

Determinants of Journalists' Trust in Public Institutions: A Macro and Micro Analysis Across 67 Countries

Basyouni Ibrahim Hamada & Davis Vallesi

To cite this article: Basyouni Ibrahim Hamada & Davis Vallesi (2025) Determinants of Journalists' Trust in Public Institutions: A Macro and Micro Analysis Across 67 Countries, Journalism Practice, 19:2, 282-303, DOI: [10.1080/17512786.2023.2187861](https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2023.2187861)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2023.2187861>



© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 23 Mar 2023.



Submit your article to this journal



Article views: 2250



View related articles



View Crossmark data

RESEARCH ARTICLE

 OPEN ACCESS 

Determinants of Journalists' Trust in Public Institutions: A Macro and Micro Analysis Across 67 Countries

Basyouni Ibrahim Hamada^a and Davis Vallesi^b

^aCommunication and Public Opinion Chair, Department of Mass Communication, College of Arts and Sciences, Qatar University, Doha, Qatar; ^bCommunication & Culture, York University, Toronto, Canada

ABSTRACT

Scholars have repeatedly expressed concern about the societal consequences of negative media coverage toward public institutions and political actors. Yet, there remains a lack of systemic understanding about the determinants of this cynical attitude. To examine this issue, we combine aggregate data on political and economic performance with *Worlds of Journalism Study* (WJS) survey data on journalists' institutional trust, watchdog and loyalty roles, editorial autonomy, professional experience, and news media ownership. Derived from interviews with 27,657 journalists from 67 countries included in the second wave of the WJS (2012–2016), results show that democracy and press freedom are negatively correlated with journalists' institutional trust. Quite notably, autonomous and watchdog journalists are less trusting than loyal journalists. The findings also suggest that corruption levels, annual economic growth, and type of media ownership are essential determinants in this regard.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 25 July 2022
Accepted 27 February 2023

KEYWORDS

Journalists' institutional trust; democracy; press freedom; corruption; editorial autonomy; news media ownership; watchdog journalism

Institutional Trust

The idea that a crisis of institutional trust will hinder society's chances to attain and sustain democracy, legitimacy, and good governance is the principal premise of an entire school of thought in political culture research (Almond and Verba 1963, 2015; Levi and Stoker 2000). Despite the centrality of this premise and the fundamental idea that journalists' negative reporting is the main driving force behind this crisis (Cappella and Jamieson 1996; Schudson 1999; Valentino, Beckmann, and Buhr 2001), studies explaining and identifying determinants of journalist trust across nations are surprisingly rare. Furthermore, while political scientists, sociologists, and economists have tended to examine the institutional trust crisis from a Westernized perspective (Coleman 1990; Mishler and Rose 2001; Morris 1999; Welzel 2007), little empirical research has been published on the topic from a journalist-centered perspective. In doing so, institutional trust scholarship has failed to account for complex realities of the media landscape in both Western and non-Western countries. Hence, it seems important to consider a multi-national,

CONTACT

Basyouni Ibrahim Hamada  bhamada@qu.edu.qa

© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

journalistic perspective to help in a comprehensive understanding of this issue. This study represents a contribution toward filling this gap by employing different types of data sources that connect the macro level (political and economic performance) to the miso level (news media ownership) to the individual journalistic level (professional roles, editorial autonomy, and professional experience).

Trust is arguably the main ingredient of social capital, which is a prerequisite for social integration, economic efficiency, and democratic life (Coleman 1988; Fukuyama 1995; Levi 1996; Newton 2001). **Institutional trust is universally considered as the cornerstone of democracy, empowering legitimacy and efficiency of political systems through connecting citizens to their representatives and public institutions created to serve them** (Godefroidt et al. 2017). The concept of trust conveys a sense of stability, predictability, and credibility. Therefore, a requisite level of trust is a necessary but insufficient condition for the healthy functioning of any democratic system (Berg and Hjerm 2010; Moy and Scheufele 2000). More importantly, trust serves as a protection mechanism for democratic institutions in times of conflict and instability (Pippa 1999a). However, declining trust is a clear trend, even for countries considered to have particularly strong and healthy democracies. In writing about the modern failure of Canada's democratic institutions, Savoie (2019) cites a 2012 survey in which only 28 percent of Canadians "trust their government to do the right thing" – down from 60 percent in 1968 (7). Similarly, Marozzi (2015) found that the people of several former communist countries, in addition to Portugal, Spain and Cyprus, have the least level of trust in public and governmental institutions among the European countries surveyed in the European Social Survey (ESS) of 2014 and that Scandinavian countries have the highest level of trust in public institutions. Other researchers found that trust in political parties, parliament, and the judiciary in European countries depends on both the objective indicators of democracy and the subjective assessment of its functioning in a given country (Slomczynski and Janicka 2009). It was also found that the relation exists between distrust in both news media and government in South Korea (Nelson and Kim 2021). Trust in public institutions is a persistent critical problem whether as seen by the journalists and experts or by the ordinary citizens. This trust decline in public institutions is also intersected with the low level of trust in journalism as shown in 36 countrywide survey conducted by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (2017). Broadly speaking, public trust in democracy and government can often be difficult to quantitatively measure, especially since normative expectations of ideal governance are contextually dependent across nations and cultures (Cho 2015). Nonetheless, there is consensus within modern literature that the nature of political information available to citizens is significantly connected to the outcomes of the governing process (Kaufhold, Valenzuela, and de Zúñiga 2010; Ohme 2020; Usher and Ng 2020).

Political trust involves abstract as well as specific objects (Pippa 1999b) and can be theorized dichotomously- one either trusts or distrusts - or in a more categorized manner - one trusts or distrusts to a particular degree (Levi and Stoker 2000). Institutional trust can be defined as the extent to which people perceive that their government is responsive and meets their needs and expectations (Hetherington 2005). However, institutional trust remains an elusive concept as citizens lack the necessary knowledge that enables them to evaluate the performance of public institutions and incumbent public officials (Hardin 1999). This is affirmed in a study by Carpin and Keeter (1997) which found that most American citizens were unaware of the vital information and concepts that enable

them to adopt informed perspectives in political sphere. More recent literature has supported these concerns surrounding implications of a lack of political knowledge, such as the study of Johann (2012) within the context of Germany (see also Milner 2007). Despite the increase in education and the penetration of internet and information technologies, the political ignorance remains unchanged over time (Somin 2010) which undermines the standards of representative and participatory democracy (Somin 2013). Mishler and Rose (2001) demonstrate how measuring institutional trust is not straightforward, as it hinges on both exogenous and endogenous factors, further influenced by cultural values and normative beliefs as well as perceptions of institutional effectiveness. This wide variance of factors illustrates why different studies have reached contradictory findings. For instance, the work of Mishler and Rose (2001) found that male and more religious students exhibit higher levels of trust in institutions than their female and less religious counterparts. However, the research of Ben, Zemach, and Arian (2011) produced opposite findings, with female and less religious students displaying more institutional trust. This inconsistency can be best explained in the absence of consensus among scholars on definitions and determinants of trust, as well as methodological approaches to measure it (Chryssochoidis, Strada, and Krystallis 2009).

