

- I Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
epreis1@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8985-005X>
- II Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada, Brasília, DF, Brasil
felixlopez@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4725-4473>

Elisa P. Reis^I
Felix Garcia Lopez^{II}

SOCIAL TRUST, INEQUALITY, AND STATE INSTITUTIONS IN BRAZIL *

INTRODUCTION

How does interpersonal trust relate to trust in public institutions, people's willingness to contribute to redistributive actions, and the strong bonds of social cohesion in society? Deciphering the foundations of society is a long-standing concern of Philosophy and the Social Sciences. What holds human groups together? What underlies solidarity between people? How social cohesion is constituted and how to preserve it are issues continually reformulated to contemplate the parameters and challenges of each era. Reflections on such questions proposed by Töennies, Tocqueville, Durkheim, and Simmel have become canonical because they continue to inspire us to think about our present.

Despite different premises and interpretations, these authors assumed a discontinuity between the past and the present, arguing that the traditional foundations of sociability had given way to new justifications and mechanisms for maintaining social cohesion. This common starting point arose out of a shared perplexity regarding the radical transformations observed both in the forms of production and in the ways of seeing and thinking about the world.

A perplexity similar to the one we just mentioned seems to take place today. When faced with global challenges such as environmental degradation, public health issues, technology-driven disruptions in the labor market, and growing inequality, we must ask ourselves how societies can be strengthened to address these issues. Not that cohesion and solidarity¹ had at some point ceased to be relevant to societies; rather, given the risks highlighted in the present-day, the political and cultural substrate gives it a new meaning.

What factors could strengthen cohesion, making societies better able to face the problems putting them at risk? Several approaches have sought answers to this question (Fonseca et al., 2018). Our purpose is not that ambitious. Our discussion focuses on examining a key ingredient in building social cohesion: social trust (Chan & Chan, 2006). There is growing acknowledgment that higher levels of social trust contribute to increasing social well-being and the chances of collective action leading to greater social progress (Nannestad, 2008).

As Holmberg & Rothstein (2017: 1) state:

Without trust, we would not leave our children at daycare centers, eat food prepared by strangers at restaurants, or deposit our money in banks. Without trust, many of us would be armed, constantly looking anxiously back over our shoulders. Trust makes everything more reliable and safer in a society. Things run more smoothly, and efficiently, and many decisions can be taken faster because complicated legal procedures are not needed for securing contracts and cooperation. If most people are seen as trustworthy, less doors need to be locked and less lawyers are needed.

As the expression canonized by the Scandinavia Forum of Ministers goes, the trust professed by the citizens of those countries constitutes “the Nordic gold.” Although the metaphor was used to highlight the precious contribution of this characteristic to the functioning of those societies, it unveiled the fact that, except for the Nordic countries, social trust has been decreasing worldwide, as evidenced by compared surveys such as the World Values Survey and the Latinobarómetro (DESA & Perry, 2021). As such, a rare and precious metal such as gold fits well with the metaphor applied to the Scandinavian countries. How can we explain this growing lack of trust and what instruments could contribute to reversing this trend? Among the recurrent explanatory hypotheses, a few stand out: the growing social, economic, and intranational political inequality observed in recent decades, the radical transformations in the labor market, international migratory flows, the strengthening of identity loyalties and social cleavages (Chan & Chan, 2006; Gidron & Hall, 2020; Sachweh, 2020).

Within this debate, Brazil occupies a significant position as the country has lived for decades with remarkably low levels of social trust, even when compared to its Latin American neighbors. Exploring this feature of Brazilian society allows us to engage in a dialogue with competing theoretical arguments about the underlying reasons for varying degrees of social trust in contemporary societies. Thus, our analysis proposes interpretations for the persistence of such low levels of trust, in dialogue with the different theoretical perspectives.

The reflection consists of seven short sections, apart from this introduction. Section two looks at the status of social trust in Brazil based on survey data. Section three summarizes the main approaches to the explanatory

factors for the varying levels of social trust in national societies, prioritizing two analytical perspectives: the psycho-cultural and the institutional. Section four details, in conversation with the institutional perspective, aspects of Brazilians' trust in particular institutions. In section five we address the relation between perceived corruption and social trust and, in section six, how trust and inequality can be related. Section seven proposes a new understanding of Brazilians' low trust levels, resorting to the concept of social consciousness introduced by De Swaan (1988). Finally, we offer a synthetic conclusion to the discussion.

TRUST AND SOCIAL COHESION IN BRAZIL AND LATIN AMERICA

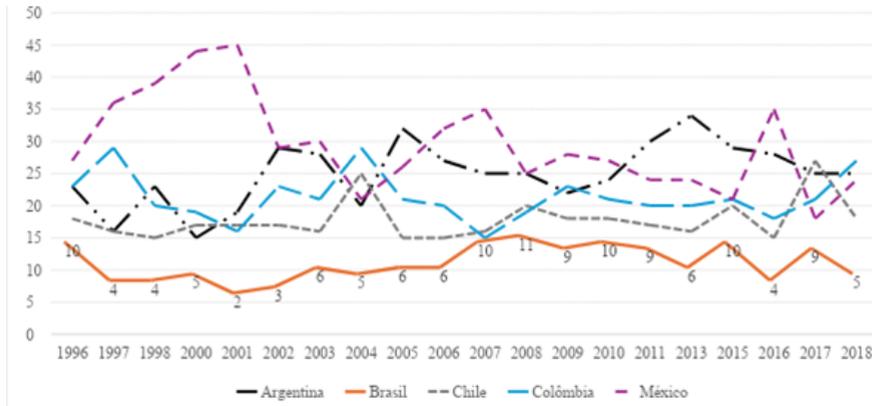
Analysis about the conditioning factors of social trust periodically emerge when societies face challenges or threats to the stability of desired normative standards. Among the factors eliciting the discussion is the decline in social trust worldwide, aggravating an already worrying situation. The World Values Survey (WVS) reports low levels of trust for most of the countries it examines, excepting northern European countries which are significantly above average. In only nine of the 77 countries that comprise the sixth wave of the WVS, over 50% of the population agree with the statement 'most people can be trusted.' Seven of these nine countries are among the most consolidated world democracies and none of them are new democracies. Countries with more established democracies show an average level of social trust of 46%, significantly higher than the 23% corresponding to new democracies and authoritarian countries (Holmberg & Rothstein, 2017).

Sociodemographic aspects do little to clarify this phenomenon. For the total number of countries included in Holmberg & Rothstein's study, differences by age or gender explains only 5% of the variations, although this percentage increases in countries with consolidated democracy. The level of trust among the most educated is 8% higher, although the difference reaches 23% in the 15 countries with more stable democracies. Overall, we find higher levels of trust in people with higher schooling levels, stable jobs, and good health (Holmberg & Rothstein, 2017: 2).

Our initial purpose is to map how Brazilians' social and institutional trust have evolved in the recent past. Thus, it is important to situate this evolution in a comparative perspective, which is why we also examine such trajectory in other Latin American societies.

