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Partisanship and institutional trust in Mongolia

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ABSTRACT
What explains institutional trust in democratic institutions in Mongolia? Institutional trust facilitates establishing democratic institutions in post-transition countries and has been accounted for by institutional performance and social capital approaches in previous research. We argue that particularly in post-transition systems, partisanship, the evaluation of corruption and the quality of democracy also impacts institutional trust. To contribute to the study of political culture in Mongolia, the only Asian post-communist country to have developed towards democracy, we investigate determinants of citizens' trust in the president, parliament, and judiciary. To test the various explanatory factors of trust, we run ordered logit models using Asian Barometer data from 2014. The results suggest that, apart from institutional and social capital factors, partisanship strongly influences trust in the president and courts. This implies that Mongolians' perceptions of the justice system are informed by political preference, which partially originates in attempts to seize courts' autonomy.

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KEYWORDS institutional trust; Mongolia; partisanship; post-transition; institutional performance; social capital; judiciary

Introduction

In 2019, Mongolia's political system was facing yet again another constitutional crisis. After major disputes over constitutional amendments between 1997 and 2000[1] and conflicts over alleged manipulations in the 2016 general election,[2] the most recent crisis was caused by a passed legislative bill that will allow the National Security Council, consisting of the president, prime minister, and the speaker of parliament, to dismiss judges and the head of the anti-corruption department prior to the termination of their tenure. As a reaction to this institutional alteration, observers of Mongolian politics noted that this may transform Mongolia back into authoritarian rule after about three decades of democratic government.[3] And yet, elections are held democratically to select political representatives in Mongolia, whereby politicians in government and parliament can be held accountable for their performance. However, both the institutional framework and citizens' attitudes towards democracy feed into the functioning of Mongolia's political system and its post-transition stage towards a fully established democracy.[4]

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While political institutions are central when establishing democracies, citizens' trust in them is of pivotal importance, particularly during the last stages of democratic consolidation.[5] Certainly, institutional trust is critical to any democratic system, but the long-term institutionalization of democracy in post-transition countries is strongly dependent on citizens' evaluations of the political system. Growing institutional trust furthermore may safeguard the new democracy from backsliding into an authoritarian regime as citizens' trust in democratic institutions may foster the institutions' resilience against attempts to change the regime type.

Mongolia represents a post-transition country with a communist past characterized by a strong dependence on the Soviet Union.[6] Since the peaceful transition from a communist authoritarian regime towards democracy in 1990, Mongolia has transformed into a democratic system against the odds:[7] It is the only Asian country to have established democratic rule although being enclosed by the authoritarian regimes of Russia in the north and China in the south. Though under rather difficult circumstances for democratic rule such as a persisting economic dependence on Russia, as well as increasingly on China, Mongolia has so far resisted against sliding towards authoritarian government. However, as the recent constitutional crisis demonstrates, Mongolia's democracy is still unstable and prone to corruption and serious conflicts between political institutions.[8]

Therefore, the resilience of Mongolia's democratic institutions depends strongly on how Mongolians trust in them.[9] Hitherto, studies empirically investigating the Mongolian case are rare. Some of the few studies suggest that civic culture has been paramount for democratization in Mongolia, a system characterized by comparatively recently established democratic institutions as well as lower economic performance.[10] In this article, we zoom into the Mongolian case in order to contribute to research on post-transition systems in general and determinants of citizens' attitudes towards political institutions in particular. More specifically, we ask: What impacts institutional trust in Mongolia?

Institutional trust is a form of political trust, which "refers to the faith that citizens place in political actors and institutions not to act in ways that will do them harm".[11] Institutional trust thereby refers specifically to institutions such as the government or parliament. In democracies, those institutions represent the democratic principles of the constitutional order, which is why citizens' low trust in them may weaken the democratic system at large. In Mongolia's parliamentary system,[12] three institutions are the most important in the constitutional framework, namely the president, parliament, and the judiciary. Therefore, we will investigate the determinants of Mongolian citizens' trust in these three institutions.

In the literature on institutional trust, institutional performance and social capital theories dominate the explanation of different levels of institutional trust. On the one hand, institutional performance theories state that the political systems' output affects the extent to which citizens are satisfied with the current institutions.[13] If the output meets citizens' expectations, they are more likely to evaluate the institutions to be trustworthy. Social capital theories, on the other hand, point to the impact of interpersonal trust at the individual level.[14] While in the institutional performance approach trust originates from system endogenous factors, citizens' trust amongst each other and civic engagement are exogenous to the institutions themselves and can thereby not be facilitated by improving the system's output.[15]

However, we argue that particularly in post-transition countries, these two theories do not exhaustively account for institutional trust. Most importantly, adhering to a particular political party, politician or movement also influences trust, as newer institutions are still perceived as strongly political. That is why citizens are more likely to trust in these institutions when an actor of their preferred political force is in power. We hypothesize that this applies to the triad of principal Mongolian institutions. While individuals stronger confide in parliament if their preferred party holds the most mandates, they may also hold the opinion that the judicial system, which is supposed to enforce the present laws, can be trusted if the supported political actor is in charge of legislating and governing. Conversely, if citizens find themselves not to support the parties and politicians in power, they may also be sceptical about the judiciary, as they suspect that judges cannot act independently from the executive and legislature.