As a result of the ambiguity of this concept, scholars largely tend to study institutional trust on a dimensional basis rather than measure trust across the whole system. Easton (1975) for instance, introduced the seminal distinction between diffuse support (that is support for the whole system) and specific support (that is support for incumbent authorities). In this context, two competing theoretical traditions explain the origins of institutional trust and clarifies its measurements, and role in enhancing democratic institutions. Cultural theories assume that the cultural norms are responsible for cultivating trust through the socialization process that embraces trust in public institutions (Mishler and Rose 2001). Institutional theories, by contrast, hypothesize that institutional trust is politically endogenous and represents an output of the positive performance of institutions that meets public expectations (Coleman 1990; Dasgupta 2000; Hetherington 1998). Institutions are generally evaluated based on their efficiency and ability to satisfy the needs of citizens. As such, untrustworthy institutions generate skepticism and distrust (Mishler and Rose 2001). The confidence level of citizens in their national institutions revolves around perceptions of specific economic or political benefits (Chiru and Gherghina 2012). Nevertheless, research has repeatedly shown that political trust functions as an important resource for the stability of democratic political systems and social stability (Easton 1975; Marien and Hooghe 2011). Dalton (2004) widens the focus of this debate by stating that when citizens positively evaluate government performance, decisions will be perceived as legitimate, and they will be more willing to abide by them on a voluntary basis. Furthermore, citizens will pay taxes and obey laws because they believe this behavior fulfills an ethical commitment and civic responsibility. Conversely, when citizens distrust government, their willingness to obey government decisions is limited and will become less likely to comply with institutionally based obligations such as taxation. The need for institutional theories when interpreting efficacy of governance and journalists' trust is deepened by the fact that trust is inherent to the nature of journalism as an institution itself. The work of Bourdieu (1996/1998) has theorized how journalism as a field gains its identity through various professional values, ethics, and norms, with institutional trust among them (see also Benson and Neveu 2005; Webb, Schirato, and

Danaher 2002). Accordingly, institutional trust is considered the single most central form of diffuse support for democratic systems (Easton 1975).

Journalists and Institutional Trust

As stated earlier, existing studies of institutional trust dating back to the 1960s tend to focus mainly on the confidence of the public toward public institutions (Easton 1965). This emphasis is justified due to the political, economic, and social consequences that public trust toward institutions has on society. Upon a recent recognition for the role of journalism in producing cynicism and distrust in government, the emphasis has expanded to consider journalists as well (Hanitzsch and Berganza 2012). One of the reasons behind this move is the documented evidence of journalists having responsibility in advancing the institutional trust crisis (Moy, Pfau, and Kahlor 1999). For instance, content analysis studies have revealed negative media portrayals of political figures and institutions as impacting public trust (Moy and Pfau 2000). In "Out of Order", the author argues that the press holds an anti-politics bias. He cited Washington Post reporter Paul Taylor as writing: "Our habits of mind are shaped by what Lionel Trilling once described as the adversary culture. We are progressive reformers, deeply skeptical of all the major institutions of society except our own" (Patterson 1993, 56). Subsequently, Putnam has argued that television is the main reason behind the decline of social capital in the United States as it isolates people from the community and privatizes their life. Among his key conclusions, Putnam (1995a, 1995b) proves that television viewing is associated with rising levels of distrust in public institutions (see also Newton 1999). Not surprisingly, the media's shift to a more adversarial role and critical style has accompanied the deterioration of political trust (Hetherington 1998). Nonetheless, it is important to not exaggerate the influence of journalism towards the institutional trust crisis, since citizens develop perspectives of trust according to a variety of factors. It is equally salient that individuals tend to seek journalistic coverage that supports their pre-conceived ideas and frameworks of society, with media serving as a reinforcing mechanism.

Journalists' institutional trust reflects an evaluation of public institutions and whether they are perceived as operating according to conventional normative expectations. This paper is structured according to two fundamental questions: (1) Why are journalists in some countries more trusting of public institutions than journalists in other countries? and (2) To what extent can differences of journalist trust be explained by macro, miso, or micro determinants? At the heart of this paper lie three major assumptions as follows. First, journalists' institutional trust is linked to the national context (democracy, press freedom, corruption, and GDP annual growth). Second, journalists' institutional trust depends on the ownership type of the news media in which they work (state-run, private, and public media). Third, journalists' characteristics at both the individual and organizational level (perceived professional roles, autonomy, and professional experience) heavily determine their institutional trust.

The following section will provide a brief discussion of what are deemed as the probable main variables in shaping journalists' trust. Journalists in a given society are ultimately also citizens affected by the national context that influences the public trust in institutions. Yet, through their objectives of gathering information and providing news,

the responsibilities of being a watchdog and agenda-setter are inherent occupational roles, particularly in their relation to institutional trust as a sensitive, intricate, and controversial topic. It has been demonstrated how the ordinary citizen, living within a complex modern society, cannot reasonably understand and evaluate all political considerations due to a general lack of time, resources, and knowledge.

Hence, journalists can be interpreted as individuals who hold the most crucial source of dis/trust-building in society. They convey daily reports upon which the people base their judgements of situations, especially those which they cannot directly experience themselves. By doing so, journalists serve as mediators between the general public trust and the public institutions of society (Kohring and Matthes 2007). Therefore, while public trust is widely believed to be good for democracy, an excess of trust among reporters may serve against the standard professional norms in journalism and democracy (Hanitzsch and Berganza 2012). Liberal democracy historically emerged from the sense of distrust of traditional and clerical authorities. Liberal innovations were mainly aimed at checking the discretionary power implied in trust relations. Enhancing democracy has meant more oversight of and less trust in authorities and their power (Dunn 1988). Democratic mechanisms such as voting, freedom of speech, association, and separation of power enable people to challenge supposed relations of trust; furthermore, this limits the discretion of trust and thus the potential harm, in any remaining trust relations (Warren 1999).

As watchdogs, the journalists should serve to strengthen democracy, transparency, and good governance by providing a check and balance on powerful institutions of society, including political leaders, economic elites, and private sector officials (Wolfgang 1995). The defining feature of watchdog journalism (Coronel 2009, 16) is not the political stance of the reporter, story, or media outlet, but rather the role of asking hard or probing questions towards the powerful to maximize transparency and to serve the public interest. Watchdog journalists can be understood as inseparable from the autonomous news media and together comprise an integral component of a well-functioning democratic society. The defining features of this role range from merely documenting information, to reporting existing phenomena, to providing neutral analyses of the current affairs, to asking probing questions and finally to challenging those who are in office in order to protect the public interest and oppose corruption, mismanagement, and disinformation (Bennett and Serrin 2005).

In this respect, Bourdieu's field theory raises several implications that serve the existing study. First, journalism as social field is constituted by the interaction of an array of endogenous and exogenous forces. Second, Journalistic field is based on the autonomy of journalists and independence of journalism as a profession. Third, the autonomy of journalists represents a special capital unique to this field and the way they perceive their roles shapes the journalistic field (quoted in Vos, Eichholz, and Karaliova 2019). We believe that the unique capital of journalism is, in fact, the source of its legitimacy and power that can lead to dis/trust in public institutions, produce several problems of governmental legitimacy and survival of democracy. What is more relevant to our analysis is that Bourdieu assesses the Western journalism as of limited amount of autonomy and power (Vos 2016). Yet, in non-Western world, autonomy of journalists and thus the profession legitimacy and power are in its minimum leading to different perceived roles of journalists and a variety of institutional trust across countries. The work of Cook (2005)

notably asserts that journalism is a political institution affecting the performance of and trust in government rather than just being neutral entities.

According to this view, news media require democracy as it is the only form of government that respects freedom of speech, expression, and information, and the independence of media from the state. By respecting and protecting these necessary freedoms, democracy fulfills its part of the social contract with the media and journalism (Strömbäck 2005). In terms of institutional theories, journalists' trust is a product of macro, miso, and individual characteristics. Since people are more likely to express trust towards entities they perceive to be working effectively, the quality of policy outcomes can also help explain trust. Consistent with this view, the improvement of economic evaluations increases political trust in government (Citrin and Green 1986). Policy success, however, is not exclusively confined to the economy. Public evaluations of the government's ability to solve problems that are personally most important should have a strong impact on political trust (Hetherington 1998).

In this context, one of the major sources of journalists' institutional trust is closely linked to corruption. The growing political corruption literature deals with trust as both a cause and effect (Asomah 2020; Lissitsa 2021; Stoecker 2022; Watkins 2022). Some point to the lack of institutional trust as a major causal component underlying corruption, whereas others find clear evidence that corruption fosters low levels of political trust and erodes bureaucratic legitimacy. A prominent analysis of political corruption suggests a vicious circle wherein corruption creates a climate of distrust that in turn feeds corruption (Morris and Klesner 2010). A reciprocal relationship of cynicism between journalists and politicians has also been explored to advance scholarly understanding of political distrust. Essentially, while political actors are guilty of acting in a manner conducive to self-interest or electoral success, journalists are equally problematic for framing political issues according to conflict, personal character traits, or other superficial aspects (Cappella and Jamieson 1997). There is no doubt that a healthy skepticism toward those in power has always been part and parcel of a good journalism, however, some argue that it moves beyond the core of a watchdog professional journalist (Brants et al. 2010).

