

Social Experience and Trust on prisoners and non-prisoners

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Abstract. Trust is shaped by the role of personal interaction in social experience, including past experiences, individual knowledge of events experienced by close people, and exposure to information from the community. Based on this paradigm, individuals who are formed with different experience, knowledge, and information will have different trust. Aiming to examine the paradigm, this study investigated the differences of trust in two groups of participants with different experiences, i.e. prisoners ($n = 68$) and non-prisoners ($n = 68$). Using the questionnaire of trust in institution, trust in people scale, and inclusive general trust scale, the data were analyzed by t-test, Mann-Whitney, and Wilcoxon. Results showed that there were no significant differences between groups in the level of general trust, and there were significant differences between groups in the level of trust in institution. This study supports the opinion that trust is more a matter of culture.

Keywords: trust in institution, general trust, prisoners, non-prisoners

Introduction

Trust is a foundation of the spirit of cooperative behavior, a moral sentiment for being with others. Rothstein (2013) stated that one reason for the strong interest in social trust is that it correlates with a number of other variables that for most people are normatively and highly desirable. Trust has been studied across a variety of disciplines and has even been equated with broader concept of social capital (Whiteley, 2000, in Bauer & Freitag, 2017). In many studies, trust is studied at the level of individual, groups, family, organizations or institutions, and countries.

Differences in categories of trust correlate with social behavior, in which trust can be examined as independent variable, as well as dependent variable. As independent variables, trust plays an important role in individual decision making on whether they choose to cooperate or not cooperate. As dependent variable, trust is examined as variable that influenced by individual social experience. Specific events that are experienced directly or known by the individual through the closest person will affect individual trust. Research on reward systems (Irwin, Mulder, Simpson, 2014)

showed that punishment system had side effect of reducing trust to level below a control group that never experienced sanctions. In family life, research on adolescent's trust in divorced parents (Zulkarnaen & Rosiana, 2017) shows that based on their experience interacting with their parents, they trusted their fathers and mothers differently. Father were more trusted in aspects of benevolence, competence, and openness; while mothers were more trusted in aspects of reliability and honesty.

As a psychological variable, trust discussed in the micro scope, but this variable has an impact that cannot be ignored. We can conclude that trust is important, and a society cannot function well without trust between its people. Even researchers gave specific terms that describe the important functions of trust. Yamagishi (2011) stated that trust is a lubricant of social relationships and also a social capital that enriches a person's life, and, at the same time, is publicly possessed social capital that makes our society a comfortable place to live. Van Lange (2015) explained trust as social glue in relationships, groups, and societies which connects people and facilitates thoughts, motives, and behaviors that promote collective goals.

Received: April 03, 2018, **Revision:** July 12, 2018, **Accepted:** December 31, 2018

Print ISSN: 0215-8175; **Online ISSN:** 2303-2499. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.29313/mimbar.v34i2.3650.351-358>

Accredited B based on the decree No.040/P/2014, valid on February, 18, 2014 until February, 18, 2019.
Indexed by DOAJ, Sinta, IPI