

Interpersonal confidence as a factor in the prevention of disorganized interaction

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Human communities are based on a certain set of everyday attitudes, on the coordination of the actions of “the self” in a group, and on the regulation of social practices. The results of this study show that a number of factors act as determinants of trust/distrust ambivalence: the multidimensionality and the dynamics of interactions among people; the high level of subjectivity in evaluating risks resulting from openness and from confidence in partners involved in an interaction; and a subject’s contradictory attitude toward the personal traits of an interacting partner (power, activity, honesty, trustworthiness). Japanese scholars have proved the necessity of taking into account quality of life (QOL) as one of the determinants of the development of interpersonal confidence. The study demonstrates that people try to bring trust into their daily routines as a way of organizing conscientious, emotionally open interactions that take into account the interests of all parties. Mistrust blocks access to the emotional, intellectual, and activity-related resources supporting life and undermines faith in the possibility of virtue and morality. Yet a supplementary study (using instant diagnostics) indicates that in practice respondents did not demonstrate a high level of confidence (in two cities it was 0%; in one city, it was 4.6%). In spite of emotionally positive views regarding trust, as well as constructive estimates of its moral/behavioral potential, a considerable number of respondents were not open and oriented to the interests of others. A tendency toward caution, inwardness, and constrained sincerity leads to nonconformity in one’s actions in a group and to changes in the vector of social practices from socio-partner regulation to disorganized interaction.

Keywords: social interaction, disorganization, conscientiousness, psychological security, confidence

In addition to self-awareness, self-determination, “pre-behavior,” and other phenomena in the social-psychological field, modern psychological studies pay considerable attention to the phenomenon of interpersonal confidence; the authors of these studies consider confidence to be one of the foundations for a social subject’s

categorization of social space and for the interactional environment. In particular, “the discrepancy between the character of the organization of the subject-spatial environment and man’s nature primordially affects different structures of the psyche in a destructive manner and subsequently distorts and wrecks an individual’s personality” (Zinchenko & Perelygina, 2013, p. 104). Confidence is described in the context of theme-oriented and practical activities of individuals interacting in formats for social and economic behavior. It is conditioned by a set of previous behavior patterns embracing interaction with other social subjects, organizations, and social institutions; these patterns provide a basis for prognostic understanding of other subjects’ actions and their probable consequences. Behavioral events as a component of social interaction are determined not only by gaining insight into another person but also by the sacral status of the regulation of organized interaction.

The process of personalization associated with the development of the humanistic and moral foundations of life has made it possible to draw parallels between a number of dichotomies: trust expectations–mistrust expectations, condition of security–condition of insecurity. These parallels were methodically addressed by Zinchenko (2011b, p. 6): “The formation of life-purpose orientations and the systematization of information about the world in a definite way that affects the self-awareness of society and the dominating values in it depend on particular constructions of the subjective world and on the perception of the world through the lens of security/insecurity.”

In a book about “self” theories, Dweck (2002) focuses on the prognostic potential of trust in social interaction: “When we observe intricate shifts or situations fraught with failure we find out that confidence loses its potential of being predictable” (p. 52).

In the course of professional interaction another context emerges in which the level of the expectation and prediction of behavioral experience is connected with the criteria for personal values. So, the confidence in a firefighter when flames are rushing near can be interpreted as obligatory trust in a professional who is literally responsible for human lives. The same obligatory confidence in political institutions, banking and financial organizations, leaders, and others can (and has to!) be inspired. “Institutions, governmental structures, churches, division into classes exist only in a flow of links and matches that involve them in mutual relations. Everything is dependence, a link, a contact, a metamorphosis... It is no use looking here for the essence of collective and material phenomena without their interrelationships” (Moscovici, 1998, p. 462).

The confidence factor is a strong component in psychological interaction. In interpersonal relationships the role of an individual’s trust in a partner’s honesty and trustworthiness is great; sincerity and human decency in a social group are important factors for the security of intragroup interaction. At the level of a state and its institutions, relations are based on trustworthiness or its absence, and here evaluation of the reputations, relationships, and conscientiousness of officials can result in macro-effects. Garfinkel (2009) emphasizes that the assessment of individuals adds to the disorganization of social interaction: “We are able to remember how greatly people can be at risk, those people whose appearance disturbs the characteristic arrangement of everyday life; it is of no importance whether they do it

with experimental aims or, like a psychopath, demonstrate it as a customary behavior pattern. One's status of being perceived as a competent member both in one's own and in other people's eyes—that is, the status of a conscientious member—can change or can be changed by people for whom these attributions are still valid into any of the statuses a society ascribes to those ‘who lack a rational mind’” (p. 20). The perceived competence and coordination of “self” actions generate the modern perspective of organized social interaction. So, for instance, “Lutheran dominance of the state over the church and a high level of public confidence resulted in the fact that in Sweden the state has become not a mechanism for the suppression of the individual but a vehicle for effective collective actions” (Zotin, 2013, p. 20).

As history has shown, human communities depend on mutual trust and they do not appear if this trust is lacking. “The security/insecurity of the surrounding reality facilitates the formation of everyone's own sets of opinions, views, and arrangements” (Zinchenko & Zotova, 2013, p. 111). Hierarchy is necessary because of the impracticability of a situation in which every person can be trusted at any time in accordance with secretly understood rules of ethics. If a member of the community breaks the established order, the community, at whose disposal there are adopted norms and sanctions, is forced to use coercion. In this sense, an individual becomes not only trustworthy but reveals dedication to the regulation of everyday practices, which shapes personality with confidence in and respect for the community. “Functional models of group interaction also assume the realization of perception functions that are connected with the processes of symbolization and thinking. They depend largely on group self-perception, which, in turn, is built on the basis of depictions of its spiritual arrangements in myths, fairy tales, ideologies, and utopias, which are widely used in advertising and which signify for the given group characteristics of the boundaries for the interpretation of reality” (Dontsov, Drozdova, & Gritskov, 2013, p. 81). In a vulnerable area such as economics these self-perceptions are highly appreciated.

Confidence in regard to economic behavior acts as a hierarchical phenomenon and includes confidence in the commercial interaction of individualized economic subjects, mutual trust between organizations as economic entities, and the establishment of “trusted partnerships” with international economic entities. Some foreign countries demonstrate the essential advantages of confidence in the entrepreneurial sector. For example, economists argue that the “mutual trust and honesty in economic affairs characteristic of Sweden create a favorable business climate” (Zotin, 2013, p. 20).

Because confidence acts as a prerequisite for joint activity, it is possible on these grounds to treat an act of confidence (the manifestation of trust, trust building, and so forth) as an activity that cannot be reduced to the initial goal but that serves as a condition facilitating a subject's interaction and interpersonal relationships in the social milieu.

Confidence deficit and mistrust in the system of intersubject interaction are linked with certain features of the situation, the context of the interaction, and other factors. In Yekaterinburg (2011–2012) data on conditions and factors that shape notions of confidence were specified in the course of the survey. The respondents' characterizations of the term *confidence* were processed via factor analysis, which allowed us to single out four significant factors.

The first factor accounts for 16.47% of the total variance and includes the following responses:

confidence in another person's readiness to selflessly mind one's affairs as if they were his/her own	.87
tendency to act in another person's interests	.76

Analysis of the first-factor scales enables one to interpret this factor as Interaction. The respondents associated this factor with mutual support.

The second factor explains 18.69% of the total variance and includes these responses:

emotional bond	.92
virtue	.41

The content of the features constituting this factor allows one to treat it as Personalization, which speaks of one's being ready to allow another person to enter into one's private zone, to share intimate information and important feelings.

The third factor is bipolar; it accounts for 19.49% of the total variance and includes the following response:

belief in one's conscientiousness	.83
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The opposite factor is represented by this response:

absolute openness toward another person	-.63
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This factor can be interpreted as Orientation to Decency; orderliness in one's historical and moral perspective has always been associated with conscience (conscientiousness).

