

Trust as a Core value in public Institutions; Political Participations and Political Trust in GREECE and TURKEY

Mehmet Ali Ozcobanlar

Department of Management, University of Warsaw, Warsaw/Poland

Bulent Acma

Anadolu University, Department of Economics, Eskisehir/Turkey

Abstract: *In this research, trust as a core value of two similar and ancient societies is examined. Trust in people and differences analyses results are given. A list of institutions in Greek and Turkish societies such as national parliament, legal system, press, police, government and the local (municipal) authorities are evaluated. This paper is a continuation of a previous paper titled: "Cross Cultural Dimensions of Cultural Capital: A Comparison between Greece and Turkey"¹. According to the results of the research Greeks have less trust point (4, 28±2, 31) than Turkish participants (4, 88±2, 55). The difference between Greek and Turkish participants are statistically significant ($p < 0,05$). All political institutions are considered as more trust worthy in Turkey. Turkish participants are willing to do more volunteer work for the political party or the trade union which they support. Greek people attend more protests, demonstrations or political events than Turkish people. Recently, Greece is facing a serious financial crisis. Due to the crisis, many Greek people protest against the government. For this reason, findings may be affected by the recent developments.*

Keywords: *Greece, Turkey, Politics, Trust, Institution*

Abbreviations: *EFA: Exploratory factor analysis*

1. INTRODUCTION

As basic pillars of representative democracy and society the institutions are more vital factors for the continuation of democracy more than the actors who are dealing with (Newton and Norris, 2000). The maintainability of institutions arises as an essential matter for the society. The importance of public and governmental institutions cannot be disregarded from today's conditions. As a stringed instrument of contemporary life, the institutions are fundamental to be required by citizens of republics. For that reason, confidence in major public institutions constitutes a prerequisite of a well-functioning democracy, while, conversely, erosion of this confidence indicates public disaffection with and poses a major threat to democracy².

Two similar and ancient societies, Greece and Turkey are the main samples of this paper to be analyzed in content of a core value "trust". Those two countries had a common history in the past and the two societies were living over 400 years together. Hellenic Republic was until 1975 Hellenic Kingdom and was ruled by a king. The Republic of Turkey was, until 1923, the Ottoman Empire, ruled by an Emperor (Sultan). Citizens of those two Republics, one of which is a member of European Union, and the other a candidate member of the Union, were asked the several questions regarding their opinions about political trust. The trust in the following institutions was evaluated: national parliament, legal system, press, police, government and the local (municipal) authorities. There are also questions regarding political participations; voluntary work, meeting of a trade union, attending a protest or demonstration. The analyses' results will help us to understand the peculiarities in between Greece and Turkey.

¹Özçobanlar, Mehmet Ali (2015), "Cross Cultural Dimensions of Cultural Capital: A Comparison Between Greece and Turkey", Canadian Social Science Journal, Canadian Academy of Oriental and Occidental Culture (CAOOC), Vol. 11, No. 4, 2015, pp.15-27

²Christos J. Paraskevopoulos, Accounting for confidence in institutions in Greece: institutional performance, social capital & EU public policy, pp. 2, Muenster, Germany, 22-27 March 2010

2. STATISTIC APPROACH

In this research, 3 factors related to cross cultural dimension Trust in people, Political trust component and Political participation component was developed. Cross cultural dimension factors and their findings were compared between Greece and Turkey. The research is restricted with 3 factors of cross cultural dimensions and two countries, Greece and Turkey. Quantitative approach is restricted with data of Euro found UK Data Archive Study Number 7316 - European Quality of Life Survey, 2011-2012, "Third European Quality of Life Survey Questionnaire" They are given in the below.

3. METHODOLOGY

Study Area and Sampling Method

The study was carried out in Greece and Turkey from "Third European Quality of Life Survey Questionnaire" - European Quality of Life Survey, 2011-2012.

After excluding the cases with missing values, the study employed the use of primary data collected from a sample of 590 subjects left in Greece and 1 211 subjects left in Turkey.

Analytical Techniques

In applied research, factor analysis is most commonly used in psychometric evaluations of multiple-items testing instruments (e.g., questionnaires; cf. Floyd & Widaman, 1995). Since its inception over a century ago (Sperman, 1904, 1927), factor analysis has become one of the most widely used multivariate statistical procedures in applied research endeavors across a multitude of domains (e.g., psychology, education, sociology, management, political science) (Brown, 2015).