This article proceeds as follows. First, we outline theories on institutional performance and social capital. Moreover, we elaborate on determinants of institutional trust that are of particular importance for post-transition countries, most importantly partisanship. Second, we contextualize the Mongolian case and delineate institutional and societal circumstances that are pertinent to institutional trust in Mongolia. Using the most recent Asian Barometer survey data of 2014, we explain our measures and the employed ordered logit models. We subsequently examine our findings and discuss the theoretical and practical implications for Mongolia, as well as for post-transition systems in general.

We find that institutional performance and social capital equally impact institutional trust. Further, we provide evidence that factors particularly relevant to post-transition countries also strongly contribute to predicting institutional trust. Most notably, apart from trust in the president, partisanship significantly impacts Mongolians' trust in the judiciary. This implies that Mongolian citizens perceive the judicial system as being strongly politicized, which might also originate in the struggles around the appointment of judges and the constitutional court's judicial competences.

Determinants of institutional trust

Institutional performance

According to Easton's model of political systems, trust is the support of the system and thereby represents the input into the system and its institutions.[16] The institutional performance approach assumes that institutional trust is predominantly determined by the system's output. The output feeds into the input, as citizens evaluate the systems' performance. Citizens retain their support as long as they are content with how the system caters to their demands, or withdraw their support if the system fails to do so.[17] Hence, institutional trust may originate in system-endogenous factors such as the government's capability to resolve policy issues and to deliver economic growth.[18]

The mechanism of the feedback-loop, which connects output and trust, can be theoretically refined by behavioural rational choice theories that refer to the individual level. This rationalist perspective draws on Downs' concept of the "rational voter", whose political behaviour is informed by the assessment of the government's fulfilment of individual demands.[19] If the delivered and expected benefits exceed the costs of voting, the individual decides to vote.

In a similar vein, citizens evaluate the system's performance and, based on their experiences and perceptions, derive an attitude towards the institutions delivering the system's output. This evaluation may occur at two different levels. First, at the macro-level, there may be an effect of the individual evaluation of the political system at large. Independently of the individuals' economic status, citizens hold an opinion on how the system generally caters to society's well-being. Thus, the overall economic performance of a political system may impact trust in political institutions.

Second, citizens may take their personal economic situation into account when expressing their trust in institutions. From this micro-perspective, the country's overall economic situation is disentangled from the individuals' situation. Institutions are thought to be trustworthy if the individual socioeconomic status, most importantly the household's income and employment, satisfies citizens' expectations.[20] The evaluation of the macro-performance may not necessarily coincide with citizens' individual perception of their own situation. Taking the evaluation at both the macro and micro-level together, we hypothesize:

H1a: The more positive the evaluation of the country's economic situation, the higher the trust in political institutions.

H1b: The more positive the evaluation of the individual's economic situation, the higher the trust in political institutions.

Social capital

The other prominent theory that accounts for institutional trust is the social capital approach. This concept builds on Putnam's seminal works on social capital and its pivotal importance for democratic societies.[21] Defining social capital as "features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions",[22] this capital type can be acquired by being involved in social groups and through civic engagement.[23] Citizens' social capital is suggested to be conducive to trust in political institutions.[24]

With regard to post-socialist countries, though, the conceptualization of social capital and the notion of social involvement as an inherent feature of democracies has to be modified. Prior to the growing importance of formal civic associations and non-governmental organizations,[25] Mongolian society, for instance, had already developed a dense, broad informal network of familial, amicable or other social ties during the socialist period.[26] These ties, maintained through both formal group membership and informal interactions, are presumed to foster interpersonal trust among citizens.[27]

Social trust, which Letki defines as "trust that others will not free ride",[28] also facilitates individual's trust in the legitimacy of the state. By engaging in civil initiatives, citizens "learn" and acquire trust in small settings in the first place. The level of trust will subsequently be inferred to social and political institutions.[29] If citizens hold the opinion that others are generally trustworthy, they may also believe that their peers similarly contribute to the state and comply with its regulations. This concept of ethical reciprocity conversely assumes that if social trust at the individual level decreases, so does trust in institutions at the state level. If individuals doubt the trustworthiness of their fellow citizens, they may equally question their support of the state and its institutions.[30]

As a result of this mechanism, citizens who tend to trust their peers are more likely to confide in state institutions and politicians. Newton, who examined political and social trust in established democracies, however, is more sceptical about the proposition that citizens project social trust on the political realm as he does not find sufficient empirical support.[31] In contrast, a study of institutional trust in Georgia, a country which used to be part of the Soviet Union and is therefore comparable to Mongolia's past dependence on the USSR, suggests that developed networks of NGOs on the ground and the possibility for citizens to engage in volunteer organizations promoted to build interpersonal and institutional trust in society.[32] To test the social capital account of institutional trust, we hypothesize:

H2: The higher an individual's social capital, the higher the trust in political institutions.