Trust among Brazilians is noticeably low. In 20 years of *Latinobarómetro*, agreement with the statement 'most people are trustworthy' averaged 7% in Brazil, a percentage much lower than in countries such as Argentina (25%), Chile (18%), Colombia (21%) and Mexico (29%) (Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Degree of social trust in Latin American countries (1996-2018)



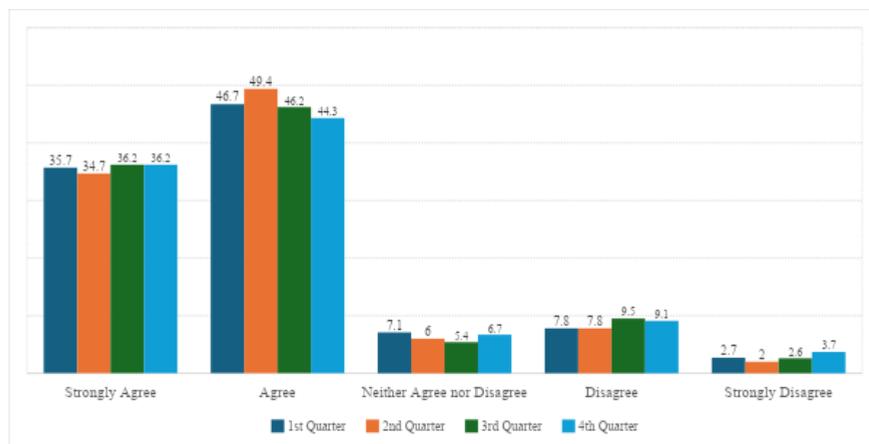
Source: Latinobarómetro. Responses to the question: Speaking in general terms, would you say that most people are trustable, or would you rather say that one is never sufficiently cautious when dealing with others?

The graph draws attention to two important facts. First, countries can experience sharp variations in social trust, like Mexico in the 2000s. We can speculate that such changes are not random or fortuitous. Second, when comparing countries, we see that the percentages can differ between them even at the intra-regional level, as the WVS has shown for Europe. When comparing brackets in Figure 1, Brazil’s consistently low trust levels call attention. Following a sharp drop in 1996, trust levels remained below 10% until the mid-2000s, when, in the next four survey editions, the values stabilized in this range. The levels recorded up to 2018 present an oscillation that might mirror the political, economic, and institutional instability of the period. It is worth investigating whether the contexts of both periods of growth in trust have anything in common. In 1996, the country had just overcome inflation, thus increasing well-being for the poorest and the feeling of well-being in the entire population. The situation post-2003, during the Workers’ Party administration, was marked by a clear effort to promote social inclusion while the country resumed economic growth.

The low levels of trust among Brazilians are homogeneously distributed between income strata and increase among people with higher schooling levels. Looking at quartiles of per capita family income, the difference in the degrees of agreement or disagreement, even when aggregated, is only 3% (Figure 2).

No substantial variation is found across the five Brazilian regions, except for the clear lower level of interpersonal distrust observed in the South. There, agreement with the statement expressing high suspicion towards strangers drops to 67%, whereas it reaches 80% or more in the other regions of the country.

Figure 2 – Agreement with the statement about personal trust among Brazilians, by quartiles of family income per capita (2012)



Source: Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (IPEA), 2012. N = 3.733.

The global trend of declining levels of trust, and the abysmal low trust levels in countries like Brazil, raise questions about the possible causes. These findings also raise concerns about issues related to cohesion, social inequalities, and democratic stability. Despite the controversial causal direction between social trust and these three measurements (Stolle & Hooghe, 2003; Nannestad, 2008), available evidence points to a strong association between them. In the case of Brazil, persistently low levels of trust suggest that the cement of social cohesion is fragile. One can reasonably assume that the political polarization of recent years, the long economic stagnation, and the increasing levels of inequality and poverty have aggravated this weakness. As such, identifying which variables affect the degrees of trust is also a strategic resource to advance knowledge on the problems that affect the fundamentals of sociability and the rules of political coexistence.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TRUST ANALYSIS

The declining levels of trust has challenged analysts to search for its causes. Literature on the topic can be grouped into four analytical perspectives (Nannestad, 2008): i) approaches focused on the role of participation in voluntary associations, ii) approaches focused on cultural and evaluative dimensions, such as religious traditions, patterns of collectively rooted socialization and its inter-temporal reproduction, iii) approaches centered on the performance of public institutions and, more recently, iv) approaches based on the analysis of social heterogeneity, in particular ethnic and linguistic ones². In this article,

we discuss i, ii, and iii, since the fourth approach is a less salient dimension in Brazil. Moreover, we group these three approaches into two broad analytical perspectives given that i and ii often overlap. In fact, their analytical differences are frequently absent in empirical analyses, merging the role of voluntary associations and the dimensions of an associative culture.

The first perspective considered here (approaches i and ii) is labeled 'cultural-associative.' It argues that the vectors of trust must be pursued in the psychocultural sphere. Some identify this approach with a Tocquevillian matrix, emphasizing that individuals' attitudes, beliefs, and values—the "habits of the heart," as Tocqueville characterizes them—would be the defining raw material for the degree of social trust prevailing in a society.

This perspective has been revived since the 1990s, particularly in association with the growing interest in civil society organizations as a source of trust diffusion. This interest arose, on the one hand, out of the activism carried out by these organizations and social movements, which overtly worked to overthrow communist regimes in Eastern Europe and dictatorships in Latin America. On the other, the motivation sprang from the neoliberal impulse to legitimize the option of delegating to non-state organizations the responsibility for conducting policies, a responsibility previously exclusively or predominantly supported and implemented by the State. The underlying assumption was that associative initiatives and its institutional form, civil society organizations, would be essential to provide the substrate in which norms of social reciprocity develop, fostering people's own willingness towards civic engagement (Putnam, 1993; Stolle & Hooghe, 2003).

The second analytical perspective considered (approach iii) assumes the performance of public institutions as the key ingredient to conform expectations about individual's behavior and practices. It argues that high-quality public institutions constitute the bases on which individuals develop trust in the functioning of society and in each other's behavior (Rothstein & Teorell, 2008; Kumlin & Rothstein, 2005; Soss, 1999).

Both theoretical approaches seek to identify explaining factors to variations in levels of trust. Broadly speaking, the cultural-associative perspective seeks explanations in cultural dimensions that anchor beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors. Putnam's early elaborations on social capital (an interchangeable term for social solidarity or social trust), for example, sees in very remote regional peculiarities the key to contrasting solidarity levels between Southern and Northern Italy. In his perspective, medieval associative practices fostered traditions of solidarity that, once established, would explain the greater economic development of contemporary Northern Italy. Likewise, when discussing the decline of associative practices in present US, he suggests that the diffusion of civic-solidarity values via socialization, values inherent to voluntary associations, would be instrumental to increase levels of trust and social solidarity (Putnam & Garrett, 2020).

The institutional perspective, in turn, prioritizes the performance of public organizations, whose ability to produce results and deliver quality services determines their legitimacy and predictability, which are responsible for the degree of trust they inspire. Institutional approaches assume that trust reflects the political context and the characteristics observed in public institutions. Particularly relevant are those institutions charged with putting into practice rights and materializing the principle of equality between individuals, such as judicial, public security and administrative institutions, particularly those responsible for implementing welfare policy measures. In practice, these are organizations whose performance is perceived as reliable, law abiding, and following isonomic principles. Organizations that are staffed with individuals who exercise their duty honestly, employ fair criteria, and exercise authority impartially when designing and implementing policies. In short, the key point for this approach is that the State and the public sector are the most relevant dimensions for identifying sources of social trust.

