on Hong Kong, Japan, Libya, Morocco, New Zealand, Qatar, South Korea, Pakistan, Palestine, Singapore, Spain, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United States were excluded from the analysis.
different countries comes not only from the general idea of similarity of people from the same country but also from the value of intra-class correlation obtained from the empty models. The estimate for the coefficient for the model of in-group trust is equaled to 0.169 and 0.108 for out-group trust which might be considered as sufficient for multilevel modeling.

All models estimated in the research includes a set of individual-level control variables (age, gender, level of education, size of place of residence, income) and GDP per capita as a country level control variable.

All reported models have random intercepts and random slopes for the variables included in the cross-level interaction term.

**Major results of the study**

Country-level analysis has shown that both levels of trust in known and unknown people are related to country-level popularity of media channels. It was found that there is a significant positive relationship between the popularity of internet use and share of people trusting in known people and negative relationship between the popularity of TV and share of people trusting in unknown people. Both results were obtained after controlling for GDP and that can be evidence that the relationship between practices of media use and trust are not defined by economic development.

In order to take into account unequal access to different media channels including digital inequality, several analytical strategies have been used. First, a set of models with media practices as dependent variables and a set of demographics as predictors. This step allowed to define that males are more tend to use all channels under analysis, age is positively related to the probability of daily usage of TV, newspapers, and radio as a source of information and negatively with Internet use. It was also found that in big cities the probability of Internet, radio and TV use is higher. Level of education and income are also positively related to informational use of all
media channels. Those results go in line with main ideas on digital inequality emphasizing that information is more available to individuals with a higher level of income [Martin, Robinson, 2007] and education [Van Dijk, Hacker, 2003]. Second, all the estimated multilevel models include a set of demographic variables as controls.

Multilevel modeling was conducted as a central method of data analysis. It has shown that trust in known people is positively related with daily TV usage as a source of information (odds ratio is equal to 1.08 and significantly differs from 1 at alpha-level 0.01) meanwhile trust in unknown people is negatively relate with TV news usage (odds ratio is equal to 0.75 and significantly differs from 1 at alpha-level 0.01).

Modeling also has shown that newspaper reading is positively related with both trusts in known and unknown people (odds ratio are equal to 1.08 and 1.12 correspondingly and significantly differ from 1 at alpha-level 0.01).

The second stage of modeling was dedicated to analysis of how the relationships between practices of media-use and trust vary for respondents with different socio-demographic features. During that part of modeling the hypothesis is tested that individual features may not only be directly related to trust but also moderate the relationship between trust and practices of obtaining information through different media channels. The results of the modeling are briefly described in table 1.
Table 1. A brief summary of individual level moderation effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>Television</th>
<th>Radio</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust in known people</td>
<td>Tertiary education: positive relationship</td>
<td>Tertiary and secondary education: positive relationship</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Tertiary and secondary education: positive relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary education: not significant</td>
<td>Primary education: not significant</td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary: not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary education: negative relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tertiary and secondary education: not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Tertiary education: positive relationship</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary education: negative relationship</td>
<td>Primary and secondary education: not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residents of towns with less than 100 000 of residents: not significant</td>
<td>Residents of towns with less than 100 000 of residents: not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residents of towns with more than 100 000 of residents: positive relationship</td>
<td>Residents of towns with more than 100 000 of residents: positive relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>«Fanning-out» effect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of a place of residence</td>
<td>Internet users of towns with 10 000-100 000 residents trust in known people with less probability than Internet users from towns with less than 10 000 residents</td>
<td>The smaller the town the stronger is the negative relationship «Averaging» effect</td>
<td>Residents of towns with 10 000-100 000 of residents: positive relationship «Averaging» effect</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Special focus of the study is to define the role of context in the relationship between practices of media-use and trust. The next stage of modelling included cross-level interaction effect between country-level characteristics (political regime, country-level popularity of each media-channel, freedom of press) and practices of media use. The results of the modelling are briefly described in table 2.