This literature highlights that corruption undermines political trust in different ways. On the one hand, it hinders the procedural performance of political institutions; on the other hand, corruption makes it extremely difficult for governments to generate policies and provide services that meet the demands of the general public (Rothstein and Uslaner 2005; Warren 2004). The notion of institutional trust as a product of a performance - based evaluation finds a great deal of support in the growing body of empirical work that has examined the effects of public-sector corruption and political support (Hakhverdian and Mayne 2012). The most common and plausible explanation for the institutional trust crisis is related to a failure of government performance. These failures are evident when outputs and outcomes are below expected standards, efficiency and effectiveness are low, and governments fail to deliver on their promised initiatives (Van de Walle and Bouckaert 2003).

At the organizational level, news media ownership seems to be the most important factor affecting journalists' trust. Previous studies have determined ownership to be one of the main guiding variables of journalists' autonomy and production of news (Besley, Burgess, and Prat 2002; Moy and Scheufele 2000; Reich and Hanitzsch 2013). Ownership type can also partially or indirectly determine journalists' trust levels (Hanitzsch and

Berganza 2012; Hanitzsch and Berganza 2014). The rapidly accelerating concentration of corporate media ownership in many nations has raised real concerns about trust in journalism; McChesney (1999) raises the important contention that media commercialization has become an anti-democratic institution. When journalists work in state-run media, their autonomy is more likely to be marginalized, their professional roles are adjusted to support the government – the owner, the regulator, and the funder of news media organizations – and their independence as a whole is not viable (Hallin and Mancini 2004). The preceding discussion has informed several hypotheses as follows:

- H1. Journalists' institutional trust varies significantly across countries.
- H2. Journalists are less trusting in countries that experience higher levels of press freedom.
- H3. Journalists are less trusting in countries that experience higher levels of democracy.
- H4. Journalists are more trusting in clean countries.
- H5. The annual growth of GDP strongly determines the journalists' trust.
- H6. Journalists are more trusting in state-run media.
- H7a. Watchdog journalists are less trusting in public institutions.
- H7b. Loyal journalists are more trusting in public institutions.
- H7c. Journalists who have higher level of editorial autonomy are less trusting in public institutions.
- H7d. Journalists with low level of professional experience (less than five years) are less trusting in public institutions.
- H8. Journalists have a higher level of trust in their own institution – news media – than in other public institutions.

Methods and Measures

To measure journalists' trust, a list of public institutions was presented to Worlds of Journalism Study respondents (WJS). These institutions include the following: parliament, the government, political parties, politicians, the judiciary/ the courts, the police, the military, trade unions, religious leaders, and the news media. The interviewed journalists were asked to indicate the extent to which they trust in these institutions on a 5-point rating scale. [(Please tell me on a scale of 1–5, (where 5 = complete trust to 1 = not trust at all), how much you personally trust each of the following institutions)]. The 10 indicators were combined into an index measure of institutional trust that turned out to be highly reliable across the sample (Cronbach's alpha = .0865). The analyses reported in this paper are based on data from the WJS covering 67 countries, representing Western and non-Western, democratic, and authoritarian, developed, and developing cultures. Interviews were conducted with 27,657 journalists, divided by gender as 57% male and 43% female. The journalists serve in 6,403 news media organizations of which 75% are private, 15% are public and 5% are state-run media. The news media are also divided between national media at 47%, regional at 26%, local at 20%, and transitional at 7% (Tables 1–3).

Table 1. Gender.

Gender	N	(%)
Male	15,419	57%
Female	11,402	43%
Total	26,821	100%

Table 2. Media ownership.

Type of medium	N	(%)
Purely private/commercial	19,711	75%
Purely public service	3960	15%
Purely state-run	2604	10%
Total	26,275	100%

Table 3. Reach of medium.

Reach of medium	N	(%)
National	12,429	47%
Regional	6747	26%
Local	5154	20%
Transnational	1959	7%
Total	26,289	100%

The questionnaire of WJS measures several dimensions of journalists' practices. The watchdog and loyalty roles were measured by the interviewer asking journalists to indicate the extent to which they see the importance of various beliefs. On a five-point Likert scale (5 = extremely important to 1 = unimportant), the question reads as follows: "Please tell me how important each of these beliefs is in your work?" For the purpose of this study, the watchdog role is measured through the statement – "monitor and scrutinize political leaders"; the loyalty role is measured by the statement – "support government policy". To measure editorial autonomy, journalists were asked on a five-point Likert scale (5 = extremely important to 1 = unimportant) the following question: "Thinking of your work overall, how much freedom do you personally have in selecting news stories you work on?"

The macro level data measuring political and economic performance were obtained from several public databases. The Economist Intelligence Unit's Index of Democracy is based on the ratings of 60 indicators grouped into five categories: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, the functioning of government, political participation, and political culture. For press freedom, data were used from the Freedom of the Press Index published annually by Freedom House (<http://www.freedomhouse.org>). An examination of the level of press freedom in each country currently comprises 23 methodology questions and 132 indicators divided into three broad categories: the legal environment, the political environment, and the economic environment. A country's final score (from 0 to 100) is based on the total of the scores allotted for each question: a score of 0–30 places the country in the free press group; 31–60 in the partly free press group; and 61–100 in the not free press group. Data on corruption is based on the Corruption Perceptions Index compiled annually by Transparency International, rating countries with respect to the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials and politicians.

It is a composite index consisting of 14 different polls and surveys from seven independent institutions carried out among professional classes and country analysts. Each country's scores range from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (highly clean). Although this index is subject to multiple criticisms due to its potential biases deriving from self-reported data, multiple studies still rely on this statistic (Treisman 2007; Ahrend 2002; Kalenborn and Lessmann 2012). Information on countries' gross domestic product (GDP, at purchasing power parity of countries per capita) was obtained from the International Monetary Fund. To avoid the multi-collinearity problem, which was very high between press freedom, and democracy ($VIF > 5$), a dummy variant was applied to all of them. Political and economic performance data represent the years in which WJS survey was conducted in 67 countries during the period of 2012–2015.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 4 summarizes the **dependent variable, journalists' trust, and the political and economic performance determinants**. Data reveals that journalists' institutional trust (2.72%) is relatively low in all countries on a scale that ranges from 1 to 5 indicating a cynical attitude from the part of journalists toward the 10 public institutions examined. The erosion of journalists' institutional trust as indicated explains the general public institutional crisis since 1960s in democratic countries, which reveals the growing research interest in its origins and consequences (Dalton 2004; Hardin 1999; Levi 1996; Levi and Stoker 2000; Pippa 1999b). The journalists' negative attitude toward public institutions influences the content they produce and the negative media coverage consequentially shapes public distrust (Hanitzsch and Berganza 2012). The link between these three domains (attitude of journalists, the news they produce, and the general public institutional trust crisis) has been empirically documented (Brandenburg 2005; Brants et al. 2010; Cappella and Jamieson 1996; Valentino, Beckmann, and Buhr 2001). As a multi-dimensional phenomenon, journalists' institutional trust is not more than a single plausible variable that determines the public institutional trust (Dalton 2004).

Table 4 also indicates the absence of a general pattern as journalists' institutional trust in some non-democratic societies such as United Arab Emirates, Oman, Singapore, and Botswana share the highest level of trust with their counterparts in some democratic countries, namely Germany, Sweden, and India. In alignment with Hanitzsch and Berganza (2012), the lowest level of journalists' institutional trust is found in Greece (2.1%), which could be explained by the bad economic performance of the government. The mean of press freedom is about 41%, locating the 67 countries in the "partly free press group". A number of notable observations can be identified. The first is that the two countries with lowest level of press freedom (Oman and UAE) have the highest rank in terms of journalist trust. Sweden, Netherlands, and Switzerland rank first, second, and third, respectively, in terms of both press freedom and journalists' trust. The average score of democracy is 6.90 placing the aggregate ranking of WJS countries in the transitional phase toward democracy. The mean level of corruption is 55.04, which points to the fact that WJS countries are on average slightly corrupt. It is obvious that journalists serving in clean countries such as Sweden, Switzerland, and Germany are more trusting in public institutions than their counterparts in corrupt countries. The data from Table 4 also tell us that Western democratic countries are clean with moderate levels of journalists' trust.

