

Propensity To Trust: Impacted By Personality, Culture, Or Both?

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1

WHAT INFLUENCES TRUST?

Trust may be influenced by a variety of factors, some of which may be related to personality and disposition.

KEY TERMS

TRUST PROPENSITY
One's inherent willingness to rely on others.

TRUSTWORTHINESS
Characteristics that support or inspire trust — ability, benevolence & integrity.

TRUST
A willingness to accept vulnerability based on expectations of a positive outcome.

Source: Colquitt, Jason A., Brent A. Scott, and Jeffrey A. Lepine. "Trust, trustworthiness, and trust propensity: A meta-analytic test of their unique relationships with risk taking and job performance." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 92.4 (2007): 909-27. Web.

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2




TRUST LITERATURE

Propensity to Trust

Individual difference or personality factor

General orientation

Ability to trust in varying contexts

3

TRUST LITERATURE: TRUST & CULTURE

Value-based dimensions of culture

Values transcend contexts




Beliefs

Come from previous experience

Can vary significantly along spectrum of specificity

Social Axioms

Once an evaluative belief becomes specific, it then becomes a Social axiom

4

TRUST LITERATURE: TRUST & CULTURE

SOCIAL AXIOMS:

Leung et al., (2002) conceptualized Social Axioms as generalized beliefs about oneself, the social, physical, and/or spiritual world which individuals use to guide their behaviour in different situations.

- Social axioms have 4 basic premises:

1. Instrumental
2. Ego defensive
3. Value-expressive
4. Knowledge



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5

TRUST LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

Created SAS pulling from literature on beliefs, as well as extracted social axioms from interviews with Hong Kong and Venezuelan participants



Five factors shows considerable overlap across cultures:

- 1) Social Cynicism,
- 2) Social complexity,
- 3) Reward for application,
- 4) Spirituality,
- 5) Fate control



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6

TRUST LITERATURE: TRUST & PERSONALITY

- Two theoretical perspectives on how trust is formed (Freitag & Bauer, 2015)
 1. Trust is created by one's assessment of their social environment and experiences of trustworthiness in the social realm
 2. Differences in personality traits developed early in life may be responsible for differences in trust between individuals
- There is no consensus regarding the correlations between personality characteristics and generalized trust (Freitag & Bauer, 2016)



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7

TRUST LITERATURE: TRUST & PERSONALITY

Big Five Personality Factors

- Agreeableness
- Conscientiousness
- Extraversion
- Openness to experience
- Neuroticism



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8

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Research question:

1. What individual characteristics correlate with one's propensity to trust?

Hypotheses:

1. One's cultural or socially learned beliefs will predict over and above personality for propensity to trust.
2. Individuals high in reward for application, control by fate, and agreeableness will be higher in trust.



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9

WHY IS STUDYING THIS IMPORTANT?

The purpose of the research was to assess what personality aspects are most closely related to propensity to trust, and to assess whether or not culturally transmitted beliefs can add more predictive power for a propensity to trust.

There has been a lot of research in trust literature on the cultural effects on an individual's propensity to trust and distrust.

The SAS has been used in a broader cultural sense to determine cultural universals but has not been used in an individual sense to help us understand relationships between beliefs (social axioms) and trusting behaviour (choosing to trust or distrust)

Little research has been done on comparing the effects of personality with the effects of culture on trusting behaviour.

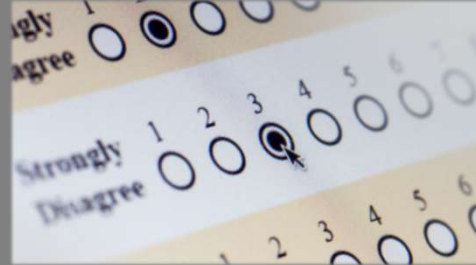
10

METHODOLOGY

- 30 Minute online questionnaire study

Participants:

- 200 participants (43 male; 155 female)
- 128 Caucasian/European background
- 64% 19-24 years old



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11

METHODOLOGY: QUANTITATIVE SCALES

Background Questionnaire	Propensity to Trust Survey (PTS)	Social Axioms Survey (SAS)	Mini - International Personality Item Pool
Measures basic demographic information of participants. Ex. Age, sex, ethnicity, etc.	Evans & Revelle, (2008) 21 Items Measures individual differences in trust and trustworthiness	Leung et al., (2002) 5 dimensions – 40 items Measures generalized beliefs regarding oneself, the social and physical environment, and the spiritual world.	Donnellan, M. B., Baird, B. M., & Lucas, R.E. (2006) 20 items Measures Big Five Personality Traits