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to compare the structure of cultural capital in Greece and Turkey. First, in order to determine the number of factors to fit, the principal component analysis was used.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Trust in People

Erikson (1950) defined "basic trust" as a personality trait which is in form of trust in others and oneself, feelings of inner goodness and optimism form, while Rosenberg (1956, 1957) argued that "trust in people" scales as a single form. However the social-psychological approach has the apparent restriction that changes in trust among large segments of a country's population cannot be explained; nevertheless it influenced the shaping of the literature on trust.

The social and cultural model, developed as an alternative to the social-psychological theory, argues that human being existence conditions and experiences, involvement in a group of people with a cooperative culture, and participation in voluntary activities, create social trust and collaboration, civic mindedness, and reciprocity between individuals. The above is an important factor for the creation of successful social organizations and institutions, including political groups and governmental institutions in which people can invest their confidence. Confidence in political institutions depends on the governmental performance in the same way as trustworthiness of others, and willingness to trust them, are based on the experience of how others behave (Hardin 1996).

The institutional performance model is a systemic one to be tested with aggregate data for nation-states. It is neither a psychological nor a social cultural one.

For trust in people dimension, "Do you think most people can be trusted?" question was asked to participants and they were asked to evaluate the current situation based on a 10 liked scale. Means and difference analysis results are given in the Table 1.

Table1. Trust in People Differences (N= People, X= Percentage)

Do you think most people can be trusted?	Greece			Turkey			P
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	
Q24	1000	4,28	2,31	2004	4,88	2,55	0,000

Source: *Own work*

According to means of answers given to the question, it is seen that Greeks have less trust point (4, 28±2, 31) than Turkish participants (4, 88±2, 55). Analysis results showed that the difference between

participant groups was statistically significant ($p < 0,05$). Thus, it may be argued that Turkish participants trust more than Greeks to other peoples. People who trust each other are also more inclined to trust public and private institutions.

Another question was related with trust of other people. In the questionnaire, participants were asked to evaluate belief that most people can be trusted. Results and difference analysis were given in the Table 2.

Table2. *Trusting of Other People and Difference Analysis Results (N=People, Mean= Percentage)*

Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p	
Q24 Would you say that most people can be trusted? (on a scale of 1 to 10)	Greece	1000	4,28	2,313	-6,28	0,000
	Turkey	2004	4,88	2,548		

Source: *Own work*

As seen in the Table 2, Turkish people trust other people more than Greeks. Although there is a little difference in their evaluation, the difference between Greek and Turkish participants are statistically significant ($p < 0, 05$). Thus, it may be argued that Turkish people trust other people around them rather more than Greeks do. This may be also related with social dimensions.

4.2. Political Trust Component

Variable C_poltrus - political trust component - is a principal component derived from a set of interval level variables Q28a...Q28f measuring the trust in political institutions on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means ‘do not trust at all’ and 10 means ‘trust completely’. The trust in the following institutions was evaluated: national parliament, legal system, press, police, government and the local (municipal) authorities. One component solution was extracted from the data, explaining 69% of the total variation with an Eigen value of 4, 13.

Political Trust

For political trust dimension, six questions were asked to the participants. The question Q28 is “How much you personally trust each of the following institutions?” In the Questionnaire, Q28a, Q28b, Q28c, Q28d, Q28e and Q28f were related with political trust dimension. The trust in the following institutions was evaluated: national parliament, legal system, press, police, government and the local (municipal) authorities. Results are given in the Table 3.