Table 4. Journalists' trust, political and economic performance indicators.

Country	Journalist's trust	Press freedom	Democracy	Corruption	GDP growth (%)
Albania	2.18	49	5.67	33	1.4
Argentina	2.33	51	6.84	34	0.5
Australia	2.92	21	9.22	85	3.6
Austria	2.76	23	8.54	76	0.4
Bangladesh	2.82	54	5.86	27	6
Belgium	2.97	11	8.05	75	0
Bhutan	3.35	59	4.82	63	2.1
Botswana	3.04	44	7.87	63	4.4
Brazil	2.25	46	6.96	38	0.1
Bulgaria	2.11	40	7.14	41	3.6
Canada	2.86	18	9.08	83	2.4
Chile	2.47	31	7.8	73	1.9
China	*	87	3.14	37	7.3
Colombia	*	54	6.55	36	4.9
Croatia	*	40	6.93	48	-1.1
Cyprus	*	25	7.4	63	-2.3
Czech Republic	2.49	20	8.06	48	-0.5
Denmark	2.73	12	9.11	91	1.1
Ecuador	2.69	66	5.87	32	3.7
Egypt	*	62	4.56	32	2.2
El Salvador	2.99	39	6.64	39	2
Estonia	3.1	16	7.61	68	1.6
Ethiopia	2.84	83	3.72	33	10.3
Finland	*	11	9.03	89	5.4
France	*	28	7.92	70	0.2
Germany	3.05	20	8.64	81	1.6
Greece	2.1	48	7.45	46	0.7
Hong Kong	*	35	6.42	77	1.7
Hungary	2.48	37	6.9	54	3.7
Iceland	2.78	14	9.65	82	1.2
India	3.21	40	7.92	38	7.3
Indonesia	2.58	49	7.03	36	5
Ireland	2.79	16	8.72	74	5.2
Israel	2.6	30	7.63	60	2.6
Italy	*	31	7.98	44	-0.4
Japan	*	25	8.08	74	1.6
Kenya	2.85	57	5.13	25	5.3
Kosovo	2.47	49	*	33	*
Latvia	2.75	28	7.48	55	2.4
Malawi	2.97	49	5.66	33	5.7
Malaysia	3.25	65	6.49	52	6
Mexico	2.34	63	6.68	35	2.2
Moldova	2.32	53	6.32	35	9.4
Netherlands	2.98	11	8.92	83	1
New Zealand	*	20	9.26	88	3
Norway	*	10	9.93	86	0.7
Oman	3.13	71	3.04	45	2.9
Philippines	2.64	44	6.84	35	6.1
Portugal	2.72	18	7.79	63	0.9
Qatar	*	67	3.18	68	4.6
Romania	2.22	42	6.68	43	2.8
Russia	2.46	83	3.31	29	0.6
Serbia	2.16	40	6.71	41	-1.8
Sierra Leone	2.88	53	4.55	29	4.6
Singapore	3.13	67	6.03	84	2.9
South Africa	2.44	37	7.82	44	1.5
South Korea	2.46	32	8.06	55	3.3
Spain	2.61	28	8.05	60	1.4
Sudan	*	81	2.54	11	3.1
Sweden	3.1	10	9.73	89	1.2
Switzerland	2.97	13	9.09	86	1.9

(Continued)

Table 4. Continued.

Country	Journalist's trust	Press freedom	Democracy	Corruption	GDP growth (%)
Tanzania	2.61	54	5.77	31	7
Thailand	*	75	5.39	38	0.9
Turkey	2.23	65	5.12	45	2.9
UAE	3.84	76	2.64	70	4.6
UK	2.77	25	8.31	81	2.9
USA	2.71	22	8.11	73	2.2
Average	2.72	40.94	6.90	55.04	-12.17

*Question of institutional trust was optional, therefore, a number of countries do not have data.

Results and Discussion

In order to identify factors behind variations in journalists' trust across countries, it is imperative to first examine whether a significant variation exists. H1 stating that journalists' trust varies significantly across countries is strongly supported (Df 51, mean square = 37.871, *p*-value = 0.000). In fact, this is the major conclusion reached by Hanitzsch and Berganza (2012) in a previous examination of the same topic, conducted in only 20 countries. In determining possible explanations toward variation of journalists' institutional trust, certain variables were explored characterizing the national structure, organizational contexts, and individual journalists. In what follows, hypotheses testing results will be presented as shown in Table 5. According to the regression analysis, H2 and H3 are supported. Journalists' institutional trust is negatively correlated with both press freedom (0.332) and democracy (-0057). It must be recalled that the higher a country scores in the index, the higher democracy level it enjoys, yet a higher score of press freedom indicates a lower level of freedom. This result suggests that both democracy and press freedom have a negative relationship with journalists' trust. These two variables are influential toward the political performance of government and each function to reduce trust of journalists. Our explanation for this result is that in democracies where journalists serve in a free press, they are more skeptical and less trusting than in non-democratic countries. Their objective is to hold the government accountable, and they have the professional liberty to raise critiques without fear of revenge or other

Table 5. Predictors of journalists' trust.

Parameter estimates	Model			Collinearity statistics	
	b	SE _b	Sig	Tolerance	VIF
Intercept (<i>a</i>)	2.945	0.146	0.000***		
Press freedom	0.332	0.203	0.120	0.282	3.542
Democracy	-0.057	0.102	0.581	0.253	3.955
Corruption	0.339	0.138	0.025**	0.348	2.877
Growth of real GDP (%)	0.193	0.078	0.024**	0.411	2.430
Media ownership: State run	0.051	0.077	0.513	0.586	1.707
Watch-dog	-0.057	0.083	0.500	0.796	1.256
Loyal	0.027	0.071	0.708	0.561	1.784
Autonomous	-0.140	0.083	0.111	0.564	1.774
Profession experience	0.070	0.105	0.515	0.472	2.117
Diagnostic statistics					
Root MSE		0.46			
R ²		60%			
Adj. R ²		35%			

consequences. In this sense, accountability takes a vertical form in which journalists and citizens observe and challenge the behaviors of public officials. As an institutional driver of accountability, journalists can directly hold governments to account in various ways, such as by acting as a watchdog over those in power; this is often through bringing out facts that may be threatening the position of political leaders and officials of public institutions (Schedler, Diamond, and Plattner 1999). Democracies need free journalists as watchdogs against the abuse of power, by taking the time to properly monitor and investigate issues of public interest. As Carey (1999) writes, "without journalism there is no democracy, but without democracy there is no journalism either" (51).

In democracies, journalists are expected to act freely and independently from political power to monitor public policies and decisions. This autonomous watchdog role is an important component of the press function as a fourth estate and hence of democracy itself. Given this role of journalists in democratic countries, it is highly expected that journalists will interpret the actions of government from a critical perspective. There is a prevalent ideology that the more journalist distrust those in power, the greater benefit to democratic society. The first wave of WJS partially confirms the current study results as journalists have less trust in democratic countries (Hanitzsch and Berganza 2012). Yet, it is in conflict with the conclusion of (Dalen et al. 2019), who state that journalists who belong to democratic corporatist systems that have well-established democratic traditions enjoy a relatively high level of institutional trust. Nevertheless, this does not reflect a general pattern; journalists from other countries that suffer from democratic deficits such as Malaysia, Oman, and Singapore also exhibit high levels of institutional trust. The negative relationship between democracy and press freedom on one hand, and journalists' trust on the other, lies at odds with the classic theories of political culture which have long suggested that if political culture is in conflict with the political system, then regimes lack legitimacy (Almond and Verba 1963). A lack of legitimacy threatens existing governments and ultimately if distrust in governments continues, people may broadly reject democracy itself. If this is true for the public, it is more likely that journalists – whose job in democracies is to monitor the governments – would be more critical and less trusting than their audiences. The comparative picture here is clear and the consistency between the influence of press freedom and democracy on trust seems logical.