For the institutional perspective, trust and institutional performance are associated in the citizens' view either through their experiences interacting with state bureaucracy, or in how they interpret messages received in public interactions or in the media about the performance of state agents. An empirical experiment on emigrants' assessments and on the mechanism that affects behavioral change showed that immigrants who lost trust in public health service workers or in police officers generalized this mistrust to include the citizens of that country (Nannestad et al., 2014; Rothstein & Eek, 2009). Expressing this mechanism in generic terms, Charron & Rothstein (2017: 6) state:

[...] since people cannot really know if 'most people' in an unknown society can be trusted, they have to use some kind of shortcut or heuristic to determine how much to trust. Thus, people make inferences from the behavior of public officials when forming beliefs about to what extent people in a society can be trusted. Moreover, if local public officials are known to be dishonest, corrupt, discriminatory, or unfair, many people will make a second inference—namely, that in order to get by in a society with dishonest public officials, ordinary people also have to engage in various forms of dishonest behavior (corruption, nepotism, favoritism) and because of this they cannot be trusted.

Accordingly, when public authority representatives offer fair treatment, charge taxes with equitable standards and methods, and provide services impersonally, the latent effect of spreading signals strengthens generalized interpersonal trust. In other words, the adequate performance of institutional officers (police staff, educational providers, etc.) set public examples that directly or indirectly inform expectations about what to expect from all citizens.

From the institutional perspective, therefore, trust varies according to shared contextual experiences, not due to the inherent characteristic of people nor due to an indelible cultural imprint. Variations in levels of social

trust over time and space reflect people's actual experiences, particularly those emerging from interactions with public organizations (Kumlin, 2004; Kumlin & Rothstein, 2005; Metter, 2002; Soss, 1999). Such an understanding does not mean that collective trust is a pliable value that changes in the short term; sharp transformations take generations (Stolle & Hooghe, 2003; Uslaner, 2003). Also noteworthy are the efforts of sociologists like Giddens to understand the interweaving of interpersonal and institutional trust. The authors' concept of facework (1984; 1994), for example, seeks to understand how trust between people is connected to institutional trust, as well as to the 'institutional system' at large. While this paper does not discuss his work, it has been particularly relevant for neo-institutionalists (Kroeger, 2017; Mollering, 2005).

Both analytical perspectives capture relevant dimensions of the prevailing degrees of trust in a society. In the Tocquevillian tradition, emphasis is given to associative and participatory practices, as they create institutionalized routines that ensure the continuity of virtuous practices, cementing trust. For institutionalists, institutional design, established ways of functioning, and compliance rules are crucial aspects that significantly affect the actions and reactions of both public agents and citizens subordinated to public organizations (Kumlin, 2004; Moisés, 2010). The option for one analytical perspective or another answers both to theoretical preferences and to the analyst's purposes.

In Brazil, the debate on social and institutional trust, as well as their relationship with the aforementioned perspectives has received relevant contributions over the last two decades, including those compiled in Moisés (2010) or Moisés & Meneguello (2013). These studies have usually emphasized the relationship between the legitimacy of democracy and the performance of political institutions (see Moisés, 2013, chapters 1 and 3; and 2010, chapters 2 and 3); and the mechanisms behind the low levels of trust in core institutions, such as the police (Lopes, 2013), that hinder the consolidation of the rule of law.

In this paper, we focus not on the adherence to democracy, but rather on the role public institutions play in creating social trust. We primarily explore specific institutions and bureaucracies rather than macro-political institutions such as legislatures, political parties, or regime types.

TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL TRUST

If public institutions can affect collective trust, what types of institutions play this role and why? It seems relevant to distinguish between representative institutions that openly stand for specific interests, such as legislative bodies, parties, and unions, and institutions whose parameters must include neutrality, justice, and impartiality. The latter, by definition, are expected to enforce the rule of law and to confirm expectations of formal equality and fair treatment, as with judicial, security and administrative institutions³.

Based on the World Value Survey, a factor analysis of the relations between social trust and trust in institutions in 56 countries effectively identifies three groups of organizations: a) institutions that address specific interests; b) neutral institutions that aim to ensure order; and c) accountability institutions such as the press. High association (.48) is observed between trust in other people and trust in institutions aimed at ensuring the impartial and neutral application of norms, such as legal and administrative institutions. In contrast, trust and partisan institutions have a low association (-.13) (Rothstein & Stolle, 2008: 449).

Procedural justice, the adoption of neutral and fair criteria in conducting administrative proceedings, plays a central role regarding people's propensity to cooperate with each other (Cremer et al., 2005). Fair and correct procedures suggest to members of a community that they are respected and valued, encouraging individuals' integration into communities and their willingness to cooperation.

Expressed in more abstract terms, such institutions act to consolidate normative frameworks guiding collective perceptions. Procedural justice entails the capacity to subject all to the rule of law and to punish opportunistic or predatory behavior. Institutions that reduce bureaucrats' discretion and intervention in determining the beneficiaries of public policies, institutions whose rules of eligibility to rights are simpler, clearer, more transparent, and effective, produce positive outcomes in citizen's perception (Kidd, 2020). Lopes (2013) provides suggestive evidence supporting this argument for the Brazilian case: "as people's perception that the police relate to citizens unfairly, the chances of them distrusting the police increase" while contextual, cultural, or sociodemographic variables "are not significant" (Lopes, 2013: 1 331)⁴.

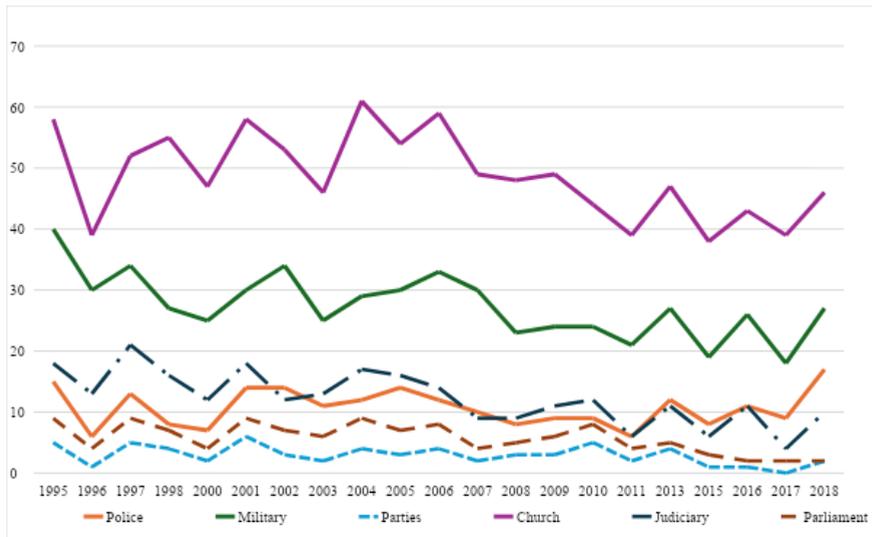
Conversely, where law and order institutions and administration institutions are distrusted, one expects social trust also to be low. What can we say about the connection between people's perception of such institutions and interpersonal trust in Brazil? Empirical evidence suggests that trust in 'law and order' institutions is low, although not as low as that of trust in representative political institutions (parliament and political parties) or in institutions of democratic control, such as the media.

The percentage of Brazilians who, on average, say they have 'high trust in the police' is 11%, whereas 27% claim to not trust the institution⁵. Concerning the Judiciary, the percentage of trust and distrust is 12% and 22%, respectively; trust in political-representative institutions is even lower. On average, 'high trust in political parties' is expressed by only 3%, whereas 50% say they have no trust at all.

Although the Armed Forces and the Church are not listed as organizations directly related to aspects of social trust, it is worth noting that even within this declining trend in the period observed, these institutions enjoy the greatest institutional trust among Brazilians. As for trust in public bureaucracy (civil

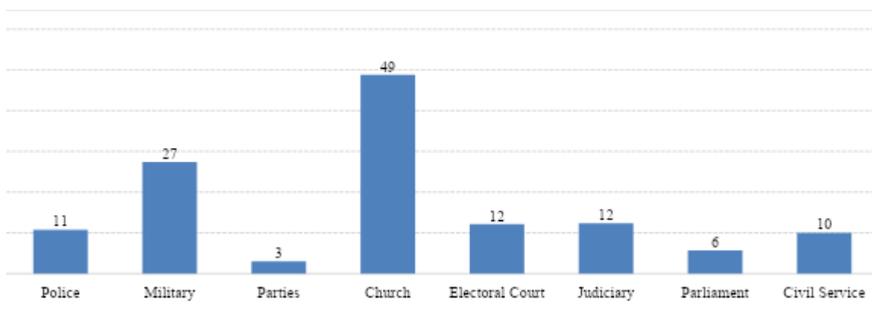
services), considering the three decades of data from Latinobarómetro, trust is high for only 10% of respondents, whereas those who declare not having ‘any trust’ make up 20% of the total. Trust in bureaucracy, a good proxy for people’s perception of street-level bureaucracy which delivers services directly to citizens, has declined over time dropping from 13% in 1989 to 8% in 2020.

Figure 3 – Brazil - % of people who trust a lot, by selected institutions (1995-2018)



Source: Latinobarómetro, 2020. Percentages correspond to the total number of people who indicated ‘to trust a lot’ in responding the following question: “Please, look at this card and tell me how much trust you have in each of the groups, institutions or persons mentioned in the list. Would you say that you have much, some, little or no trust in each one of them?”

Figure 4 – Brazil - Average percentage of people who trust a lot, by selected institutions (1995-2018)



Source: Prepared by the authors, based on data from Latinobarómetro.

Following Rothstein & Stolle (2008), who explored how individual experiences relate to generalized trust resorting to a multivariate model to analyze whether trust in institutions categorized as 'order' affects trust, we applied a similar model to explore results from Latin American countries, including Brazil. Similarly, we use potentially relevant variables in different theoretical models to search for the sources of trust. These include sociodemographic variables (age, education, marital status, and employment status), city size, trust in law and order institutions, trust in political institutions, and people's participation in voluntary associations. Detailed data and results can be found in the appendix. Looking at the sociodemographic variables, in the case of Brazil, results show that education positively affects collective trust. Law and order institutions also positively affect trust. Looking at other Latin American countries, a positive effect exists for both schooling level and trust in political institutions. Participation in civil society organizations showed no statistically significant results in any of the models (cf. Appendix A).

While one approach favors cultural values, beliefs, and practices as measurements, and the other prefers design and institutional performance indicators, both perspectives use other variables to analyze variations in levels of trust such as perceived corruption, which we will examine in the next section.

CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND TRUST

If people distrust collective or individual actors in public positions, one could presume they might infer that members of their expanded impersonal circle, outside their strictly personal contact networks, should also not be trusted. If citizens view corrupt practices as prevailing in public institutions, they are likely to assume everyone falls in the same pattern, applying this normative parameter more broadly.

Moreover, corruption undermines the idea that public agents are impersonal and fair, which contributes to the belief that favors, bribes, and particularisms of all kinds motivate their conduct. As such, it would be logical to expect an inverse association between high levels of trust and low levels of perceived corruption, since individuals would be more likely to believe in the efficiency, fairness, and impartiality of these state organizations. Likewise, a widespread perceived corruption within administration undermines confidence in organizational impartiality and fairness. This negative assessment is even more likely among people who have witnessed corruption in their interactions with state agents (Rothstein & Stolle, 2008).

Bearing this argument in mind, we examine below empirical data on perceived corruption to assess whether our arguments converge with the Brazilian population's views on corruption, particularly in state institutions.

Perceived corruption in Brazilian public institutions has been on the rise in recent decades, with percentages varying depending on the region and income level. In 2007, 14% of the population indicated corruption as one of the major problems in the country, a percentage lower only to unemployment (20%) and violence (18%) (Schiavinatto, 2013). In 2011, another survey again showed corruption as among the top problems in Brazil (14%), behind only violence (23%) and health (22%) (IPEA, 2011; Schiavinatto, 2011). In southern Brazil, 20% of the population considered corruption the main national problem, percentage that dropped to 9% in the northeast region. While corruption appears as the main national problem for only 7% of those earning up to 4 minimum wages, this becomes the most frequent national issue in the opinion of people with an income above five minimum wages (IPEA, 2011)⁶.

More recent data portray an even more striking association between perceived political corruption and distrust in politicians and/or in the administrative apparatus. The growing relevance of this topic is certainly related to broad political corruption scandals reported daily in the news headlines, particularly since the “Car Wash”⁷ scandal and the tumultuous judicial process that followed, galvanizing enormous public attention. But this, by no means, suggests that public resources malfeasance was absent as a central topic from people’s discourse about the public sector. In the 2018 Brazilian Electoral Study (*Estudo Eleitoral Brasileiro*), 80% of those surveyed agreed to some degree that “most politicians don’t care about people” (ESEB, 2018, q402) and 81% disagreed with the statement that “most politicians are trustworthy.” Such assessments corroborate the fact that 72% point out that “politicians are the main problem in Brazil” (ESEB, 2018, q404).

The large percentage of people who evaluate politics negatively is linked to the perception that corruption is widespread in the political sphere: 90% of Brazilians considered that “bribes among politicians” were *very* or *thoroughly* widespread, and 87% considered corruption “a very serious problem,” which in the survey represented the highest scale of concern about the issue.

While seeking to capture the meaning attributed by Brazilians to corruption, we observed that 80% of the responses associated it with politics, public institutions, and politicians, while connecting reprehensible conducts with the very nature of the activities proper to specific State spheres (ESEB, 2018). Seeing corruption as inherent to government, they automatically extend this perception to state agents. Indeed, following the opinion that corruption is widespread among political actors, and by extension the government, no different perception emerges of the public administrative sector. In the 2019 edition of *Latinobarómetro*, 44% of the respondents considered that corruption among Brazilian civil servants is very widespread and 18% agreed that it is somewhat widespread⁸ (Corporación *Latinobarómetro*, 2020).