Table3. *Differences of Political Trust (N= People, X= Percentage)*

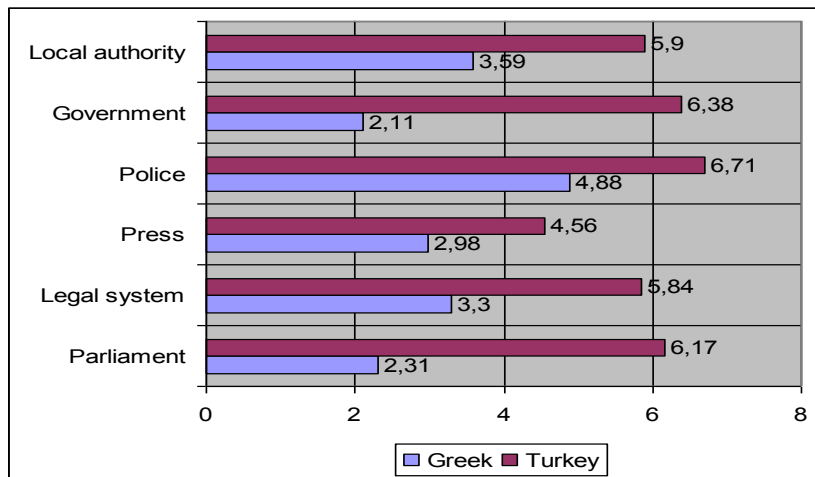
	Greece			Turkey			p
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	
Q28a-Parliament	992	2,31	1,81	1964	6,17	3,15	0,000
Q28b-Legal system	979	3,30	2,23	1945	5,84	3,13	0,000
Q28c-Press	984	2,98	1,98	1955	4,56	2,90	0,000
Q28d-Police	998	4,88	2,66	1982	6,71	3,07	0,000
Q28e-Government	988	2,11	1,82	1969	6,38	3,29	0,000
Q28f-Local authority	991	3,59	2,31	1964	5,90	3,15	0,000

Source: *Own Work*

As seen in the Table 3, all political institutions are more trustful in Turkey, and all differences between countries are statistically significant ($p < 0,05$). In this respect, it may be argued that participants in Turkey are more conservative than in Greece. In addition, it is seen that both participant groups think that police is the most trustful institution of the country. The main difference between countries is government trust. In Turkey, more people trust the government than in Greece and the same is observed in other institutions in Turkey, except police. Distribution differences are also showed in the Scheme 3.1.

As seen in the Scheme 3.1, all political institutions are more trustful in Turkey, a fact that is related to “trust in people”, since if people trust each other, they are also more inclined to have confidence in the authorities who enforce the law. The greater difference between the two countries is in the trust to the Parliament. In Turkey, Police is considered as the most trustful political institution. The order of trust in turkey is: police, government, parliament, local authority, legal system and press. In Greece, police,

is the most trustful institution as in Turkey. The order in Greece is: police, local authority, legal system, press, parliament and government.



Scheme3.1. Differences of political trust (percentage)

Source: Own work

As seen in the Scheme 3.1, all political institutions are more trustful in Turkey, a fact that is related to “trust in people”, since if people trust each other, they are also more inclined to have confidence in the authorities who enforce the law. The greater difference between the two countries is in the trust to the Parliament. In Turkey, Police is considered as the most trustful political institution. The order of trust in Turkey is: police, government, parliament, local authority, legal system and press. In Greece, police, is the most trustful institution as in Turkey. The order in Greece is: police, local authority, legal system, press, parliament and government.

4.3. Political Participation Component

Political participation component Variable C_polpart – political participation component – is a principal component derived from an ordinal variable measuring voluntary work for political parties and trade unions (Q22d) and a set of dichotomous variables measuring whether one attended over last 12 months a meeting of a trade union, a political party or political action group (Q23a); attended a protest or demonstration (Q23b); signed a petition, including an e-mail or on-line petition (Q23c); contacted a politician or public official (Q23d). The variable Q22d was recoded so that 0 means no voluntary work in the last 12 months and 3 means voluntary work at least once a week. One component solution was extracted from the data, explaining 47% of the total variation with an Eigen value of 2,36.

Political Participation

People voluntarily congregate to discuss local issues and public interactions, so high social trust is associated with a dense and vibrant network of social capital. The social-cultural model shows that trust in people and confidence in institutions are associated the social position, cultural identity, and personal life experiences of an individual. Citizens who are most active in voluntary organizations and community associations would develop the social trust and cooperative habits that lead to confidence in public institutions.

For political participation, five questions were asked to the participants. In the Questionnaire, Q22d, Q23a, Q23b, Q23c and Q23d were related with political participation dimension. Answers given to the participation of political parties and trade unions (Q22d) are given in the Table 4.