H4 predicts a higher level of trust in countries that experience low levels of corruption (clean countries), which is fully supported by the regression model shown in Table 5. Given the fact that journalists and their media outlets are the main driving forces in the fight against corruption, and that journalists' pressure will compel leaders of clean countries to resolve corruption, it is rational to expect higher journalist trust than in corrupt ones. In corrupt countries, leaders are more likely to remain in office, overlooking any policy that reduces corruption irrespective of existing pressure from journalists or other sources of threat (Charron 2009). However, there are no grounds to distinctly identify causation between the level of corruption in a country and institutional trust. There is sufficient evidence to suggest a cyclical effect, in which both corruption and institutional trust interact in a cause-effect relationship. Literature also indicates complex relationships between coverage of corruption by the journalists and trust in governments. Zhang and Kim (2018) prove that citizens develop positive attitude towards countries in which journalism exposes more corruption that leads to more punishment for public officials. In

contrast, when convictions are declining, citizens underestimate anticorruption efforts and thus become less trusting in their governments.

Scholarly literature has found trust to be positively correlated with average annual income growth within a nation. This is explained partially by trust reducing the cost of transactions, resulting in high-trust societies exhibiting better economic performance than low-trust societies (Berggren, Elinder, and Jordahl 2008; Roth 2009; Zak and Knack 2001). The present study confirms such previous findings. The regression model confirms H5 and indicates a significant positive relationship between the annual growth of real GDP and journalists' trust. Though economic growth is statistically proven to be a strong determinant of trust among journalists, trust could be a cause rather than an effect in this relationship. Meanwhile, in taking panel data and using a fixed-effects estimation from a 41-country sample over the time period from 1980 to 2004 and with a total of 129 observations, Roth (2009) concludes that economic growth is negatively related to an increase in trust. This negative finding needs further investigation as it lies at odds with most empirical findings using a cross-sectional design.

H6 posits that journalists tend to be more trusting in state-owned media than their peers in private or public media; this aligns with the first wave of the WJS, as Hanitzsch & Berganza (2012, 2014) develop a similar conclusion. Yet it remains inconsistent with other investigations (Tejkalová et al. 2017) that found no significant difference in institutional trust based on media ownership type. Higher trust among journalists working in state-owned media is highly expected as the climate of governmental media imposes loyalty and breeds trust among journalists who are more likely to lack freedom or raise suspicions in public institutions. Another key explanation is that state-run media attract like-minded journalists whose ideological orientations, values and beliefs are by nature in line with the government and other public institutions. It is not surprising that type of media ownership is influencing journalists' practices and definitely trust in public institutions. The argument is grounded in the political economy approach of how variables such as ownership, financing, and other related aspects influence how journalism functions and how journalists orient themselves towards power structure in any given society. Yet, this theoretical argument has not received empirical support from (Amado and Waisbord 2018) who concluded that ownership and other economic factors do not impact on any variations among journalists serving in private, public, and state-run media. The Spanish case also tells that there is no significant difference with regard to journalists' trust in public institutions based on media ownership (Conde, Jiménez, and Calderón 2016). A result that calls for further research. Regardless of Argentinian and Spanish cases, our result is further supported by all hypotheses related to individual journalists' characteristics that follow.

H7a-d involve the individual professional characteristics of journalists (watchdog role, loyal role, editorial autonomy, and professional experience), illuminating key conclusions. Firstly, watchdog journalists (H7a) are less trusting in public institutions than loyal journalists are (H7b). Secondly, autonomous journalists (H7c) have lower levels of trust than their non-autonomous counterparts. These findings underscore the results of (Matthes, Maurer, and Arendt 2019) who observed a negative attitude between hostile media perceptions among politicians and their communicative behavior towards journalists. As proven in this study, there is an atmosphere of distrust governing the relationships of autonomous journalists, which in turn influences the perception of politicians who likely feel

Table 6. Journalists' trust in news media and other public institutions.

Journalists' trust	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence interval of the difference				
					Sig.	Mean difference	Std. Error difference	Lower	Upper
					(2-tailed)				
Levine's test for equality of variances									
Journalists trust	F	Sig.	T	Df					
Equal variances assumed	771.516	0.000	-73.586	38.924	0.000	-0.579	0.008	-0.594	-0.563
Equal variances not assumed	—	—	-73.546	37.254.5	0.000	-0.579	0.008	-0.594	-0.563

Note: ($t = -73.586$, p -value = 0.00 < 0.05).

confronted by opinions of hostile media. Journalists who work in the free press of liberal democracies are autonomous watchdogs. On the contrary, journalists who operate in restricted presses of authoritarian countries perceive their role as necessitated by loyalty, supporting the policies of the government, and expressing high level of trust. A psychological explanation says that loyal journalists serving in state-run media will demonstrate higher levels of trust in order to avoid the cognitive dissonance that may exist if they distrust the government despite depending on a governmental institution for their livelihoods (Patterson and Donsbach 1996).

As far as professional experience is concerned, several studies have uniquely examined this topic, producing differential and sometimes conflicting conclusions (Deuze 2005; González de Bustamante and Relly 2015; Relly et al. 2015; Weaver 2015; Willnat, Weaver, and Choi 2013). Still, the relationship between a journalist's years of professional experience and levels of trust is understudied. Nonetheless, the hypothesis of H7d asserting that less experienced journalists are subsequently less trusting in public institutions is confirmed (Table 6).

Our explanation is that younger journalists are more critical than older ones, largely connected to standards of professional journalism that they have recently studied during their university degrees, and thus are more likely to distrust public institutions. Furthermore, there is merit to the idea that younger journalists are being educated in more critical perspectives, due to modern technological and social developments. For instance, Richardson (2017) describes how increasing levels of precarity in journalism employment, newfound opportunities for alternative journalism using social media platforms, and a rapid spread of online "fake news" have all led to younger journalists being educated to approach their work in a more rigorous and critical manner (7). Studies on how years of professional experience correlate with trust in government are very rare. The only noteworthy research identified is Pasti (2005), who concluded that the Russian older generation continues to perceive and practice journalism as a part and parcel of support of those who hold authority in society. This stands in contrast to the younger generation who view journalism from a different perspective focusing on market, entertainment, and profit.

Finally, results showed the level of trust in journalists' own institution – the news media – is higher than the level of trust in other public institutions (confirming H8), consistent with an existing study (Tejkalová et al. 2017). The extent to which journalists' higher trust in their own organizations reflects a subjective and biased view, as well as the extent this bias may affect journalists' objectivity and audience perceptions of reality is a required area of further investigation. This is why journalism is seen as biased and not serving the public good as much as the professional interests of journalistic outlets (Newman and Fletcher 2017).