Post-transition factors

In addition to economic and social capital theories, studies focusing on post-transition and post-communist countries have pointed to the relevance of further explanatory factors of institutional trust.[33] Amongst the most critical ones are partisanship, perception of the current democratic system, and corruption. These factors are certainly influential in established democratic systems as well but are of particular importance when it comes to new democracies with comparatively recently created political institutions. New democracies, including those with a post-communist trajectory, may face economic issues simultaneously to the consolidation of democratic institutions so that the system's overall poor performance may be a rather weak predictor of institutional trust. Moreover, social capital emerges through a long-term process, as "political trust is culturally determined and rooted in deep-seated societal norms or basic socialization patterns".[34] Post-communist societies are deemed to have been lacking time to establish and to cultivate trust in institutions and politicians.[35] Thus, trust in democratic institutions of former communist countries should be more strongly affected by additional factors, since economic performance and social capital are likely to be generally lower than in more consolidated democracies.

Partisanship as an explanatory variable for institutional trust has firstly been suggested in studies on institutional trust in western democracies.[36] Citizens who are governed by those for whom they have voted might believe more strongly in the legitimacy of the policies implemented by an institution for which a party or politician is responsible. Conversely, if citizens have voted for the opposition and are thereby more likely to distrust the incumbent, they may be more skeptical about the institution itself. This especially applies to institutions of which a single candidate or party is in charge, such as the president or government. At the same time, in order to continuously ensure that democratic institutions are socially accepted and trusted, partisan-biased trust indicates that institutions are politicized and may be partially questioned in its entirety by supporters of the opposition.

We, therefore, expect that voting for the opposition has a negative effect on institutional trust, especially with regard to the president, as the institution is represented by a single person directly elected by the people:

H3: If citizens are partisans of the opposition, they are less likely to trust in political institutions than supporters of the governing party.

Citizens' perception of the prevalence of corruption plays another pivotal role when explaining institutional trust.[37] Especially in post-communist countries, where "individual liberty and the rule of law were systematically repressed for decades",[38] combatting corruption, and the perception of an efficient prosecution thereof, can foster trust in democratic institutions. There is evidence, amongst others from Asia and Africa, that the perception of corruption negatively impacts trust and thereby undermines the consolidation of new democracies.[39] Hence, we expect a similar effect in Mongolia:

> H4: The more corrupt a political system is perceived to be, the lower the trust in political institutions.

Lastly, the perception of the country's state of democracy can also influence trust in institutions. First, if individuals negatively evaluate the existing democratic system, this may also coincide with a sceptical attitude towards institutions. Second, the opinion about the nation as such could also influence trust, as positive emotions towards the country and its culture might increase the overall satisfaction with political institutions. For instance, trust in Ghanaian institutions is also determined by pride in the country and thus facilitates favourable attitudes towards institutions.[40] Third, anti-democratic and authoritarian orientations among citizens should have a detrimental effect on trust in democratic institutions because democratic norms are generally rejected. Taking these three aspects together, we hypothesize:

> H5: The more positive the attitudes towards and perception of democracy are, the higher the trust in political institutions.

Post-transition politics and society in Mongolia

Mongolia is often referred to as a remarkable exception amongst Asian post-communist countries.[41] Apart from Eastern European political systems, which for the most part have transformed into democracies, central Asian post-soviet countries except Mongolia can be characterized as authoritarian systems with a dominant president. It is therefore somewhat surprising that Mongolia has developed towards democracy since the relatively ordered transformation from the communist to the new democratic system in 1990. This aberrant case of Mongolia is worthy of explanation to adequately contextualize the present Mongolian democratic culture.

In 1990, uprisings in Ulaanbaatar, as well as other regions of the country, and hunger strikes sparked. Put under pressure by the public upheavals, the ruling communist party eventually agreed on holding democratic elections, which paved the way for the democratization of the country. Despite some popular political figures in the protest movement, there was no dominant leader of the democratic opposition during the transition who would have inspired the founders of the new constitution to implement a presidential system in order to create a centre of power in the democratic system. According to Fish, the absence of a dominating leader in the revolutionary movement who would have had the popularity to become a powerful president fostered democratization in Mongolia.[42]

Another favourable condition for Mongolia's transition was the rather "well established statehood and stateness"[43] that facilitated the effective implementation of democratic institutions. What is more, adjacent states and international organizations were rather disinterested in the path Mongolia was about to follow after the revolution, which prevented other actors from interfering in the transition process.[44]

In addition to the constitution-makers' objective to protect Mongolia's newly created democratic institutions from foreign interference in the country's sovereignty, the nomadic culture also contributed to the separation of powers. Unlike the impeding influence of clan-based structures in other central Asian countries, the nomadic tradition thus provided fertile ground for the separation of powers and hindered the elites to implement an authoritarian system.[45] Nomadism is still widespread in Mongolia and a point of orientation even in urban areas. It could be therefore presumed that trust in democratic institutions may be strengthened by an underlying collective-oriented civic culture in Mongolia.

Empirical evidence supporting this assumption is scarce, though. A survey in 2002 suggested that Mongolians tend to trust more in parliament than in courts.[46] Generally, it was found that citizens trust in the political system but also express concerns about corruption, which should be urgently tackled. It was also criticized that effective governance had not yet been achieved. Drawing on the approaches to institutional trust delineated in the previous section, it appears that Mongolians were especially concerned about the systems' economic performance and bribery even a decade after the transition period. With this study, we aim to provide more recent evidence on whether these two concerns still determine trust in democratic institutions.