Table 2. A brief summary of cross-level interaction effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Trust in known people</th>
<th>Positive relationship only for the respondents form the 6th decile and higher</th>
<th>Positive relationship only for the respondents form the 5th decile and higher</th>
<th>Interaction effect is not significant</th>
<th>Interaction effect is not significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust in unknown people</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Negative relationship for respondents with higher income</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust in known people</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust in unknown people</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In young age Internet users are less trustful, in old age Internet users more trustful.

Internet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>Television</th>
<th>Radio</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Popularity of the media-channel</td>
<td>Trust in known people</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust in known people</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political regime</td>
<td>Trust in unknown people</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference in probability of being trustful increase with the increase of share of people using newspapers in the country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political regime</th>
<th>Trust in known people</th>
<th>Interaction effect is not significant</th>
<th>Interaction effect is not significant</th>
<th>Interaction effect is not significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free countries: users are more trustful than non-users</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly free countries: non-users are more trustful than users</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not free countries: no significant difference</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td>Interaction effect is not significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Free countries: respondents daily using newspapers as a source of information are more trustful in comparison to those who read newspapers less frequently.

Partly free countries: no significant difference

Not free countries: no significant difference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political regime</th>
<th>Freedom of press index</th>
<th>Interaction effect is not significant</th>
<th>Interaction effect is not significant</th>
<th>Interaction effect is not significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free countries: respondents who use newspapers as a daily source of information are more trustful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly free countries: no significant difference</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not free countries: no significant difference</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In countries with higher freedom of press respondents who use newspapers as a daily source of information are more trustful.
**General conclusions of the study**

Based on all the stages of modeling a range of substantial conclusions was made.

Comparison of the media-channels effects allows revealing that it is not only the fact of getting information somewhere is relevant for trust but also the source of the information. Current study ignores the content of media messages; however, it is possible to suggest that the difference in effects may derive from the difference of media messages transmitted through different channels.

It was shown that daily use of newspapers as a source of information is positively related with both trust in known and unknown meanwhile daily TV watching is positively related to trust in known and negatively with trust in unknown people. It is possible to explain by the fact that TV watching might be considered as a bonding activity that allows simultaneously communicate with in-group, however since TV narration is mostly based on violence [Gerbner, Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1980] it can destroy trust in out-group. Those results may be considered as some kind of justification for TV. Earlier scholars were tending to see TV view as something destructive for social life [Schmitt-Beck, Wolsing, 2010] but current research is showing the positive relationship at least with trust in known people.

Despite the fact that lately a lot of media researches have been focused on Internet effects in general [for example, Räsänen, Kouvo, 2007; Bauernschuster, Falck, Woessmann, 2014], and the effects of different patterns of Internet use [for example, Shah et al, 2001; Steinfield et al. 2008; Valenzuela, Park, Kee, 2009] the evidences about the relationship between Internet use and prosocial attitudes (including trust) are quite contradictory. The results of the dissertation show that there is no direct relationship between trust in unknown people and Internet use. The absence of relationship goes in line with the idea of Uslaner that Internet use is not related with a higher level of social capital, however, it might be relevant after taking
into account additional variables [Uslaner, 2000]. In current research, it was found that in young age both users and non-users show the same level of trust, however, in old age internet users are more trustful. Level of education is another moderator for the relationship between Internet use and level of trust. It was found that people with higher education tend to be more trustful if they use the internet as a daily source of information, meanwhile, people with lower levels of education are in opposite less trustful if they use the Internet. Variability in the relationship between trust and Internet use was also found across different income groups. The positive relationship was found only for wealthiest respondents. Generally, those conclusions may be considered as evidence supporting cyber-pessimism.

Recent literature mostly argue that the Internet allows people to participate in politics [Bakker, De Vreese, 2011] and gain social capital [Bauernschuster, Falck, Woessmann, 2014], but the current dissertation shows that it may not be applicable to all social groups.