As an extension of this position the respondents perceived confidence in light of the notion of "verification before ratification"; consequently, confidence does not always imply complete openness, perhaps because of the fact that in modern society one often experiences vulnerability and prefers shielding oneself from disorganized and radical contacts.

The fourth factor is bipolar; it accounts for 15.02% of the total variance and involves the following response:

moral attitude	.87
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The opposite factor is illustrated by the following response:

absolute openness toward another person	-.46
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This factor can be considered to be Humanism, which testifies to a humane component of trust-based relations and expectations of mutuality in ethical approaches.

Thus, one can say that the respondents of Yekaterinburg took confidence both, on the standard side, as openness toward another person, humaneness in relationships, and mutual aid, and, on the nonstandard side, caution, which allows one to avoid dangers that can arise in trusted interactions between people in the course of interpersonal relations.

In order to examine the confidence factor with more accuracy, express diagnostics (with the use of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) was conducted in Yekaterinburg in 2013. The sample characteristics were as follows: N=39, ages 18–31, 11 males and 28 females, education: final-year university students. Not a single respondent demonstrated a high level of confidence; 16 respondents demonstrated an average level (41%); and 23 respondents manifested a low level of confidence (58.97%). To gain an understanding of these insufficiently high rates, let us look at the essential characteristics of the Ural respondents.

The study of the phenomenon of confidence involving Yekaterinburg residents (2011–2012) resulted in a semantic field formed by the two leading factors combined. The semantic-field analysis showed that “moral attitude” is located in the same semantic zone as the notions “absolute openness toward another person,” “belief in one’s conscientiousness,” “emotional bond,” and “tendency to act in another person’s interests,” which form the scales Interaction and Personalization. One might say that in the respondents’ consciousness confidence was strongly associated with the conviction that their communication partners were honest, sincere, decent, and trustworthy.

Such notions as “incidental relationship caused by common achievement” and “human naïveté” entered the zone made up of the negative poles of the Inwardness and Detachment factors. It may be concluded that the respondents likely perceived lack of trust as weakness.

Contradicting zones formed by the factors Personalization–Inwardness and Interaction–Detachment involved notions of “virtue,” “illusory feature having an incidental character in a lifetime of rationality,” and “confidence in another person’s readiness to selflessly mind one’s affairs as if they were his/her own.”

It may be no accident that the notion of confidence is situated in both positively and negatively charged factors.

An analysis of the conditions in which confidence and mistrust coexist in interpersonal and organizational relationships shows the ambivalence of trust and mistrust. Subjects can both believe and distrust each other at the same time. The reasons for this ambivalence are, first, the multiaspectual nature and dynamics of people’s relationships; second, the contradictory personality traits of a partner; third, the high level of risk assessment that emerges as a result of openness and high confidence in a partner; finally, the conflicting attitude of a subject toward the personal traits of a partner (power, activity, honesty, conscientiousness, weakness).

In 2008, Japanese researchers explored the interrelationship between interpersonal confidence and subjective well-being. Tokuda and his co-thinkers state: “Quality of life (QOL), or subjective well-being, is a critical aspect of individual welfare and is a worthy goal for societies. . . . Thus, we aimed to evaluate the association between interpersonal trust and the QOL among Japanese adults. If this association can be confirmed in this population, controlled interventional studies