How public authorities are perceived by most Brazilians not only affects their level of social trust but also leads to a negative assessment of the demo-

cratic system. This outlook arises from the belief that economic resources, such as bribes and unregulated lobbying, influence decisions that permits such misconduct, as citizens view the representative system as favoring the “wealthy and powerful” (ESEB, 2018). Reflecting the perception of citizens that the use of such economic resources influences decisions that affect society, low trust in public authorities can lead to discrediting the political system that allows for such misdemeanors. Associating politics with selfishness and corruption further fuels the perceived unfair representation of interests. The 2018 survey reveals that 80% of Brazilians agree that “most politicians are only concerned with the interests of the rich and powerful” (ESEB, 2018, q407, q4g). This assessment erodes the legitimacy of the democratic-representative system, which has long been associated with popular discredit in the country⁹. Another issue demanding attention refers to the connection between low trust in public institutions—or in state agents—and inequality levels, as we discuss below.

INEQUALITY AND TRUST

Academic literature has frequently noted the close connection between trust levels and social inequalities. While this relation may be reciprocal, some empirical evidence indicates that it is inequality that undermines trust. As one study shows, “there is no direct effect of trust on inequality; rather, the causal direction starts with inequality” (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005). For Uslaner (2002: 3), “while trust in others does not heavily depend upon our individual experiences, it does reflect our collective experiences, especially on the linkage between our sense of optimism and the distribution of wealth in a society. As countries become more equal, they become more trusting.”

Very high levels of inequality solidify social distances and hierarchies, leaving little room for shared experiences between members of different strata, thus fostering greater distrust between them. In rigidly stratified and unequal societies, individuals’ position in the hierarchy restricts their interaction and how they perceive others, therefore limiting the notion of a “we” and contributing to diminish the capacity for wider social identification and trust (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). This observation can be indirectly supported by evidence available in sociological analysis that see the interaction between diverse groups as one of the main mechanisms for reducing stereotypes and prejudices (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Bregman, 2020: chap. 17). As high levels of inequality entail parallel living experiences and life horizons along the strata levels, extreme social distances are expected to foster distrust. However, distrust and inequality can act interactively, and one can assume that low levels of trust inhibit actions leading to lesser inequality (Putnam, 2001).

The key point to remember is that trust leads to cooperation, which facilitates collective action to solve problems. In this regard, the evidence that public institutions have a very negative assessment in Brazil outlines a

worrying scenario in which mistrust creates barriers to collective actions to mitigate social issues. Among these barriers is the perceived institutional corruption.

Corrupt practices can have a detrimental impact on the distribution of communal resources, hindering fair access to public services and rights, and contributing to the erosion of trust. This scenario is typical of what Rothstein (2018) defined as “social trap,” a situation in which widespread distrust prevents cooperation even when collective gains are envisioned (Rothstein & Teorell, 2008). This can be observed in the perceptions expressed by Brazilians. In 2011, corruption ranked third among the most mentioned factors to explain poverty in the country, behind only “lack of access to education” and “high levels of unemployment” (IPEA, 2011: 5)¹⁰. This view is even greater in the 2018 Brazilian Electoral Study, which reported a 70% agreement with the association between corruption, poverty, and inequality (ESEB, 2018).

Another negative implication of public corruption in settings that combine low levels of trust and high social inequality is the reduced support for redistributive policies. People do not trust public agents or the state’s capabilities or legitimacy to implement them. Support for higher taxation aimed at universalizing policies to mitigate inequalities is conditional on the expectation that agents will actively pursue these goals efficiently and effectively. That this expectation is absent among Brazilians is evident in people’s perceptions of poverty, inequality, and the role of the State. Below we present two paradigmatic examples of the reasoning expressed by people from different social strata.

As a member of the Brazilian elite states,

The State collects abusively, and the State machine drains these resources while the services do not reach the citizen. I would insist with anyone that we do have enough funds for health and education, but funding is not allocated accordingly [...] (Interviewee A, suppressed for anonymity).

The answer of a middle-class lawyer about ways to mitigate inequality illustrates well the connection so often found in similar surveys:

[You lessen] inequality by ensuring the fair allocation of public resources, preventing their diversion to sources other than the well-being of people living in society, guaranteeing access to basic rights, serious public institutions guaranteeing quality education, quality health, access to information, culture. If resources were managed correctly and not as a source of corruption, as a source of diversion, if it were allocated efficiently, not only without corruption, but also (without) waste, right? I think people would have more access. [...] (Access) to the services and goods they need for reducing this inequality (Interviewee B, suppressed for anonymity)¹¹.

Remarks abound in the aforementioned surveys about problems in the formulation of public policies, as well as on inefficiencies in implementing them,

coupled with references to political corruption as an obstacle to state redistributive actions. Remarks pointing to the interweaving of such problems provide a clue to understanding an apparent and recurring paradox one finds in surveys on Brazilian inequality: the widespread recognition by Brazilians that the country's levels of inequality are unacceptable, and that comprehensive state measures should be implemented to reduce them; yet such perceptions do not translate into support for broader tax collection aimed at redistribution. Citizens believe redistribution should be the initiative of public authorities, but lack confidence in the reliability and competence of state actors to achieve such goal. Remarks that new public resources would simply be lost in the "corruption drain," or that "the problem is not lack of resources, but bad management" are commonsensical formulations of widely shared views. Illustrative of this fact is that 83% of Brazilians did not trust that "tax resources are or will be well used by the State" (Latinobarómetro, 2005)¹².

This pernicious synergy between existing inequalities and lack of trust in state institutions is mediated by the perception, especially among the elites as power holders, that high levels of corruption make coordinated actions to change the status quo impossible. The resulting paralysis derives not only from the short-term interests of those in power but also from the generalized belief that a redistributive mobilization is set to fail.

After all, the willingness to contribute towards reducing inequalities by paying more taxes implicitly entails expectations based on mutual trust. First, we assume that others will pay their share and trust that the financed programs will be directed to those who are legitimately entitled to it, as well as that collection will be done without kickbacks or bribes, that is, that the resources will not flow down the "corruption drain" (Rothstein, 2018; Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005). Our discussion above suggest that Brazilians do not hold such convictions.

The arguments presented thus far could lead to the hasty conclusion that we understand the entanglement between Brazil's low levels of trust and acute inequality as some sort of fatalistic trap. But we do not see the country's predicament as such. The following section looks at the issue from another angle, exploring the possibility to expand the levels of trust and the sense of social interdependence that affect how status quo is understood and its prospects for change.

TRUST AND SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Brazilians' low level of trust in people and institutions raises questions about their implications for society. Although further research is needed to provide additional analysis, we should explore arguments that could suggest new paths of investigation. In this regard, introducing the notion of social consciousness, understood not as philanthropic predisposition but in De Swaan's

(1988) analytical terms, might be useful. The concept expresses the confluence of three evaluative assessments: (a) a perception of interdependence between social activities, including the possibility of potential positive or negative externalities; (b) a sense of self-responsibility, that is, one's perceived capacity to act; and (c) the identification of real opportunities to change a situation perceived as a threat, or likely to expand existing social benefits.