Since Mongolia's transition, the county has developed towards a parliamentary system with a directly elected president,[47] or, according to other scholars, towards a semi-presidential system.[48] Presently, the two dominating parties are the Democratic Party (DP) and the Mongolian People's Party (MPP). Also, the electoral system has been subject to several reforms.[49] As the political context is relevant when examining institutional trust,[50] Mongolia's institutional framework may also impact how citizens trust in democratic institutions. Since the president is directly elected, partisanship may particularly facilitate trust in the presidency compared to the State Great Khural, the Mongolian parliament, in which both the ruling party and the opposition are represented.

Since transition to democracy, the Constitutional Court has ruled on several legal matters and thereby shaped Mongolia's institutional framework as well. Yet, some rulings have been controversially discussed by the public and lead to far-reaching consequences for the dominating parties in Mongolia. Most notably, in 1996 the Court ruled that ministers in government are not allowed to simultaneously serve as members of parliament in the Great State Khural. The Court, who justified the ruling with the strict separation of powers, has been criticized for this action, which forced deputies to resign in order to serve as cabinet members. Ginsburg and Ganzorig comment on this issue that

> the Constitutional Court has several times passed up opportunities to resolve this issue of separating parliament and government in a way that allows for a functioning political system: instead it has consistently adopted an overly strict reading of the constitutional text without sensitivity to political dynamics.[51]

The question remains of whether this state of uncertainty also has affected citizens' trust in courts in general. This will be examined empirically together with trust in the president and parliament in the following section.

Data and methods

We analyse data for Mongolia from the fourth wave of the Asian Barometer conducted in 2014 ($N = 1228$). The face-to-face survey covered all Mongolian provinces and is, by weighting the data, representative of the entire population. In 2013, one year before the

survey was conducted, presidential elections were held which were won by Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, the candidate of the Democratic Party (DP).

As we are interested in Mongolia's principal political institutions, we select the items on trust in courts, president, and parliament to measure potential different explanatory factors on institutional trust.[52] The response set consists of four categories, namely "great deal of trust", "quite a lot of trust", "not very much trust", and "none at all". Comparatively few participants reported having a "great deal of trust" in institutions (for courts only 45), which is why we merge this category with the one for "quite a lot of trust".

To measure the economic approach, we select four variables: The first item asks about how the respondents assess the country's economic performance, where the second enquires about the family's economic situation. Third, measured on a scale from 1 to 10, we use the reported class affiliation from "very poor" to "very rich" to assess the effect of how Mongolians locate themselves in financial terms compared to others. To determine the impact of perceived inequality, we also include how fair respondents evaluate the income distribution among Mongolians.

Commonly used in studies on institutional trust, the first item gauging social capital asks about general trust in other people. To evaluate the influence of how Mongolians weight between national and individual interests, we also incorporate the response on a Likert scale to this statement: "For the sake of national interest, individual interest could be sacrificed". To measure civic engagement, we include a dummy variable on whether the participant is a member of a civic organization or not. Finally, as social capital also encapsulates how citizens are actively concerned with politics, an item about interest in politics is included in the analysis as well.

Lastly, building the block of factors being particularly critical to new democracies, we create a dummy variable of the vote choice at the 2013 presidential election by discriminating voters of the opposition from voters who voted for the winning candidate. In the survey, 67% report to have voted for the incumbent, and 33% percent for the opposition, although slightly more than half of the entire Mongolian electorate voted for the winner of the Democratic Party. Recognizing the potential bias due to an inaccurate representation of vote choice in the sample, we nevertheless argue that an effect, if any, indicates a valid finding. Furthermore, we include variables that have been identified to affect institutional trust in post-transition countries and new democracies: perceived level of corruption in the country, pride in the country,[53] perception of the state of democracy in the country, and whether the respondent would prefer a strong political leader rather than a parliamentary system. These items serve as an indicator of how citizens evaluate the performance of the system with regard to the state of democracy and the prosecution of corruption.

A list containing all variables and descriptive measures is shown in Table 1. If fewer than 50 respondents fell into one response category, we dichotomized the variable into a dummy. As our dependent variable is ordinal in nature, we employ ordered logistic regression models.

Results

Table 2 shows the percentages of citizens' trust in the president, parliament, and courts. Mongolians appear to trust in the president the most, where more than 50% reported trusting the institution either a lot or a great deal. Only 4% responded to trust a great

Table 1. Descriptive statistics (unweighted).

	Obs.	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Trust president	1123	2.39	0.71	1	3
Trust parliament	1206	2.12	0.73	1	3
Trust courts	1188	2.10	0.71	1	3
Overall economy	1222	2.67	0.78	1	5
Economy family	1226	2.06	0.62	1	3
Class	1195	5.22	1.57	1	10
Economic equality	1191	0.18	0.38	0	1
Trust in people	1203	2.47	0.77	1	4
National interest	1213	3.04	0.93	1	4
Member organization	1187	0.35	0.48	0	1
Interest in politics	1227	2.39	0.74	1	4
Voted for opposition	1054	0.33	0.47	0	1
Corruption	1183	0.74	0.44	0	1
Class	1227	0.81	0.39	0	1
Democracy	1228	5.36	1.72	1	10
Leader	1194	2.82	0.95	1	4
Gender (1 = female)	1228	0.57	0.49	0	1
Age	1228	40.77	14.78	18	93
Education	1228	11.8	3.31	0	33

Table 2. Percentages of trust in Mongolian institutions (weighted), $N = 1228$.

	President	Parliament	Courts
A great deal of trust	13%	4%	4%
Quite a lot of trust	39%	29%	26%
Not very much trust	35%	44%	46%
None at all	13%	21%	20%
Do not understand the question	0%	0%	0%
Can't choose	0%	2%	3%
Decline to answer	0%	0%	1%

deal in parliament and courts, where citizens find the parliament on average more trustworthy than the judiciary. This widely confirms the results by Prohl and Sumati and therefore suggests the reliability of our findings.[54]

Table 3 displays the association between the dependent variables measured by Goodman and Kruskal's gamma. Trust in the president and parliament are the strongest associated with each other, followed by trust in parliament and courts. The weakest association exhibits the value for the president and courts. Overall, the dependent variables are only moderately associated with each other.

Table 4 shows the ordered logit regression results. The first block in the models for each institution consists of economic variables, the second of social capital variables, and the third of variables being particularly influential on trust in new democracies and post-transition countries. In terms of model diagnostics, the Brant test turns out

Table 3. Goodman/Kruskals gamma of association (unweighted).

		95%-confidence interval		
	Gamma	lower	upper	*N*
Trust president/parliament	0.502	0.432	0.571	1203
Trust president/courts	0.381	0.303	0.458	1185
Trust parliament/courts	0.411	0.336	0.486	1170

Table 4. Ordered logistic regression (unweighted).

	Trust in president						Trust in parliament						Trust in courts					
	1.1		1.2		1.3		2.1		2.2		2.3		3.1		3.2		3.3	
	B (SE)	odds ratios	B (SE)	odds ratios	B (SE)	odds ratios	B (SE)	odds ratios	B (SE)	odds ratios	B (SE)	odds ratios	B (SE)	odds ratios	B (SE)	odds ratios	B (SE)	odds ratios
Economic factors																		
Overall economy	0.611*** (0.079)	1.842	0.566*** (0.083)	1.761	0.440*** (0.095)	1.553	0.536*** (0.075)	1.709	0.481*** (0.079)	1.618	0.444*** (0.090)	1.559	0.397*** (0.075)	1.488	0.385*** (0.079)	1.470	0.348*** (0.090)	1.416
Economy family	0.170 (0.096)	1.185	0.118 (0.102)	1.126	0.277* (0.118)	1.319	0.148 (0.094)	1.160	0.149 (0.099)	1.160	0.223* (0.113)	1.250	0.266* (0.093)	1.304	0.253** (0.098)	1.288	0.329** (0.110)	1.390
Class	0.020 (0.038)	1.020	0.017 (0.040)	1.017	0.001 (0.047)	1.001	−0.002 (0.037)	0.998	−0.001 (0.039)	0.999	−0.013 (0.045)	0.987	0.028 (0.038)	1.028	0.032 (0.040)	1.032	0.038 (0.045)	1.038
Economic equality	0.447** (0.159)	1.564	0.358* (0.165)	1.430	0.281 (0.185)	1.325	0.320* (0.146)	1.378	0.288 (0.152)	1.334	0.235 (0.169)	1.265	0.317 (0.148)	1.374	0.285 (0.154)	1.330	0.187 (0.168)	1.206
Social capital																		
Trust in people			0.199* (0.081)	1.220	0.299** (0.093)	1.349			0.222** (0.078)	1.249	0.261** (0.088)	1.298			0.141 (0.079)	1.151	0.247** (0.088)	1.281
National interest			0.097 (0.066)	1.102	0.146 (0.078)	1.158			0.050 (0.065)	1.051	0.004 (0.075)	1.004			0.141* (0.065)	1.151	0.077 (0.075)	1.080
Member organization			0.297* (0.131)	1.345	0.233 (0.150)	1.263			0.296* (0.126)	1.344	0.326* (0.141)	1.385			0.138 (0.126)	1.148	0.234 (0.141)	1.264
Interest in politics			0.200* (0.085)	1.222	0.190 (0.098)	1.209			0.382*** (0.084)	1.466	0.401*** (0.095)	1.493			0.047 (0.084)	1.048	−0.036 (0.094)	0.965
Post-transition factors																		
Voted for opposition					−1.069*** (0.147)	0.343					−0.174 (0.140)	0.840					−0.416** (0.142)	0.659
Corruption					−0.377* (0.169)	0.686					−0.382* (0.157)	0.683					−0.145 (0.154)	0.865
Pride in Mongolia					0.209 (0.190)	1.232					0.197 (0.181)	1.217					−0.052 (0.188)	0.949
Democracy					0.172*** (0.043)	1.188					0.059 (0.040)	1.061					0.035 (0.040)	1.035
Leader					−0.034 (0.075)	0.967					−0.012 (0.072)	0.988					−0.106 (0.072)	0.899