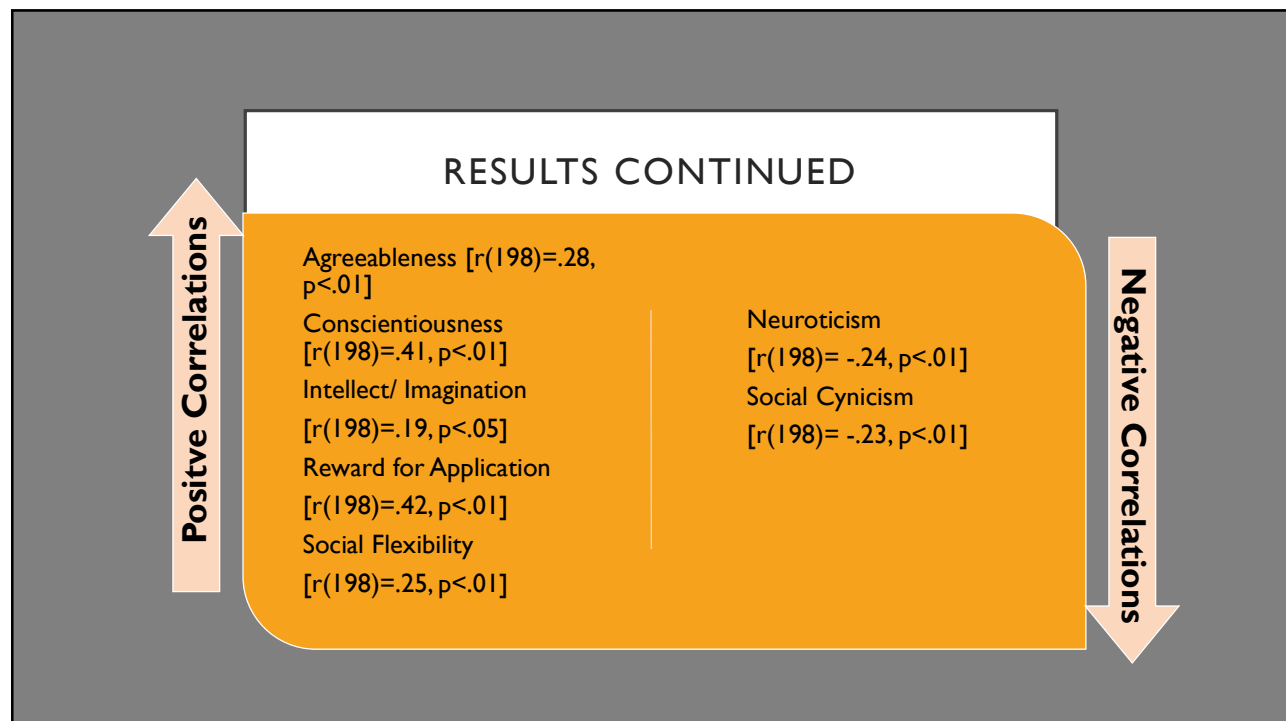
12

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Propensity to Trust (N = 200)

Predictor Variables	B	SE B	β	t	R ²	R ² Change	ΔR^2	Sig F Change
Model 1					.339	.339	.322	0.000
Neuroticism	-1.059	.220	-.295	-4.810***				
Extraversion	.251	.190	.078	1.321				
Agreeableness	1.406	.252	.339	5.584***				
Conscientiousness	.983	.237	.253	4.153***				
Intellect/ Imagination	.255	.243	.063	1.048				
Model 2					.429	.090	.399	0.000
Neuroticism	-.709	.220	-.197	-3.226**				
Extraversion	.142	.186	.044	.763				
Agreeableness	1.164	.259	.281	4.497***				
Conscientiousness	.791	.226	.203	3.493**				
Intellect/ Imagination	.087	.242	.022	.359				
Fate Control	-.216	.718	-.071	-1.217				
Reward for Application	.748	.200	.240	3.745***				
Social Flexibility	-.035	.223	-.010	-.157				
Social Cynicism	.372	.116	-.198	-3.193**				
Spirituality	.021	.120	.011	.177				

Note. [*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.]

13



14

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY




Not representative of general population

No manipulation checks

Self-report measures
And online nature


Lack of literature

Scores on several scales were not evenly distributed



15

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS



16

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

Any Questions?



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