Conclusion

In this article, empirical evidence has been provided that illustrates the possible determinants of journalists' trust. The findings suggest that high levels of both democracy and press freedom are associated with lower levels of journalists' institutional trust. Journalists tend to be less trusting of public institutions in democratic societies that experience high levels of press freedom. This is a major conclusion that, while replicating some previous findings, also illustrates divergences from others. It also sheds light on the different

possible consequences and implications of trust among the general public and that of journalists. Aside from a few exceptions where journalists are more skeptical than the regular public as in the global south countries, journalists' trust in political institutions was found to go hand in hand with the perceived trust among the public as measured by data from both WJS and the sixth (2010–2014) wave of the World Values Survey (WVS) (v. Dalen et al. 2019). This analysis is important because higher levels of general public trust are of great benefit to both elected officials and political institutions as a whole. Greater levels of trust are conducive to receiving higher support, which can be translated into an increased effectiveness of public institutions (Hetherington 1998). The opposite is true for journalists who are obliged to monitor the ability of public institutions to serve citizens and represent public opinion in front of governments. As such, it is expected that higher levels of journalists' trust will harm democracy and the powerless people whose interests will not be well served if both journalists and politicians exhibit mutual trust and alliances. After all, journalists are depended upon as the "Fourth Estate", acting as the eyes and ears of the public (Inglehart 1999). Similarly, journalists tend to have less trust in public institutions when they serve as autonomous watchdog journalists. If we combine these two important conclusions, the current analysis will suggest that macro-level determinants related to political performance are closely tied to micro-level determinants. Autonomous watchdog journalists only operate in free press environments, representing a landmark quality of democratic societies. This result, however, bears many implications for the relationship between the public body and journalists' institutional trust. On the one hand, it is healthy for democracy and the overall functioning of society that the public grant trust toward public institutions. However, a dilemma arises from the fact that journalists' distrust that is beneficial for democracy and good governance is also responsible for the decline of public trust that eventually causes declines in social trust, one of the important dimensions of social capital (Schyns and Koop 2010). It can also be expected that higher journalists' trust will worsen the public perception of journalists, since citizen trust in the profession is based on the ability of journalists to safeguard their interests against the hegemony of powerful governments. In this context, we argue that it is essential for the optimal performance of public institutions that journalists perform their job as a fourth estate, despite coming at the expense of the public trust towards such institutions. Distrust is not always dysfunctional, and the consequences of trust and distrust are debatable. "Democratic and public administration theories contradict each other in what citizens' attitude towards government should be. Some argue that trust is positive and distrust is destructive, while others argue that distrust is rational and trust naïve" (Van de Walle and Six 2014, 160). From a journalistic point of view, this article adopts the perspective of Jempson (2004), that the government must learn to live with both an increase of watchdog journalists and more critical citizens.

The analysis indicates a positive relation between annual economic growth and fighting corruption on one hand and higher levels of journalists' trust on the other. This finding demonstrates that the journalists who tend to scrutinize political actors, businesspeople, and public officials will evaluate them positively when warranted. Providing positive treatment when properly deserved will in return lead to more success in the fight against corruption and consequently more economic growth. This result also suggests that journalists' evaluation of public institutions to some extent seeks to establish and attain the

fundamental needs of society. If results are combined pertaining to political and economic performance, the situation becomes significantly more complicated. An understanding of the intricate relationship between journalists and political actors from the exchange model perspective offers clarification, as it assumes a complex and sometimes contradictory framework of relations and interactions (Nimo 1964). The rule of law and trust relationship represents a significant complication within this situation. While a higher level of rule of law is designed to enhance the trust of journalists in public institutions, it leads to the opposite. Interestingly, when the judiciary/courts were isolated from the group of surveyed public institutions, a uniquely high level of trust exists, inviting the need for further studies. There is a strong imperative to understand why the courts/judiciary are the solitary institution that enjoys high trust from journalists, likely connected to an understanding that courts exist to fight corruption. In general, the findings of the current research are expected to enrich the scholarship about both the public as well as journalists' institutional trust and their implications for democracy, social stability, and economic strength. It also contributes to resolving major questions regarding the driving forces behind the relationships of journalists, public institutions, and politicians. However, some unresolved issues remain, each of which deserving further inquiry. First, it is imperative to examine how a decline in the general public trust is at least partially determined by journalists' trust in public institutions. Second, it was beyond the limit of this study to identify factors that increase trust among the loyal journalists and those who work in state-owned media. Third, the higher trust that journalists grant toward their own institutions - news media – compared to other public institutions raises a number of questions that may challenge the assumed objectivity of journalists. It was also impossible to incorporate all societal, organizational, and individual variables that may influence variance of trust. As such, several studies could focus on other political and economic performance variables such as human rights, social capital, literacy, and unemployment, as well as organizational and individual journalists' variables including reach of the medium, gender, and education of the journalists. Finally, we suggest a cross-cultural research line that deals with both political and social trust in an integrative way that considers the interaction between the journalists, media coverage, the regular public, and public institutions. Yet, without a consensus on conceptualization of trust, its determinants, and consequences, techniques of measurements, and methodological approaches, empirical studies are likely to reach contradicting results.

Acknowledgements

The authors thank the anonymous reviewers of Journalism Practices for their very useful critique and evaluation that highly improved the original version of this article.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

Open Access funding is provided by the Qatar National Library.

References

- Ahrend, Rudiger, Press Freedom, Human Capital and Corruption. February 2002. DELTA Working Paper No. 2002-11, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=620102> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.620102>.
- Almond, G. A., and S. Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton University Press.
- Almond, G. A., and S. Verba. 2015. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton University Press.
- Amado, A., and S. Waisbord. 2018. "Journalists and Media Ownership: Practices and Professional Conditions of Argentine Journalism." *Brazilian Journalism Research* 14 (2): 364–383. doi:10.25200/BJR.v14n2.2018.1090
- Asomah, J. Y. 2020. "Democracy, the Public Sphere, and Power Elites: Examining the Ghanaian Private Media's Role in Political Corruption." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 37 (3): 221–237. doi:10.1080/15295036.2020.1774069
- Ben, N., M. Zemach, and A. Arian. 2011. "The Religious Experience as Affecting Ambivalence: The Case of Democratic Performance Evaluation in Israel." *Democratization* 18 (1): 25–51.
- Bennett, L., and W. Serrin. 2005. "The Watchdog Role." In *The Press*, edited by G. Overholser and K. H. Jamieson. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Benson, R., and E. Neveu. 2005. *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Berg, L., and M. Hjerm. 2010. "National Identity and Political Trust." *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 11 (4): 390–407. doi:10.1080/15705854.2010.524403
- Berggren, N., M. Elinder, and H. Jordahl. 2008. "Trust and Growth: A Shaky Relationship." *Empirical Economics* 35 (2): 251–274. doi:10.1007/s00181-007-0158-x
- Besley, T., R. Burgess, and A. Prat. 2002. "Mass Media and Political Accountability." In *The Right to Know: Institutions and the Media*, edited by R. Islam. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Bourdieu, P. 1996/1998. In *On Television*, edited by P. Ferguson. New York: The New Press. (Original work published 1996).
- Brandenburg, H. 2005. "Political Bias in the Irish Media: A Quantitative Study of Campaign Coverage During the 2002 General Election." *Irish Political Studies* 20 (3): 297–322. doi:10.1080/07907180500359350
- Brants, K., C. De Vreese, J. Möller, and P. Van Praag. 2010. "The Real Spiral of Cynicism? Symbiosis and Mistrust Between Politicians and Journalists." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 15 (1): 25–40. doi:10.1177/1940161209351005
- Cappella, J. N., and K. H. Jamieson. 1996. "News Frames, Political Cynicism, and Media Cynicism." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 546 (1): 71–84. doi:10.1177/002716296546001007
- Cappella, J. N., and K. H. Jamieson. 1997. *Spiral of Cynicism: The Press and the Public Good*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Carey, J. W. 1999. "In Defense of Public Journalism." In *The Idea of Public Journalism*, edited by T. L. Glasser. New York: Guilford Press.
- Carpini, M., and S. Keeter. 1997. *What Americans Know About Politics and Why It Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Charron, N. 2009. "The Impact of Socio-Political Integration and Press Freedom on Corruption." *Journal of Development Studies* 45 (9): 1472–1493. doi:10.1080/00220380902890243
- Chiru, M., and S. Gherghina. 2012. "Does the Confidence in the EU Spill Over to the National Level? A Longitudinal Analysis of Political Trust in Central Europe." *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 13 (2): 226–245. doi:10.1080/15705854.2012.675654
- Cho, Y. 2015. "How Well are Global Citizens Informed About Democracy? Ascertaining the Breadth and Distribution of Their Democratic Enlightenment and Its Sources." *Political Studies* 63: 240–258. doi:10.1111/1467-9248.12088
- Chrysochoidis, G., A. Strada, and A. Krystallis. 2009. "Public Trust in Institutions and Information Sources Regarding Risk Management and Communication: Towards Integrating Extant Knowledge." *Journal of Risk Research* 12 (2): 137–185. doi:10.1080/13669870802637000