Since interpersonal trust is part of a broader range of variables that affects social cohesion (Sage, 2013, Chan & Chan, 2006) and interacts with levels of social inequality (Uslaner, 2002, Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009; Kidd et al., 2020), the difficulties in strengthening social consciousness, as defined above, are considerable in contemporary Brazil. Acute inequalities solidify social distances, erect rigid borders in everyday life, and obscure an accurate perception of social interdependence. For the same reasons, it is unlikely that people, particularly those that control material or symbolic power, see themselves as actors directly involved in solving collective problems. Real opportunities to change a social situation might be detected, but without the conjunction of the two previous conditions, such opportunities are wasted.

In other words, the absence of a real perceived interdependence and self-responsibility suggests that the levels of social cohesion in Brazilian society are low. Although one cannot expect readymade recipes to reverse this situation, it would also be incorrect to suggest that Brazil is condemned to perpetuate the status quo. Since public policy strategies are basic resources that societies count on to implement changes, asking what paths could lead to changes that favor increased social trust and social cohesion is warranted.

Academic literature in Brazil has focused predominantly on psychocultural aspects related to issues arising from low levels of trust and social cohesion. However, the focus on institutional arrangements is a crucial resource in addressing such problems. As values do not reproduce without the practices and institutions that support them, it is at the institutional level that one can build arrangements for generating greater social consciousness. The challenge will need to involve arrangements that incorporate instruments and mechanisms to improve public sector quality and reduce corrupt practices to reverse the socially perceived pervasiveness of corruption in the state apparatus. Such institutional strategies can be decisive in overcoming historically low patterns of social trust.

Low corruption levels and high institutional quality are important venues for fostering widespread trust (Charron & Rothstein, 2017: 18). Generalized trust is influenced by high-quality government institutions (Stolle, 2003). As Bicchieri & Xiao (2009) show, compliance with norms is greater when normative and empirical expectations converge. If normatively people cherish a rule but empirically that rule is not followed, compliance becomes more costly. In such a scenario, people's expectations about others' behavior are decisive in defining their own behavior. If I see my neighbors recycling garbage, I empirically experience that

this practice has broad regulatory support and believe people expect me to follow it, thus there is a high probability that I will do so. Normative expectation condemns corruption, but this malfeasance is widespread in practice. This conflict of expectations, in the end, allows reprehensible behavior to prevail (Bicchieri & Xiao, 2009: 202).

The above observations highlight a tangible facet of the dilemma facing Brazil: the need to establish high-quality public institutions. This means creating institutions that are both efficient and impartial in delivering services, and that serve as normative models, thereby fostering greater levels of social trust. Political institutions are organizations that disseminate normative frameworks to citizens and shape their perceptions of desirable behavior (You, 2018; Rothstein, 1998).

It therefore has an element associated with reciprocity, which is an essential motivator of human behavior (Bicchieri, 2006; Fehr & Fischbacher, 2005). People act based on assessments of the future, guided by expectations of what others will do, and then update their perceptions based on new information. On the one hand, this form of understanding reduces the determinism of tradition and the weight of reproducing old collective values. On the other, it increases the strategic importance institutional transformations can play in shaping values and perceptions based on everyday experiences, which are updated daily. In this regard, we can approach the problems of social trust and solidarity from a more dynamic perspective, according to which people reconstruct their perceptions based on what they live and experience in their interactions with others, rather than rigidly adhering to old-established cultural norms or trying to predict immediate individual advantages (Rothstein, 2017).

The assumption that individuals only engage in public activities that produce collective well-being when they see an opportunity for direct personal benefits does not always prove true. People may participate when convinced that actions are fair, that others will be cooperative, and that opportunistic behavior is residual. Attitudes and opinions in favor of taxation and redistribution increase when there is a greater perception that public institutions are impartial and efficient and when the “quality of government” is greater (Svallfors, 2013).

This argument aligns with the proposition that changes in institutional design can contribute to creating egalitarian, fair, and efficient organizations. This becomes feasible when impartial and effective institutions establish a kind of feedback mechanism between principles considered fair. Conversely, societies that perceive unfair practices (e.g., corruption) as everyday events tend to be less supportive of the idea that the State is the most suitable actor to reduce social injustice, even though they may agree with the goal itself (Rothstein, 2017: 311).

Brazil has a vicious cycle of low trust in public institutions and extreme distrust among people, which hinders the development of broader social so-

lidity. As pointed out, the relations between trust and institutional performance are confirmed by many survey studies which find ample evidence of people's explicit distrust of state and bureaucratic agents.

The recurrent protests of the Brazilian middle and upper classes over the incongruity between high taxes and the low quality of public services offered—regardless of the relation between this shared belief and reality—are interpreted as a refusal to contribute to the costs of implementing or expanding such services. However, we can also assume that such a refusal expresses a rejection of institutions that deliver poor services or function with poor efficiency and quality. Consolidating institutional practices with clear rules and transparent decisions, free from nepotism, clientelism and corruption, engenders institutional trust, which spreads throughout the social fabric. Designing appropriate institutions to implement policies is essential in trying to break this vicious circle. In short, investing in paths to increase generalized trust, beginning with institutional strategies, can start a virtuous circle that by raising trust levels also translates into greater support for redistribution, fostering social cohesion and solidarity (Kidd et al., 2020; Rothstein et al., 2012).

CONCLUSIONS

Social trust is not something that can be implemented by fiat; rather, it grows from fair, transparent, and honest systems. When discussing the sources of trust and strategies to expand it, one must look as much to the State as to civil society. Based on this understanding, dialoguing with the available literature, and looking into primary or secondary empirical data, we have pointed to aspects that favor a state-centered approach to broaden understanding of how the low trust levels of Brazilians affect the extremely high levels of social inequality and hinder social cohesion.

First, we presented data on the low levels of both interpersonal trust and trust in key public institutions, such as political, judicial, police, and administrative organizations. We argued that citizens' assessments of such institutions are pivotal to understanding problems of collective trust.

Next, we suggested that perceived corruption and inefficient public institutions also contribute to the widespread distrust members of society have of others. Moreover, we argued that both interpersonal and institutional perceptions inform distrust in public authorities to conduct redistributive policies, despite agreement on the need to implement them. For instance, the willingness to contribute towards reducing inequalities by paying more taxes implicitly involves assumptions based both on mutual trust and trust in public organizations, which are far from popular among Brazilians.

Corruption, mistrust and inequality combined inhibit the development of a social consciousness (De Swaan, 1988), which expresses the confluence of three evaluative dimensions: (a) perception of interdependence between

social activities, including the identification of positive or negative externalities; (b) self-responsibility, that is, one's perceived capacity to act; and (c) identification of real opportunities either to avoid a perceived threat, or to provide for accrued social benefits.