Socio-demographics																		
Gender (1 = female)	0.058	1.059	0.042	1.043	0.072	1.075	0.015	1.015	0.076	1.079	0.047	1.048	−0.007**	0.993	0.029	1.030	−0.015	0.985
	(0.116)		(0.122)		(0.141)		(0.113)		(0.118)		(0.133)		(0.114)		(0.119)		(0.133)	
Age	0.004	1.004	0.002	1.002	0.000	1.000	0.001	1.001	−0.004	0.996	−0.008	0.992	−0.008	0.992	−0.010*	0.990	−0.010*	0.990
	(0.004)		(0.004)		(0.005)		(0.004)		(0.004)		(0.005)		(0.004)		(0.004)		(0.005)	
Education	0.000	1.000	−0.020	0.980	−0.040	0.961	0.011	1.011	−0.014	0.986	−0.017	0.983	0.032*	1.033	0.023	1.023	0.022	1.022
	(0.019)		(0.020)		(0.022)		(0.018)		(0.019)		(0.021)		(0.018)		(0.019)		(0.021)	
Constant 1	0.375		1.074		1.197		0.643		1.746		1.526		0.522		1.215		0.701	
Constant 2	2.326		3.056		3.393		2.685		3.830		3.710		2.731		3.417		3.044	
McFadden Pseudo R^2	0.096		0.168		0.366		0.082		0.157		0.330		0.079		0.143		0.314	
N	1150		1076		873		1136		1062		861		1123		1049		858	

B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error. Dummy variables: economic equality, member organization, vote for opposition, corruption, pride in Mongolia, gender.
*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$; ***$p \leq .001$.

to be insignificant for all models, whereby we meet the proportional odds assumption of ordinal logistic regression. Furthermore, the models meet the assumption of non-multicollinearity (highest VIF = 1.186). Generally, the goodness of fit statistics improve as the blocks are added to the model and are at their highest in the full models (1.3, 2.3, 3.3).

The results for trust in the president are shown in models 1.1–1.3. Economic factors exhibit a slightly higher effect size than social capital. When adding the last block containing post-transition variables, the goodness of fit doubles. In the full model for trust in the president (1.3), voting for opposition becomes the strongest predictor, but also the perception of democracy and corruption contributes significantly to the model. For economic factors, both the country's and the family's economic situation are significant, where the country's economic performance exhibits a stronger effect size. For social capital, only affirming to trust in people yields a significant coefficient.

The models for trust in parliament are shown in models 2.1–2.3 Compared to trust in the president, the social capital block proportionally contributes more, and economic factors less, to the model. For economic factors, the evaluation of the country's and family's economy again yields a positive, significant effect size on parliamentary trust. Regarding social capital, apart from trust in people, interest in politics and being a member of a civic organization positively turn out to be positive predictors. In the post-transition block, only the perception of corruption has a negative impact on trust in parliament.

Lastly, models 3.1–3.3 show the coefficients for explaining trust in courts. We find the same pattern for economic and social capital factors, which is that both equally add to the prediction of trust. Similar to trust in the president, the country's economic performance, as well as the family's economic situation, are significant explanatory variables. For social capital, solely trusting in people significantly predicts trust in courts. Finally, having voted for the opposition is strongly negatively correlated with judicial trust. While socio-demographic variables do not predict trust in the president and parliament, age has a slightly negative impact on trust in courts. Comparing the effect size with the other independent variables, the influence of age is negligible, though.

Discussion and conclusions

What explains citizens' institutional trust in Mongolia? To address this question, we distinguished between the three principal Mongolian political institutions, namely the president, parliament, and the courts, to examine whether considerable differences in individuals' trust in those institutions exist. In doing so, we refrained from building a general trust indicator, which has been employed by previous studies investigating institutional trust.[55]

The analysis of Mongolians' institutional trust provides support for diverging patterns of trust in the examined institutions. Mongolian citizens trust in the president the most, followed by parliament and courts, where trust is generally rather low. This indicates that the president, although being solely represented by a single person, is perceived as the most reliable and respected authority in society. The president's relative popularity may be explained by his rather representative political functions from the outset of democratic rule up until 2013 when the survey used in our analysis was conducted. Since the president was not directly involved in party politics or in implementing specific policies but nevertheless present in the Mongolian public, citizens might have held a more positive attitude towards this institution than the politicized

parliament. However, even though the judiciary is supposed to be distinct from the political realm of executing and legislating, citizens appear to be comparatively sceptical about the trustworthiness of the justice system.

Interestingly, trust in the three institutions is solely moderately associated with one another. This further buttresses our assumption that studies should also examine institutions separately, as citizens appear to be aware of the differences between distinct institutions and consequently hold differing opinions about them. Future research may consider employing institution-specific analyses on institutional trust and further elaborate on the explanatory factors of the different levels of institutional trust in post-transition countries.

The analysis of determinants of Mongolians' trust in institutions confirmed the institutional performance approach. In other words, the better citizens evaluate the systems' output, the more they trust in political institutions. Yet, while the macro-evaluation of the system strongly impacts trust, there is no effect of the individual socioeconomic status. Thus, Mongolians seem to value the overall countries' economic performance more than their personal and family's economic situation with regards to institutional trust. In sum, we find evidence for the universal approach within economic performance theories, but not for a self-centred mechanism.

While previous research has highlighted the effect of economic performance on institutional trust in new democracies,[56] we find comparable effects of social capital factors on trust in all three institutions. Most importantly, the more individuals trust each other, the more likely they are to trust in political institutions. Compared to interpersonal trust, being a member of an organization has a greater effect on trusting in president and parliament. Civic engagement, therefore, facilitates trust the most, which supports the mechanism of "learned" trust: being active in social organizations allows the individual to interact with peers, which in turn fosters interpersonal trust. This trust is then transmitted to the institutional level, as citizens believe that most people will not freeride and thereby equally contribute to the systems' current performance. Furthermore, civically involved Mongolians may hold the opinion that they benefit from the status quo of the political system because they are integrated into a group in which they can express their perspectives and aspirations. Since the president and parliament are institutions whose composition can be influenced through elections, socially involved citizens may support them more than those who are not a member of a social organization. A reason for this may be that socially involved individuals, by having the right to vote, may perceive themselves as more influential on how actors exert power when they are in charge of the institution. This confidence in one's own political influence might originate from the own impact which the individual has experienced through its own engagement.