- Citrin, J., and D. P. Green. 1986. "Presidential Leadership and the Resurgence of Trust in Government." *British Journal of Political Science* 16 (4): 431–453. doi:[10.1017/S0007123400004518](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123400004518)
- Coleman, J. S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94: S95–S120. doi:[10.1086/228943](https://doi.org/10.1086/228943)
- Coleman, J. S. 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Conde, B., H. Jiménez, and A. Calderón. 2016. "Perceived Influences and Trust in Political Institutions of Public vs Private Television Journalists in Spain." *Communication & Society* 29 (4): 185–201.
- Cook, T. E. 2005. "Public Policy Toward the Press: What Government Does for the News Media." In *The Institutions of American Democracy*, edited by G. Overholser and K. H. Jamieson. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Coronel, S. 2009. "Corruption and the Watchdog Role of the News Media." In *Public Sentinel: News Media and Governance Reform*, edited by P. Norris. Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- Dalen, A., R. Berganoz, T. Hanitzsch, A. Amoda, B. Herrero, B. Josephi, ... N. Steindl. 2019. "Journalists' Confidence in Public Institutions." In *Worlds of Journalism: Journalistic Culture Around the Globe*, edited by T. Hanitzsch, H. Folker, J. Ramaprasad, and A. de Beer. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dalton, R. 2004. *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dasgupta, P. 2000. "Trust as a Commodity." *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations* 4: 49–72.
- Deuze, M. 2005. "What is Journalism? Professional Identity and Ideology of Journalists Reconsidered." *Journalism* 6 (4): 442–464. doi:[10.1177/1464884905056815](https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884905056815)
- Dunn, J. 1988. "Trust in Political Agency." In *Trust Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations*, edited by G. Diego. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Easton, D. 1965. *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Easton, D. 1975. "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support." *British Journal of Political Science* 5 (4): 435–457. doi:[10.1017/S0007123400008309](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123400008309)
- Fukuyama, F. 1995. *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*. Free Press Paperbacks.
- Godefroidt, A., A. Langer, and B. Meuleman. 2017. "Developing Political Trust in a Developing Country: The Impact of Institutional and Cultural Factors on Political Trust in Ghana." *Democratization* 24 (6): 906–928. doi:[10.1080/13510347.2016.1248416](https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2016.1248416)
- González de Bustamante, C., and J. E. Relly. 2015. "Professionalism under Threat of Violence." *Journalism Studies*, 1–19. doi:[10.1080/1461670x.2015.1006903](https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670x.2015.1006903).
- Hakhverdian, A., and Q. Mayne. 2012. "Institutional Trust, Education, and Corruption: A Micro-Macro Interactive Approach." *The Journal of Politics* 74 (3): 739–750. doi:[10.1017/S0022381612000412](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381612000412)
- Hallin, D., and P. Mancini. 2004. *Comparing Media System: Three Models of Media and Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hanitzsch, T., and R. Berganza. 2012. "Explaining Journalists' Trust in Public Institutions Across 20 Countries: Media Freedom, Corruption, and Ownership Matter Most." *Journal of Communication* 62 (5): 794–814. doi:[10.1111/j.1460-2466.2012.01663.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2012.01663.x)
- Hanitzsch, T., and R. Berganza. 2014. "Political Trust among Journalists: Comparative Evidence from 21 Countries." In *Comparing Political Communication Across Time and Space*, edited by M. J. Canel and K. Voltmer. London: Palgrave Macmillan. doi:[10.1057/9781137366474_9](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137366474_9)
- Hardin, R. 1999. "Do We Want Trust in Government?" In *Democracy and Trust*, edited by M. Warren, 22–41. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hetherington, M. J. 1998. "The Political Relevance of Political Trust." *American Political Science Review* 92 (4): 791–808. doi:[10.2307/2586304](https://doi.org/10.2307/2586304)
- Hetherington, M. 2005. *Why Trust Matters: Declining Political Trust and the Demise of American Liberalism*. Princeton University Press.
- Inglehart, R. 1999. "Trust, Well-Being and Democracy." In *Democracy & Trust*, edited by M. Warren, 88–120. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jempson, M. 2004. "Journalism and Public Trust." *British Journalism Review* 15 (1).

- Johann, D. 2012. "Specific Political Knowledge and Citizens' Participation: Evidence from Germany." *Acta Politica* 47 (1): 42–66. doi:10.1057/ap.2011.20
- Kalenborn, C., and C. Lessmann. 2012. The Impact of Democracy and Press Freedom on Corruption: Conditionality Matters. CESIFO Working Paper No. 3917, www.SSRN.com.
- Kaufhold, K., S. Valenzuela, and H. G. de Zúñiga. 2010. "Citizen Journalism and Democracy: How User-Generated News Use Relates to Political Knowledge and Participation." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 87 (3/4): 515–529. doi:10.1177/107769901008700305
- Kohring, M., and J. Matthes. 2007. "Trust in News Media." *Communication Research* 34 (2): 231–252. doi:10.1177/0093650206298071
- Levi, M. 1996. "Social and Unsocial Capital: A Review Essay of Robert Putnam's Making Democracy Work." *Politics & Society* 24 (1): 45–55. doi:10.1177/0032329296024001005
- Levi, M., and L. Stoker. 2000. "Political Trust and Trustworthiness." *Annual Review of Political Science* 3 (1): 475–507. doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.3.1.475
- Lissitsa, S. 2021. "Effects of Digital Use on Trust in Political Institutions among Ethnic Minority and Hegemonic Group – A Case Study." *Technology in Society* 66: 101633–11. doi:10.1016/j.techsoc.2021.101633
- Marien, S., and M. Hooghe. 2011. "Does Political Trust Matter? An Empirical Investigation Into the Relation Between Political Trust and Support for Law Compliance." *European Journal of Political Research* 50 (2): 267–291. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6765.2010.01930.x
- Marozzi, M. 2015. "Measuring Trust in European Public Institutions." *Social Indicators Research* 123: 879–895. doi:10.1007/s11205-014-0765-9
- Matthes, J., P. Maurer, and F. Arendt. 2019. "Consequences of Politicians' Perceptions of the News Media: A hostile Media Phenomenon Approach." *Journalism Studies* 20 (3): 345–363. doi:10.1080/1461670X.2017.1377102
- Mcchesney, R. W. 1999. "Noam Chomsky and the Struggle Against Neoliberalism." *Monthly Review* 50 (11): 40.
- Milner, H. 2007. "Political Knowledge and Participation among Young Canadians and Americans." Montreal: Institute for Research in Public Policy. Working Paper.
- Mishler, W., and R. Rose. 2001. "What Are the Origins of Political Trust? Testing Institutional and Cultural Theories in Post-Communist Societies." *Comparative Political Studies* 34 (1): 30–62. doi:10.1177/0010414001034001002
- Morris, S. 1999. "Corruption and the Mexican Political System: Continuity and Change." *Third World Quarterly* 20 (3): 623–643. doi:10.1080/01436599913721
- Morris, S. D., and J. L. Klesner. 2010. "Corruption and Trust: Theoretical Considerations and Evidence from Mexico." *Comparative Political Studies* 43 (10): 1258–1285. doi:10.1177/0010414010369072
- Moy, P., and M. Pfau. 2000. *With Malice Toward all?: The Media and Public Confidence in Democratic Institutions*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Moy, P., M. Pfau, and L. Kahlor. 1999. "Media use and Public Confidence in Democratic Institutions." *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 43 (2): 137–158. doi:10.1080/08838159909364481
- Moy, P., and D. A. Scheufele. 2000. "Media Effects on Political and Social Trust." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 77 (4): 744–759. doi:10.1177/107769900007700403
- Nelson, J. L., and S. J. Kim. 2021. "Improve Trust, Increase Loyalty? Analyzing the Relationship Between News Credibility and Consumption." *Journalism Practice* 15 (3): 348–365. doi:10.1080/17512786.2020.1719874
- Newman, N., and R. Fletcher. 2017. Retrieved from University of Oxford, Oxford: <http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/bias-bullshit>.
- Newton, K. 1999. "Mass Media Effects: Mobilization or Media Malaise?" *British Journal of Political Science* 29 (4): 577–599. doi:10.1017/S0007123499000289
- Newton, K. 2001. "Trust, Social Capital, Civil Society, and Democracy." *International Political Science Review* 22 (2): 201–214. doi:10.1177/0192512101222004
- Nimo, D. 1964. *News Gathering in Washington*. New York: Atherton Press.
- Ohme, J. 2020. "Mobile But Not Mobilized? Differential Gains from Mobile News Consumption for Citizens' Political Knowledge and Campaign Participation." *Digital Journalism* 8 (1): 103–125. doi:10.1080/21670811.2019.1697625