It was shown in the study that trust in unknown people is negatively related to daily use of TV as an information source and the relationship is stronger for people with higher levels of income. Another moderating variable is the size of a place of residence and income. The positive relationship between TV viewing and trust in known people is only relevant for people living in cities with more than 100 000 residents or respondents with a higher level of income. To sum up, it was found that TV is positively related to trust only for most privileged groups meanwhile for others the relationship is either negative or insignificant. That finding may be interpreted in terms of knowledge gap hypothesis that states that knowledge distributes unequally across the social system and reaches earlier people with higher socio-economic status [Tichenor et al, 1970]. On the other hand, it may be supposed that TV transmits violent images and groups with the low socioeconomic status being more vulnerable are mostly affected by those images.
“Mainstreaming” effect of media described by Gerbner [Gerbner, 1981; Gerbner, Gross, 1976, Gerbner et al, 1980, Gerbner et al, 1986] was found only for the relationship between trust in unknown people and radio and TV use moderated by place of residence’s size. Respondents form towns of different sizes show a similar level of trust in the case if the use TV or radio as a daily source of information. This result contradicts to Hindman and Yamamoto's previous findings stating that there is no variability of the relationship between trust and TV watching for residents of towns of different sizes [Hindman, Yamamoto, 2011].

In the study trust considered as a cognitive result of information obtained from media. It also may be assumed that media could shape trust as a form of social intellect [Yamagishi, 2001]. However empirical evidence does not allow to support such a mechanism. First, it is not just information that shapes trust. Second, it was shown that the relationship is not the same for all social groups. Third, trust in known and unknown people may be considered as two different forms of social intellect shaped differently by information obtained from media channels.

Particular interest of the study is directed on the role of country-level context. Some previous studies have shown that the relationship between trust and media-practices is moderated by country-level context [Geber et al. 2016] and varies at different stages of internetization [Kraut et al. 1998, Kraut et al. 2002]. Use of wide cross-country data provided by World Values Survey allows comparing countries with different economic well-being, the popularity of media-channels, political regimes in order to understand whether there is variation in the relationship between trust and media use in different political and economic context. That part of the analysis is justified by the existence of different trust cultures [Штомпка, 2012] and informational environments [Guillén, Suárez, 2005].

The relationship between daily newspapers use and trust in known people depends on how popular are newspapers and radio as a daily source of information.
The positive relationship was found only in those countries where newspapers are popular as a source of information across the population. A similar pattern occurs with the relationship between newspapers reading and trust in unknown people. The higher the popularity of newspapers in the country the higher the relationship between trust in known people and personal newspaper reading. Such a mechanism may be described with the idea of “rainmaker effect”. Newton assumes that such an effect relevant to TV since public TV affects culture in general. Therefore, TV expected to have an effect on people’s attitudes regardless of whether particular individuals using TV as a source of information or not [Newton, 2016]. Zmerli et al have shown that the popularity of TV is related to political trust along with personal TV use [Zmerli et al, 2015]. Schmitt-Beck and Wolsing show that macro-effect of television’s popularity is stronger than the individual effect of TV use [Schmitt-Beck, Wolsing, 2010]. However, the results of the current dissertation show no rainmaker effect for television use but some support of it for radio and newspapers use as a daily source of information.

Democratic regime traditionally considered to be macro-characteristics related to the individual level of trust in a country. However, it was shown in the current study that the level of democracy has no significant relationship with the level of trust to known people. This may be evidence that trust in in-group is the basic characteristic of any society [Delhey, Welzel, 2012].

The relationship between democracy, trust and media consumption may be explained by Przeworski’s theory. He argues that the level of uncertainty is higher in democracies [Przeworski, 1991]. Therefore, it might be assumed that the relationship between trust and the media is stronger in democratic societies. The current dissertation shows that only in democratic countries newspapers and Internet use are related to higher propensity to trust.
Despite the fact that printed press is the oldest media channel studied in the dissertation, and it could be expected to have the most stable relationship with trust, it was shown that there is a significant variability of newspapers and trust relationship. The relationship differs in countries with different political regime, freedom of the press and general popularity of printed press within the country. It is also notable, that for all tested cross-level interaction the relationship of TV and trust proved to be stable regardless of country-level features. That may be considered as evidence of television system universality.

According to Castells “Internet use depends on people and society using it” That probably also applies to other media channels, therefore current study focuses on media channels and features of the users and societies. As a result, the analysis conducted in the dissertation allows to conclude that it is not information by itself that matters for the level of trust, but also where does it come from and who and where gets that information.

Publications

The works published by the author in journals indexed in the international databases of indexing and citation, as well as on the list of high-level journals of the HSE:


Other publications on the topic of dissertation:


