

The Comparison of Trust Towards Political Institutions Between Caucasian Countries and Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Economies not only have higher growth rates but also have less effected from the economic crisis in an environment with trust (Tonkiss, 1999). To ensure the trust in the economy is the prerequisite for both the political and economic stability. The main of this study is to compare the trust towards political institutions between Caucasian Countries (Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia) and Turkey. The parliament, the armed forces, the police and the press are examples of political institutions. To test the hypothesis, European Values Survey (EVS) is utilized. The survey is conducted in 2008. The number of observations for Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia and Turkey is 1505, 1500, 1500 and 2384, respectively. The ANOVA method is used to test the hypothesis of whether there are differences across countries according to trust towards political institutions or not.

Keywords: Trust, Turkey, Caucasus, ANOVA

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1. INTRODUCTION

The worldwide decreasing levels of trust in many public institutions is seen to be a very important problem since trust is central to maintain social order and persistence of the democratic regimes as it affects institutional performance, wellbeing, economic development and crime reduction Marozzi (2014). Čermák et.al. (2016) describes the institutional trust as “one of the basic components of social network and a keystone of the legitimacy of representative government”. Also, they add that institutional trust connects the public with the institutions designed to represent them, so that increase the legitimacy and the effectiveness of democratic government.

In this study, the main is to analyze the differences of trust between the Caucasian countries and Turkey towards political institutions. The perceptions of the individuals are considered in our study. Micro-level data will help us to understand the dynamics behind the beliefs of individuals towards political institutions.

2. LITERATURE

There are many studies concerning institutional trust. Lamoén (2014) analyzed the confidence in the justice system using the data from EVS over 98460 respondents from 25 different countries. Results indicate a decline in confidence in the justice system. When it is compared with the trend to confidence in all other institutions, it is seen that religion has a positive effect on confidence in the justice system while educational level has a negative effect.

Čermák et.al. (2016) study on two regions of Czech Republic to analyze different levels of government, namely national, regional and local levels. They analyzed some specific regional differences as well. They found that in all levels political institutions are affected by both the cultural environment and the institutional performance.

Lühiste (2006) also reached to the same conclusion for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Here different levels of government are not analyzed but in general the two theories of institutional trust (the cultural and performance explanation) are considered. Also, the effects of party preference, ethnicity, and socio-demographic factors are controlled. The results indicate that people are affected both by the trust to other individuals and their belief on the well-functioning of economic and the political system.

Karim (2012) analyzed the trust in modern and traditional political institutions in Africa. He showed that trust in both kinds of institutions go in the same direction. Further he determined that the trust in both kinds of institutions are affected by perception of state legitimacy, satisfaction with democracy and interpersonal trust. Also, he indicated that the individual perceptions not the external factors are the real predictors of trust in both political institutions.

Vladimir, Shlapentokh (2006) analyzed the Russians attitudes toward their social institutions and showed that the trust in Russia is the lowest in the world. There is mistrust to almost all social institutions in the country with political institutions coming first. In fact, most political institutions are in a 10 to 30 percent confidence level or lower and no one is trusted by more than 40 to 50 percent of the nation.

Taşpınar and Şahin (2015) concentrated on the mutuality of trust, meaning that not only the trust of individuals to the institutions but also the trust of public employees in citizens matters. Seligman (1997) points out that in order to construct a long range social order and continuity of social frameworks of interaction necessitates reliance on stable relations of mutual trust between social actors.

Arnold et.al (2012) made a cross-country analysis of the trust in the institutions of the European Union. They showed that individuals evaluate the institutions as a hole instead of evaluating them separately and the trust is mostly depended on the individual-level predictors. Therefore, there are different attitudes in different countries. The level of trust is directly affected by the differences between countries and also it is related to the individual's socio-economic status. “People living in countries with low levels of corruption, low public expenses on welfare and high decision-making power in the European Union are less likely to trust EU institutions than people living in countries with high levels of corruption, high expenses on social spending and low decision making power.”

Caucasus countries are of special concern in this context. They are both analyzed separately and within post-communist countries. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are analyzed by different studies. Paturyan and Gevorgyan (2014) analyze the trust towards non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and self-reported volunteering in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia by using ANOVA. They concluded that in Armenia lowest

levels of trust and the highest levels of volunteering is observed. On the other hand, in Azerbaijan and Georgia are observed to be very similar.

They also included some demographic variables to their analysis. Results indicate that the socio-demographic variables influencing trust towards NGOs and self-reported volunteering differs across countries. Also, some variables appear in only some periods of time. An age-related analysis showed that Armenian youth are more likely to trust NGOs. In Azerbaijan and Georgia no universal relation can be proved but mostly higher levels of trust among youth was observed. When it comes to voluntary activities, post-communist generation is not more likely to report volunteering. Also, in all three countries, men, high income individuals and the ones with higher education are more prone to attend these activities. Settlement type has an influence on volunteering for certain time periods. In Georgia, it is observed that rural volunteering is high whereas in Azerbaijan urban volunteering is higher.