Table4. Political Participation Differences I (N= People, % = Percentage)

Question	country	Every week		Every month		Less often/occasionally		Not at all		X ²	p
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Q22d	Greece	4	0,4	4	0,4	18	1,8	978	97,4	39,82	0,000
	Turkey	15	0,8	37	1,9	113	5,9	1751	91,4		

Source: Own work

Table4. Shows that there is statistically significant difference based on participation of political parties or trade unions between Turkey and Greece. It is seen that Turkish participants volunteer more for political party or trade union participation.

In the questionnaire, a set of four questions was also asked for political participation. These are whether one attended over last 12 months a meeting of a trade union, a political party or political action group (Q23a); attended a protest or demonstration (Q23b); signed a petition, including an e-mail or on-line petition (Q23c); contacted a politician or public official (Q23d). Results are given in the Table 5.

Table5. Political Participation Differences II(N= People, %= Percentage)

Question	country	Yes		No		X ²	p
		n	%	n	%		
Q23a-meeting	Greece	32	3,2	961	96,8	0,402	0,526
	Turkey	74	3,7	1939	96,3		
Q23b-protest	Greece	126	12,7	868	87,3	98,471	0,000
	Turkey	66	3,3	1949	96,7		
Q23c-demonstration	Greece	39	3,9	953	96,1	14,133	0,000
	Turkey	34	1,7	1981	98,3		
Q23d-contacting	Greece	41	4,1	953	95,9	3,232	0,072
	Turkey	58	2,9	1955	97,1		

Source: Own work

According to the results of the analysis, most of the participants do not volunteer to attempt a meeting of a trade union, a political party or political action group in both countries ($p > 0,05$). Similarly, most of the participants do not volunteer to contacting a politician or public official in both countries ($p > 0,05$). On the other hand, attending a protest or demonstration and signing a petition, including an e-mail or on-line petition distributions showed statistically significant differences between participant groups ($p < 0,05$). According to these results, Greek people attended more protests, demonstrations or political events than Turkish people. Recently, Greece has been faced with a serious financial crisis. Due to the crisis, many Greek people protest against the government. For this reason, findings may be affected by recent developments.

5. CONCLUSION

Trust is an important element in any kind of association. To trust in people and institutions are basic pillars of representative democracy and society. Therefore to develop a trustful atmosphere in institutions and between people is an essential factor in efficiency and maintaining society. Many aspects can be seen as negative effectiveness resulting to loosing trust for institutions. In this research one of the European Union countries Greece was examined. Many key institutions have fallen to critical proportions. Greeks have less trust point regarding trusting people. Greek participants have the lowest trust in government institution. It may be an argument that the recent economic crisis and the instability in the country make Greek citizen to feel less confident with governmental institution. The results disclose a dramatic lack of trust in democratic institutions in Greece. The results show that although there is low trust in Government institutions between the Greek participants, local authorities are ranked as trustable institutions. This could be due to the fact that people in Greece feel closer to their local authorities and because they are better able to decide about themselves in their own territory, for instance by electing a mayor that they know. The confidence to parliament shows that this is the second lowest trustable institution after government. As a most trustable institution police, has the highest confidential level between Greeks. The other country which is analyzed in this research is Turkey. Turkish people, as Greeks, consider Police as the most trustful institution. The government institution has the second highest trust in between Turkish participants. After government, the Parliament is considered as the most trustable institution. In fact, all political institutions are considered as more trustworthy in Turkey. Turkish participants are willing to do more volunteer work for the political party or the trade union which they support. Greek people attend more protest, demonstration or political events than Turkish people. Recently, Greece is facing a serious financial crisis. Due to the crisis, many Greek people protest against the government.

Social and political institutions which have managed to acquire the social trust are usually effective for the governments to carry out the things more successfully. This encourages confidence in civic institutions. Turkey, the nation which was analyzed in this research enjoys a high level of social trust and also tends to enjoy a relatively high level of confidence in political institutions. Greece, with low level of social trust is less likely to build the kind of vibrant civil society that spurs strong government performance, a fact that could result to low citizen confidence in government and public institutions. Since trust is going to be one of the major issues of today's world, the policy makers should try to restore more values in Greece and rebuild the trust at the top. In Turkey the recent demonstrations regarding the corruption in government, a fact which could create an extensive social distrust, should be taken in consideration and policy makers should strive to rebuild the stable atmosphere in country. The results of recent elections run in European countries, show that a change in the political landscape and a different policy than the traditional one is expected by voters.

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