In our perspective, however, it is at the institutional level and particularly in the practices within public institutions that lies a promising path to build arrangements conducive to greater social consciousness. Arrangements that incorporate instruments to improve public sector quality and practices that confront the perceived corruption within the state apparatus can be decisive in reversing historically low patterns of trust and social cohesion. A comprehensive and time-consuming challenge, but certainly worth the effort to contradict the widespread view that Brazilian society is entangled in values and cognitions destined to perpetuate themselves, regardless of strategic efforts to match opportune conditions and agency.

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Elisa P. Reis is professor of Political Sociology at the Graduate Program in Sociology and Anthropology, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, and chair of the Interdisciplinary Center for Studies on Inequality (NIED). She holds a PhD in Political Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Active member of the International Panel on Social Progress (www.ipsp.org), she is co-author of the IPSP book (published in several languages): *A Manifesto for Social Progress: Ideas for a Better Society [Um manifesto pelo progresso social: ideias para uma sociedade melhor]* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 2022). With Felix Lopez she published “Clash Between Science and Politics: The Covid-19 Pandemic in Brazil” (*Social Research Quarterly*, v. 90, n. 1, p 53-74, Spring 2023).

Felix Garcia Lopez is senior researcher at the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), professor at the Brazilian Institute of Education, Development and Research (IDP) and member of the Interdisciplinary Center for Inequality Studies (NIED/UFRJ). He holds a PhD in Sociology (2005). His publications discuss the politicization of top-level bureaucracies in Brazil, and social perceptions on inequality. ‘He co-edited the book *Trajectories of Bureaucracy in the [Brazilian] New Republic: Heterogeneities and Inequalities (1985-2020)* [*Trajetórias da burocracia na Nova República: heterogeneidades, desigualdades e perspectivas (1985-2020)*] (Brasília, DF: IPEA, 2023).

NOTES

- * A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the Interdisciplinary Network of Studies on Inequality seminar (NIED/UFRJ), at IPEA's Department of Studies on State, Institutions, and Democracy seminar, and at the VII International Seminar of the Center for Conflict and Social Cohesion (Coes), in Chile. We thank the participants for their suggestions. We also thank Acir Almeida, Raquel Lima, Valdir Melo, Carla Bezerra, Marco Natalino, and Zairo Cheibub for their comments and Andre Vieira for research assistance. Any omissions or errors in the text are our sole responsibility. Elisa Reis acknowledges the grants received from the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), and from the Rio de Janeiro Research Foundation (FAPERJ).
- 1 Solidarity is understood as the ability to care for others, even when interpersonal interests conflict. Solidarity and cohesion comprise essential dimensions of the moral community that defines, from an individual point of view, belonging to a collectivity (Sztompka, 2000: 5). Social trust largely reflects a sense of solidarity because it expresses the perception that the community shares a common fate and, therefore, "there is a responsibility to provide possibilities for those with fewer resources." (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2004: 42; Delhey & Newton, 2004.)
 - 2 According to this fourth theoretical perspective, any social variable that increases the social distance between citizens in a country—such as income inequality or religious cleavages—negatively affects generalized trust. The theory therefore presumes ethnic heterogeneity to have a negative impact on generalized trust by fostering intraethnic/bonding trust in individuals to the detriment of interethnic, generalized/bridging trust (Nannestad, 2008, p. 426).
 - 3 As observed by Rothstein & Stollen (2008), "[...] compared with other institutions within the arena of public policy, the courts, the police, and the other legal institutions of the state have a special task, namely, to detect and punish people who, in game-theory parlance, use opportunistic strategies [...]."
 - 4 According to Lopes, "trust in police is a function of public expectations connected to the results of this institution's work against crime and, primarily, to the way in which

- police officers deal with citizens and exercise their authority” (2013: 332).
- 5 The percentage of people who answered ‘no trust at all’ remained much higher than that of respondents indicating a lot of trust, except for the latest 2018 edition. One possible reason for this exception could be that the highly visible anti-corruption activities of the Federal Police at the time galvanized public attention, perhaps contributing to an increase in law and order institution.
 - 6 It is expected for corruption to rank lower among people with lower income, for whom material urgencies, often directly related to survival, such as income and employment, are more pressing.
 - 7 Operation Car Wash is a large-scale corruption investigation and prosecution in Brazil that began in 2014. It has since become one of the largest and most complex corruption investigations worldwide. The operation involved allegations of bribery, money laundering, and other illegal activities involving executives of Brazil’s state-owned company Petrobras, as well as politicians and businesspeople.
 - 8 The question posed was: “Considering your own experience or what you have heard from others about civil servants, would you say that there is widespread corruption among public servants? “... somewhat spread?” The sample comprised 1498 individuals.
 - 9 As noted in Bartels (2018), and in Page, Bartels & Seawright (2013), support for democracy has declined globally. Also, the higher the levels of inequality in the distribution of resources, the lower is people’s satisfaction with democracy (Saxton, 2021).
 - 10 Note the income cleavage: 18% of respondents with income above 5 minimum wages associate corruption with poverty, a percentage that drops to 10% among those with a lower income.
 - 11 Respondent A’s quote was taken from a database of 180 interviews with members of the business, political and bureaucratic elite. Quote from interviewee B was extracted from a database of 632 interviews with Brazilians in different social classes. The projects were conducted in different years and with different objectives, but both partly address issues related to the causes and consequences of social inequalities.

- 12 The fact that Brazilians do not consider market initiatives capable of promoting generalized development is another way to attribute to the State an irreplaceable, albeit ineffective, role in redistribution.
- 13 V-DEM – Varieties of Democracy Dataset. Available at <https://www.v-dem.net/vdemds.html>.
- 14 World Bank (2020). *Worldwide Governance Indicators*. Available at <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/worldwide-governance-indicators>. Accessed on 10 Feb. 2022.

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SOCIAL TRUST, INEQUALITY, AND STATE INSTITUTIONS IN BRAZIL

Abstract

How does interpersonal trust relate to trust in public institutions, people's willingness to contribute to redistributive actions, and the strong bonds of social cohesion in society? This article presents how Brazilians' trust in others and in various state institutions has varied since the 1990s and how the interaction between interpersonal and institutional trust affects social cohesion. Also, we examine how widespread social perceptions of institutional corruption and different levels of inequality affect the levels of interpersonal social. Using the analytical concept of social responsibility, we argue strategies centered on the design and performance of public institutions contribute to breaking the vicious circle of lack of trust and its social costs. We used descriptive statistics and regression analysis based on data extracted from the Latinobarómetro World Values Survey as well as interview data with different social classes in Brazil.

Keywords

Social trust;
Institutional trust;
Social inequalities;
Corruption;
State in Brazil.

CONFIANÇA SOCIAL, DESIGUALDADE E INSTITUIÇÕES ESTATAIS NO BRASIL

Resumo

Como a confiança interpessoal se relaciona com a confiança nas instituições públicas, a disposição das pessoas em contribuir para ações redistributivas e os fortes laços de coesão social? Este artigo apresenta como a confiança entre os brasileiros e em várias instituições estatais tem variado desde a década de 1990, e como a interação entre a confiança nas instituições e a confiança interpessoal afeta a coesão social. Além disso, examinamos como as percepções sociais generalizadas de corrupção institucional e diferentes níveis de desigualdade afetam os níveis de confiança social. Utilizando o conceito analítico de responsabilidade social, argumentamos que estratégias centradas no desenho e atuação de instituições públicas contribuem para quebrar o círculo vicioso da falta de confiança e seus custos sociais. Utilizamos estatística descritiva e análise de regressão com base nos dados extraídos do Latinobarómetro World Values Survey, bem como dados de entrevistas com pessoas de diferentes classes sociais do Brasil.