Charles (2009) also analyzed the same countries but focusing on determinants of trust in religious institutions. Results indicate that the religious practice which is measured by attendance, prayer and fasting are low in all three countries, but in Armenia and Georgia, after the army, religious institutions are the second most trusted, and they are the third most trusted in Azerbaijan. Interpersonal trust is a very important determinant of trust in religious institutions in Georgia. In Azerbaijan, the most significant factor affecting trust is residence in the capital. Education and age are significant together only in Armenia.

Matevosyan (2013), analyzed the public trust in core democratic institutions, referring to the rates of effective communication and transmission of publicly significant information in between and inside those institutions. It is asked whether an efficient transmission affect the public trust positively. Results show that there is a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between economic growth and trust in various institutions.

Sapsford and Abbott (2006), analyze the trust and confidence both between people and in institutions in eight post-communist countries (Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine). They showed that while people in general do not trust each other they trust their relatives and friends. The least confidence is observed in politicians and institutions of social control.

Mishler and Rose (2001), analyze 10 post-communist societies in Eastern and Central Europe including the former Soviet Union (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Belarus, Ukraine) to test two theories of trust, namely the cultural and institutional theories. They conclude that institutional explanations of trust come forward, and there is little support for either micro or macro-cultural explanations.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is the best method to use for analyzing the differences between the groups. When the hypothesis covers only two groups, the simple t-test in statistics is utilized. ANOVA is used when there is more than two groups. ANOVA test and the t-test is actually compare the mean of the groups and analyze whether they are statistically different from each other or not.

The fourth and last wave of European Values Survey (EVS) which is started in 1981 conducted in 2008 and covers 48 countries. 67,786 people are surveyed in total. In the survey, the questions are about the basic human values. The number of observations for Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia and Turkey is 1505, 1500, 1500 and 2384, respectively. The questions starting with "how much confidence in:" are used in our analysis to test our hypothesis. In the Survey, the questions starting from v205 to v220 is utilized in our study.

Table 1: T test results for Caucasian Countries and Turkey

	How much confidence in:	Question	Mean (g1)	Mean (g2)	Caucasus (1) and Turkey (2)
<i>First Group</i>					
	Armed Forces	v206	1.85	1.49	+
	Education System	v207	2.19	1.89	+
	Trade Unions	v209	2.74	2.59	+

	The Police	v210	2.48	1.77	+
	Parliament	v211	2.55	2.37	+
	Civil Service	v212	2.45	2.21	+
	Social Security System	v213	2.53	1.95	+
	Health Care System	v217	2.31	1.98	+
	Justice System	v218	2.62	1.87	+
<i>Second Group</i>					
	Church	v205	1.62	1.71	-
	The Press	v208	2.58	2.94	-
	European Union	v214	2.18	2.87	-
	NATO	v215	2.37	2.97	-
	United Nations Organizations	v216	2.25	2.99	-
	Major Companies	v219	2.53	2.85	-
	Environmental Organizations	v220	2.42	2.69	-
	Political Parties	v221	2.73	3.03	-
<i>Third Group</i>					
	Government	v222	2.49	2.52	x

4. RESULTS

The main hypothesis of this study is to distinguish the differences of trust towards political institutions between the Caucasian countries and Turkey. Different political institutions from armed forces to NATO are considered. The main aim is to compare four countries but before that Caucasian countries and Turkey are compared with t-test which can be seen in Table 1.

According to the test results political institutions are split into three groups. In the first group, the political institutions which the Caucasian countries have higher confidence than Turkey can be seen, in the second group vice versa. In the third group, the political institutions which both groups are not statistically different.

In the first group except the trade unions, the Caucasian countries have higher trust than Turkey to political institutions related to the government institutions such as education, healthcare, social security and justice system. Actually, it could be said that Caucasian countries have more trust on the political system than in Turkey.

In the second group, all the institutions are non-governmental institutions. Turkish people have more confidence than the Caucasian people on the non-governmental institutions. Caucasian and Turkish people have trust on government on the same average. No statistical difference is found for trust to governmental between the Caucasus countries and Turkey.

5. CONCLUSION

The main aim of this study is to compare the trust towards political institutions between the Caucasian countries (Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia) and Turkey. European Values Survey is used to test the hypothesis. According to mean comparison test (t-test) results, there is a significant difference between the two groups. The Caucasian countries have higher confidence on government institutions although in Turkey the people have higher trust on non-government institutions.

The main goal is to compare the four countries (Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia and Turkey) according to trust towards political institutions with ANOVA test. In this study, the preliminary results of the Caucasian countries and Turkey with t-test are shown. For further analysis, the ANOVA test will be done for four countries.

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