However, the analysis at hand supports our contention that further factors need to be considered to fully explain institutional trust.[57] First and foremost, we find that partisanship has a great impact on trust in both president and courts. Regarding the president, it is plausible that citizens who have cast a vote in favour of the winner also tend to trust more in the institution of the presidency. Previous research has pointed to the link between political trust and the party or candidate holding office.[58] Since the president is solely represented by one politician, the partisan effect occurs only with regard to the institution of the presidency, unlike to parliament, in which checks and balances are ensured due to its collective structure. Indeed, partisanship does not account for trust in parliament, in which multiple parties are represented and intra-institutional control is more likely.

In Mongolia, partisanship is determined by patronage and social networks rather than polarized ideologies. Mongolia's society is characterized by various "multiple interlinked patronage networks and rife factionalism",[59] contributing to safeguarding the democratic system from backsliding into authoritarian rule. Especially the Democratic Party (DP), on whose ticket President Elbegdorj was elected in 2013, does not pursue an ideological agenda but has gained strength through dense patronage networks. These networks can also be observed in the context of electoral campaigns, in which politicians maintain dyadic relationships to voters by distributing gifts in order to retain or extend electoral support.[60] At the same time, the Mongolian People's Party (MPP), as the former ruling party during the communist regime, can build on a longer tradition and enjoys presumably more ideologically driven endorsement than the Democratic Party (DP). Nevertheless, partisanship in Mongolia is an overall predominantly network- and loyalty-based phenomenon which, according to our results, also has repercussions on trust in Mongolian democratic institutions.

Another factor feeding into partisanship in the Mongolian context are habitual voting patterns. Research into turnout in elections in East Asian countries suggests that citizens' habitual voting behaviour hinges on the regime type, namely democratic versus authoritarian regimes.[61] More precisely, in Asian democratic systems, citizens turn out to fulfil perceived civic duties. Adapting this habitual voting approach to Mongolia, it is probable that voters turn out and adhere to a political party or candidate based on a long-term routine of voting behaviour. Our study also confirms previous research suggesting that voting for the opposition negatively affects satisfaction with democracy.[62] It is clear, then, that partisans of the opposition are generally less content with Mongolia's democratic institutions at large.

The results also suggest that trust in the judiciary is strongly influenced by partisanship, which is the strongest significant predictor in our analysis. Adhering to the incumbent president thereby not only has a facilitating effect on trusting in the institution of the presidency but also on courts, although the judicial system is supposed to be independent of the executive and legislature. Citizens, therefore, appear to perceive the judiciary as strongly interwoven with the president, who, according to the constitution, proposes judges for the constitutional court to parliament. This illustrates the intertwining of institutional structure and civic culture, more specifically of the institutional design and trust, further underscoring the need for an institution-specific enquiry of the determinants of institutional trust.

From a theoretical perspective, trust in the judiciary is of paramount importance to establish the rule of law and to consolidate new democratic systems.[63] It is therefore imperative for courts to be perceived as a neutral institution regardless of political affiliation. In the case of Mongolia, where trust in the judiciary is comparatively low to the other institutions, the justice system yet is lacking trust which is approximately equally gained from all electorates. It can be assumed that the recent constitutional crisis in Mongolia reinforced the effect of partisanship on trust in courts, as the constitutional court and its judges are likely to be perceived as being representative for the entire judicial system.

Even though this crisis originated in the appointment procedure between president and parliament in the first place, it is likely to have further politicized, and to have consequently undermined, the judiciary. In order to enhance Mongolians' trust in courts, institutional conflicts concerning the judiciary, such as the appointments of judges, ought to be resolved and avoided in the future. Although trust cannot solely be

increased by adjusting the institutional framework, the actors being in charge of political institutions may address the lack of trust in the judiciary by refraining from interfering in the justice system and by pursuing to embrace an independent judiciary. Increased trust in courts, in turn, might stabilize Mongolian democracy also in the case of intermittent poor economic performance, as the evaluation of economic output turns out not to be the strongest predictor of institutional trust.

While this article provides evidence for the effect of partisanship on trust in the president and courts, future research may further elaborate on the mechanisms beyond the link of political preference and attitude towards institutions. In addition, future studies may test the effect of partisanship in other post-transition countries to scrutinize whether these findings are distinctive for the Mongolian case or generalizable to other new democratic systems.