- Pasti, S. 2005. "Two Generations of Contemporary Russian Journalists." *European Journal of Communication* 20 (1): 89–115. doi:10.1177/0267323105049634
- Patterson, T. 1993. *Out of Order: How the Decline of the Political Parties and the Growing Power of the News Media Undermine the American Way of Electing Presidents*. New York: Alfred Knopf.
- Patterson, T. E., and W. Donsbach. 1996. "News Decisions: Journalists as Partisan Actors." *Political Communication* 13: 455–468. doi:10.1080/10584609.1996.9963131
- Pippa, N. 1999a. "Conclusions: The Growth of Critical Citizens and its Consequences." In *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government*, edited by P. Norris. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pippa, N. 1999b. "Introduction: The Growth of Critical Citizens." In *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government*, edited by N. Pippa, 1–27. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Putnam, R. D. 1995. "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital." *Journal of Democracy* 6 (1): 65–78. doi:10.1353/jod.1995.0002
- Putnam, R. D. 1995b. "Tuning in, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America." *PS-WASHINGTON* 28: 664–664.
- Reich, Z., and T. Hanitzsch. 2013. "Determinants of Journalists' Professional Autonomy: Individual and National Level Factors Matter More Than Organizational Ones." *Mass Communication and Society* 16 (1): 133–156. doi:10.1080/15205436.2012.669002
- Relly, J. E., M. Zanger, and S. Fahmy. 2015. "Professional Role Perceptions among Iraqi Kurdish Journalists from a 'State Within a State'." *Journalism* 16 (8): 1085–1106. doi:10.1177/1464884914550973
- Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. 2017. *Digital News Report*. <http://www.digitalnewsreport.org/>.
- Richardson, N. 2017. "Fake News and Journalism Education." *Asia Pacific Media Educator* 27 (1): 1–9. doi:10.1177/1326365X17702268
- Roth, F. 2009. "Does Too Much Trust Hamper Economic Growth?" *Kyklos* 62 (1): 103–128. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6435.2009.00424.x
- Rothstein, B., and E. M. Uslaner. 2005. "All for All: Equality, Corruption, and Social Trust." *World Politics* 58 (1): 41–72. doi:10.1353/wp.2006.0022
- Savoie, D. 2019. *The Politics of Public Spending in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Schedler, A., L. J. Diamond, and M. F. Plattner. 1999. *The Self-restraining State: Power and Accountability in New Democracies*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Schudson, M. 1999. "Social Origins of Press Cynicism in Portraying Politics." *American Behavioral Scientist* 42 (6): 998–1008. doi:10.1177/00027649921954714
- Schyns, P., and C. Koop. 2010. "Political Distrust and Social Capital in Europe and the USA." *Springer Science+Business Media* 96: 145–167. doi:10.1007/s11205-009-9471-4.
- Slomczynski, K. M., and K. Janicka. 2009. "Structural Determinants of Trust in Public Institutions: Cross-National Differentiation." *International Journal of Sociology* 39 (1): 8–29. doi:10.2753/IJS0020-7659390101
- Somin, I. 2010. "Deliberative Democracy and Political Ignorance." *Critical Review* 22 (2–3): 253–279. doi:10.1080/08913811.2010.508635
- Somin, I. 2013. *Democracy and Political Ignorance: Why Smaller Government is Smarter*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Stoecker, A. 2022. "Partisan Alignment and Political Corruption: Evidence from a new Democracy." *World Development* 152: 105805. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2021.105805
- Strömbäck, J. 2005. "In Search of a Standard: Four Models of Democracy and Their Normative Implications for Journalism." *Journalism Studies* 6 (3): 331–345. doi:10.1080/14616700500131950
- Tejkalová, A., A. S. de Beer, R. Berganza, Y. Kalyango, A. Amado, L. Ozolina, ... Masduki. 2017. "In Media We Trust." *Journalism Studies* 18 (5): 629–644. doi:10.1080/1461670X.2017.1279026
- Treisman, D. 2007. "What Have We Learned About the Causes of Corruption from Ten Years of Cross-National Empirical Research?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (1): 211–244.
- Usher, N., and Y. M. M. Ng. 2020. "Sharing Knowledge and "Microbubbles": Epistemic Communities and Insularity in US Political Journalism." *Social Media + Society* 6 (2): doi:10.1177/2056305120926639

- Valentino, N. A., M. N. Beckmann, and T. A. Buhr. 2001. "A Spiral of Cynicism for Some: The Contingent Effects of Campaign News Frames on Participation and Confidence in Government." *Political Communication* 18 (4): 347–367. doi:10.1080/10584600152647083
- Van de Walle, S., and G. Bouckaert. 2003. "Public Service Performance and Trust in Government: The Problem of Causality." *International Journal of Public Administration* 26 (8–9): 891–913. doi:10.1081/PAD-120019352
- Van de Walle, S., and F. Six. 2014. "Trust and Distrust as Distinct Concepts: Why Studying Distrust in Institutions is Important." *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice* 16 (2): 158–174. doi:10.1080/13876988.2013.785146
- Vos, T., et al. 2016. "Journalistic Fields." In *The Sage Handbook of Digital Journalism*, edited by W. Tamara, A. C. W, and D. David. London: Sage.
- Vos, T. P., M. Eichholz, and T. Karaliova. 2019. "Audiences and Journalistic Capital." *Journalism Studies* 20 (7): 1009–1027. doi:10.1080/1461670X.2018.1477551
- Warren, M. 1999. "Introduction." In *Democracy and Trust*, edited by M. Warren. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Warren, M. 2004. "What Does Corruption Mean in a Democracy?" *American Journal of Political Science* 48 (2): 328–343. doi:10.1111/j.0092-5853.2004.00073.x
- Watkins, M. 2022. "Foreign aid Projects and Trust in Political Institutions." *Governance* 35 (3): 909–927. doi:10.1111/gove.12628
- Weaver, D. H. 2015. "Studying Journalists and Journalism across Four Decades: A Sociology of Occupations Approach." *Mass Communication and Society* 18 (1): 4–16. doi:10.1080/15205436.2014.969843
- Webb, J., T. Schirato, and G. Danaher. 2002. *Understanding Bourdieu*. London: SAGE.
- Welzel, C. 2007. "Are Levels of Democracy Affected by Mass Attitudes? Testing Attainment and Sustainment Effects on Democracy." *International Political Science Review* 28 (4): 397–424. doi:10.1177/0192512107079640
- Willnat, L., D. H. Weaver, and J. Choi. 2013. "The Global Journalist in the Twenty-First Century." *Journalism Practice* 7 (2): 163–183. doi:10.1080/17512786.2012.753210
- Wolfgang, D. 1995. "Lapdogs, Watchdogs and Junkyard Dogs." *Media Studies Journal* 9 (4): 17–30.
- Zak, P. J., and S. Knack. 2001. "Trust and Growth." *The Economic Journal* 111 (470): 295–321. doi:10.1111/1468-0297.00609
- Zhang, Y., and M.-H. Kim. 2018. "Do Public Corruption Convictions Influence Citizens' Trust in Government? The Answer Might Not Be a Simple Yes or No." *The American Review of Public Administration* 48 (7): 685–698. doi:10.1177/0275074017728792