TRUST SCALE

Reference:

Description of Measure

A 5-item questionnaire designed to measure an individual’s general level of trust toward other people. It is specifically designed to measure two of the main factors that form general trust: (1) belief that other people are basically honest and (2) belief that trusting others is risky. The items from this scale come partially from Yamagishi and Sato’s (1986) Fear scale and partially from Yamagishi and Sato’s (1986) trust scale.

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:


Two motivational bases for not contributing to a public good, desire to free ride (or greed) and fear of being a "sucker," were experimentally compared; 110 Japanese undergraduates served as subjects. It was hypothesized that these two types of motivation would be activated under different situations. When a public good was provided conjunctively, fear would have a strong effect but greed would not; when a public good was disjunctively provided, greed would have a strong effect but fear would not. In addition, this prediction was expected to hold when subjects are total strangers, and that the greater mutual trust existing among friends would make them contribute more than strangers would in the conjunctive condition but would make no difference in the disjunctive condition. Three types of "production rules," in which a public good is conjunctively, disjunctively, or additively produced on the basis of members’ contributions, were experimentally created. Half of the groups in each condition consisted of total strangers, and the other half consisted of friends. The hypotheses were supported when the size of the public good (bonus points) was relatively large. Also, subjects responded similarly in the conjunctive condition and in the additive condition.


A distinction is proposed between trust as a cognitive bias in the evaluation of incomplete information about the (potential) interaction partner and assurance as a perception of the incentive structure that leads the interaction partner to act cooperatively. It is hypothesized that trust in this sense helps people to move out of mutually committed relations where the partner's cooperation is assured. Although commitment formation is a rather standard solution to the problems caused by social uncertainty, commitment becomes a liability rather than an asset as opportunity costs increase. Facing increasing opportunity costs, trust
provides a springboard in the attempt to break psychological inertia that has been mobilized to maintain committed relations. In conjunction with an assumption that networks of mutually committed relations play a more prominent role in Japanese society than in American society, this hypothesis has been applied to predict a set of cross-national differences between the United States and Japan in the levels of trust and related factors. The results of a cross-national questionnaire survey (with 1,136 Japanese and 501 American respondents) support most of the predictions, and indicate that, in comparison to Japanese respondents, American respondents are more trusting of other people in general, consider reputation more important, and consider themselves more honest and fair. In contrast, Japanese respondents see more utility in dealing with others through personal relations.


The study of social dilemmas is the study of the tension between individual and collective rationality. In a social dilemma, individually reasonable behavior leads to a situation in which everyone is worse off. The first part of this review is a discussion of categories of social dilemmas and how they are modeled. The key two-person social dilemmas (Prisoner's Dilemma, Assurance, Chicken) and multiple-person social dilemmas (public goods dilemmas and commons dilemmas) are examined. The second part is an extended treatment of possible solutions for social dilemmas. These solutions are organized into three broad categories based on whether the solutions assume egoistic actors and whether the structure of the situation can be changed: Motivational solutions assume actors are not completely egoistic and so give some weight to the outcomes of their partners. Strategic solutions assume egoistic actors, and neither of these categories of solutions involve changing the fundamental structure of the situation. Solutions that do involve changing the rules of the game are considered in the section on structural solutions. I conclude the review with a discussion of current research and directions for future work.
Scale:

Using the following scale, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.) Most people tell a lie when they can benefit by doing so.
2.) Those devoted to unselfish causes are often exploited by others.
3.) Some people do not cooperate because they pursue only their own short-term self-interest. Thus, things that can be done well if people cooperate often fail because of these people.
4.) Most people are basically honest (R).
5.) There will be more people who will not work if the social security system is developed further.

Scoring:

Item 4 is reverse scored. Items 1 and 4 make up the “belief that other people are basically honest” factor. Items 2, 3, and 5 make up the “belief that trusting others is risky” factor. Scoring is kept continuous.