Notes

1. Munkh-Erdene, "The Transformation of Mongolia's Political System".
2. Radchenko and Jargalsaikhan, "Mongolia in the 2016–17 Electoral Cycle".
3. Sambuu and Menarndt, "Here's How Democracy is Eroding in Mongolia".
4. Ganbat, Tusalem and Yang, "The Mass Public and Democratic Politics in Mongolia".
5. Merkel, "The Consolidation of Post-autocratic Democracies".
6. Fish, "The Inner Asian anomaly".
7. Fritz, "Mongolia".
8. Fritz, "Democratisation and Corruption in Mongolia".
9. Ganbat, Tusalem and Yang, "The Mass Public and Democratic Politics in Mongolia".
10. Sumaadi, "Mongolian Values And Attitudes Toward Democracy"; Fish and Seeberg, "The Secret Supports of Mongolian Democracy"; Finch, "Civil Society in Mongolia's Development and Governance".
11. Hakhverdian and Mayne, "Institutional Trust, Education, and Corruption".
12. Munkh-Erdene, "The Transformation of Mongolia's Political System".
13. Letki, "Investigating the Roots of Civic Morality"; van der Meer, "Economic Performance and Political Trust".
14. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*; Putnam, "Bowling Alone".
15. Mishler and Rose, "What are the Origins of Political Trust?".
16. Easton, "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems".
17. Ibid., 384.
18. Mishler and Rose, "What are the Origins of Political Trust?," 36.
19. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*.
20. Letki, "Investigating the Roots of Civic Morality," 309; Mishler and Rose, "What are the Origins of Political Trust?".
21. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*.
22. Ibid., 167.
23. La Due Lake and Huckfeldt, "Social Capital, Social Networks, and Political Participation".
24. Zmerli, Newton and Montero, "Trust in People, Confidence in Political Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy," 58, 61.
25. Byambajav, "International NGOs in Mongolia".
26. Dalaibuyan Byambajav, "Formal and Informal Networks in Post-socialist Mongolia".
27. Mishler and Rose, "What are the Origins of Political Trust?," 31.
28. Letki, "Investigating the Roots of Civic Morality," 307.
29. Scholz and Lubell, "Trust and Taxpaying"; Russell Hardin, "Trust in Government," 11.
30. Letki, "Investigating the Roots of Civic Morality," 307; Levi, *Consent, Dissent, and Patriotism*, 24.
31. Kenneth Newton, "Social and Political Trust in Established Democracies," 185.
32. Ishiyama, Mezvrishvili and Zhgenti, "An Oasis of Democracy in an Authoritarian Sea?," 26.
33. Mishler and Rose, "What are the Origins of Political Trust?"; Stoyan et al., "Trust in Government Institutions".

34. Mishler and Rose, "What are the Origins of Political Trust?," 33.
35. Sapsford and Abbott, "Trust, Confidence and Social Environment in Post-communist Societies".
36. Stoyan et al., "Trust in Government Institutions"; Kotzian, "Conditional Trust"; Banducci and Karp, "How Elections Change the Way Citizens View the Political System".
37. Mishler and Rose, "What are the Origins of Political Trust?"; Ganbat, Tusalem and Yang, "The Mass Public and Democratic Politics in Mongolia"; Habibov, Afandi and Cheung, "Sand or Grease?"; Hakhverdian and Mayne, "Institutional Trust, Education, and Corruption".
38. Mishler and Rose, "What are the Origins of Political Trust?," 36.
39. Godefroidt, Langer and Meuleman, "Developing Political Trust in a Developing Country".
40. Ibid.
41. Ganbat, Tusalem and Yang, "The Mass Public and Democratic Politics in Mongolia".
42. Fish, "The Inner Asian Anomaly," 330.
43. Fritz, "Mongolia," 785.
44. Fish, "The Inner Asian Anomaly," 335.
45. Aagaard Seeberg, "Democratization in Clan-based Societies".
46. Ganbat, Tusalem and Yang, "The Mass Public and Democratic Politics in Mongolia," 153.
47. Ibid., 141; Fritz, "Democratisation and Corruption in Mongolia," 192; Munkh-Erdene, "The Transformation of Mongolia's Political System".
48. Elgie, "The Perils of Semi-Presidentialism".
49. Maškarinec, "The 2016 Electoral Reform in Mongolia".
50. Stoyan et al., "Trust in Government Institutions," 31.
51. Ginsburg and Ganzorig, "When Courts and Politics Collide," 93.
52. A list of all items used in the analysis can be found in the online supplemental material.
53. Godefroidt, Langer and Meuleman, "Developing Political Trust in a Developing Country".
54. Prohl, *Voter's Voices*, 117.
55. Godefroidt, Langer and Meuleman, "Developing Political Trust in a Developing Country"; Lühiste, "Explaining Trust in Political Institutions".
56. Mishler and Rose, "What are the Origins of Political Trust?"; Stoyan et al., "Trust in Government Institutions"; Godefroidt, Langer and Meuleman, "Developing Political Trust in a Developing Country".
57. Cf. Stoyan et al., "Trust in Government Institutions".
58. Listhaug and Jakobsen, "Foundations of Political Trust," 561–2; Banducci and Karp, "How Elections Change the Way Citizens View the Political System".
59. Radchenko and Jargalsaikhan, "Mongolia in the 2016–17 Electoral Cycle".
60. Bonilla and Shagdar, "Electoral Gifting and Personal Politics in Mongolia's Parliamentary Election Season".
61. Chang, "Why do They Vote Out of Habit?".
62. Rich, "Losers' Consent or Non-Voter Consent?".
63. Ishiyama and Ishiyama, "Judicious Choices"; Bradford, Jackson and Hough, "Trust in Justice".

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