Palavras-chave

Confiança social;
Confiança institucional;
Desigualdade social;
Corrupção;
Estado no Brasil.

APPENDIX A – MULTIVARIATE AND LOGISTIC REGRESSION APPLIED TO BRAZIL AND SIX LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

Quantitative exploration of the theoretical argument on interpersonal trust at the national and individual levels in Brazil and other Latin American countries used, respectively, two main data sources: Latinobarómetro 2002, 2005, 2011, 2015, and 2018, and the seventh edition of the World Values Survey (2017-2020). Latinobarómetro is an annual public opinion survey that involves around 20,000 interviews, in 18 Latin American countries, representing over 600 million people. To examine interpersonal trust factors at the national level, we selected 12 countries with available data for the variables of interest in our model: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay.

World Values Survey (WVS) is a survey on sociocultural and political values conducted in nearly 100 countries and economies on six continents addressing themes that provide a broad view of what individuals think about different aspects of social life, such as quality of life, the environment, science and technology, politics, economics, tolerance, and others. Considering the unavailability of a key explanatory variable for our study—participation in voluntary associations—for several of the Latin American countries of interest in the period considered, we only used data from the seventh edition, which covers the period from 2017 to 2020. We selected for individual analysis observations from six countries: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, and Peru, which represented 7,290 observations, with 1,507 of them in Brazil.

Besides these two data sources, we used additional bases for the control variables at the country level, considering the same selected years of Latinobarómetro. Democratic longevity was measured using the V-Dem Electoral Democracy Index. GDP per capita calculated based on purchasing power parity was obtained from the World Bank's World Development Indicators database. Gross enrollment in secondary education is sourced from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Participation in voluntary associations was derived from the V-Dem Index of Participatory Environment in Civil Society Organizations¹³. Finally, the variables related to institutional effectiveness and impartiality came from the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) – Government Effectiveness Index¹⁴ and V-Dem Rigorous and Impartial Public Administration Index, respectively.

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Based on the study data, we operationalized two types of dependent variables. We started our analysis with an aggregated variable at the country level built from Latinobarómetro data, which shows the percentage of people who answered that most people in their countries are trustworthy. Our second

individual-level dependent variable is the binomial “trust most people” or “don’t trust most people,” constructed using the World Values Survey.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

In our dialogue with the relevant literature (Rothstein, Stolle, 2008; Holmberg, Rothstein, 2016), we used as dependent variables in the country-level analysis:

- *Participation in voluntary associations*: Index of Participatory Environment in Civil Society Organizations, scale ranging from 0 to 3, with the highest value indicating more frequent participation in civil society organizations.
- *Democratic longevity*: Electoral Democracy Index, values ranging from 0 to 1, with the highest value indicating that the broad ideal of electoral democracy is achieved.
- *GDP per capita*
- *Gross enrollment rate in secondary education*
- *Institutional Effectiveness*: Government Effectiveness Index, scale ranging from -2.5 to 2.5, with the highest values showing better governance.
- *Institutional impartiality*: Rigorous and Impartial Public Administration Index, scale ranging from 0 to 4, with the highest value indicating that the law is generally respected by public officials and that arbitrary or biased application of the law is very limited.
- At the individual level, we considered the following variables:
- *Employment*: recoded into 3 categories – employed, unemployed, other (students, housewife, retired, other).
- *Age*: recoded into three categories – 15 to 29 years old, 30 to 49 years old, and 50 or older, following Holmberg (2017).
- *Married*: dummy with married and unmarried.
- *Education*: recoded into 3 categories – less than Secondary Education, Secondary Education, and Higher Education.
- *Political trust*: dummy with trusts political institutions (“a great deal” or “quite a lot”) and does not trust political institutions (“not very much” or “none at all”)
- *Membership in associations*: dummy with a value equal to one if you participate in at least one of the following institutions: religious organizations, education, unions, parties, professionals, recreation or other.
- *Satisfaction with life*: dummy with satisfied (values 6 to 10) and dissatisfied (values 1 to 5).
- *City size*: recoded into four categories -- less than 50,000, 50,000 to 100,000, 100,000 to 500,000, and over 500,000.
- *Trust in law and order institutions*: factor constructed from two variables – trust in the judiciary (0.754) and in the police (0.754), with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.72 and explained variance of 56%.

MODELS

Interpersonal trust at the country and individual level were analyzed using multivariate Ordinary Least Squares and logistic models, respectively. Due to their multicollinearity, the institutional variables of the first model were individually examined in addition to the base model. Tables 2 and 3 summarize the results of the models.

Table 2 – Institutional features and interpersonal trust

Independent Variables	Base model	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Participation in voluntary associations	1.508 (2.509)	3.072 (2.561)	1.105 (-2.545)	2.150 (2.486)	1.555 (2.559)	1.568 (-2.571)	2.025 (3.153)
democratic longevity		-15.829** (7.752)					
GDP per capita			-0.0001 (0.0001)				
Gross enrollment rate in secondary education				-0.098* (0.054)			
Institutional effectiveness					0.222 (1.778)		0.836 (11.822)
Institutional impartiality						-0.186 (1.377)	-0.924 (2.366)
Interaction: institutional effectiveness and impartiality							0.118 (3.845)
Constant	14.780** (6.058)	23.055*** (7.157)	17.544*** (-6.701)	22.158*** (7.192)	14.665** (6.179)	15.118** (6.602)	15.904* (7.198)
N	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
R ²	0.006	0.022	0.022	0.061	0.006	0.007	0.009
mean VIF	--	1.10	1.03	1.02	1.02	1.03	2.38

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3 – Regression model for interpersonal trust at the country level

	Model: Latin America	Model: Brazil
Education		
Secondary Education	-0.105 (0.101)	0.047 (0.266)
Higher Education	0.323***(0.113)	0.721**(0.296)
Age		
30 to 49 y/o	-0.120 (0.107)	-0.235 (0.288)
>50	-0.148 (0.113)	0.253 (0.289)
Married	0.108 (0.089)	-0.084 (0.223)
Trust in political institutions	0.738***(0.101)	0.408 (0.248)
Employment		
Employed	0.464**(0.167)	0.286 (0.336)
Other	0.171 (0.176)	0.207 (0.356)
Life satisfaction	-0.015 (0.116)	-0.215 (0.258)
City size		
50 th to 100 th hab.	-0.137 (0.148)	-0.524 (0.395)
100 th to 500 th hab.	-0.238*(0.118)	-0.259 (0.301)
over 500,000	0.284***(0.101)	-0.450 (0.300)
Trust in law and order institutions	0.074 (0.054)	0.261* (0.142)
Membership in associations	0.007 (0.089)	-0.192 (0.252)
Constant	-2.274*** (0.218)	-2.707***(0.483)
Observations	7.290	1.507

ZNote: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01