should be conducted to confirm its causal relationship and then a policy could be instituted to enhance people’s QOL in Japan. Furthermore, these findings might be generalizable to populations in other countries” (Tokuda, Jimba, Yahnai, Fujii, & Inoguchi, 2008). The respondents were grouped according to age (six groups: 20–29, 30–39, etc.), family status, family annual income (up to ¥5 million, equal to US \$50,000; from ¥5 million to ¥8 million; more than ¥8 million). Quality of life was measured on the basis of the WHOQOL personal questionnaire. The survey gave grounds to conclude that interpersonal trust and quality of life have a close relationship: the higher the QOL level, the higher the level of interpersonal trust among respondents. These researchers also obtained the following results: “Based on the between-group comparisons, women were more likely to report a greater trust in all three scales than men. Compared to other age groups, persons aged 60 years or older reported a greater trust in human fairness and nature, while those 20–29 years old reported a lower trust in human nature. There was no significant difference in these trust scales by size of residence. Compared to other income groups, persons with ≥8 million JY reported a greater trust in people and human fairness. There was no significant difference in these trust scales by educational attainment. For occupational status, compared to the employed groups, homemakers reported a greater trust in human nature” (Tokuda et. al., 2008).

Coming back to Russian reality, the study into the content of notions of the confidence phenomenon shared by residents of Krasnoyarsk (2012) and its subsequent factor-analytical processing made it possible to mark four significant factors.

The first marked factor accounts for 21.12% of the total variance and involves the following responses:

confidence in another person’s readiness to selflessly mind one’s affairs as if they were his/her own	.79
absolute openness toward another person	.72
emotional bond	.70

Scales analysis gives grounds for interpreting this factor as Mutual Openness. People’s readiness to be mutually open to each other is closely linked to the level of trust of each of them based on preparedness to sacrifice time and to make an effort to resolve each other’s problems, on emotional and spiritual bonds, and on the possibility of experiencing “togetherness” in the course of interaction and trust reinforcement.

The second factor explains 16.05% of the total variance and is represented by the following responses:

emotional bond	.46
tendency to act in another person’s interests	.92
human naïveté	.46

The content of the properties involved in the factor allows one to treat it as Subject-to-Subject Attitude, which speaks to one’s readiness to alter one’s opinion

by taking into account the stance of another person, naïve openness, and willingness to be close emotionally and actively to an object of trust.

The third factor accounts for 19.64% of the total variance and includes these responses:

moral attitude	.92
virtue	.50

This factor can be taken as Nobleness, which testifies to the fact that the respondents tended to trust people with high moral standards.

The fourth factor accounts for 19.72% of the total variance and includes the following response:

belief in one's conscientiousness	.98
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Therefore, the Krasnoyarsk respondents perceived confidence as openness and trust in a situation of interpersonal interaction as well as concern about the interests of another person.

When we take a step forward and shift from the study of notions of confidence and the characteristics of trusted relationships to the study of the practice of confidence in the respondents' lives, we see that not all the residents of Krasnoyarsk believed that other people can be trusted. By carrying out express diagnostics (Rosenberg scale variant), we found that 2 people exhibited a high level of confidence (4.6% of the respondents), 22 interviewees exhibited an average level (51%), and 19 respondents demonstrated a low level (44%). Thus, for 44% of the respondents notions of a moral, emotional, and activity-based orientation to the interests of another person remained in the realm of hope.

However, it is important with regard to the purposes of our survey to examine the semantic field formed by the combination of the two leading factors; this field determines how confidence was perceived by the Krasnoyarsk respondents. In the semantic zone shaped by positive poles of the intensively charged factors Mutual Openness and Subject-to-Subject Attitude, we find the notions of "virtue" and "emotional bond." In Krasnoyarsk residents' consciousness, confidence should necessarily have been linked to emotional rapport and the readiness and ability to be and to do good (to cast their bread upon the waters) and to coordinate their actions with their partners' interests.

Such notions as "belief in one's conscientiousness," "illusory feature having an incidental character in a lifetime of rationality", "an incidental relationship caused by common achievement" entered the zone made up of negative poles of the Inwardness and Nonconformity factors. It can imply that the respondents could not trust without emotional openness, without being convinced of human conscientiousness.

The following notions filled the contradictory zones formed by the factors Conformity-Nonconformity and Mutual Openness-Inwardness: "moral attitude," human naïveté," "tendency to act in another person's interests," : "absolute openness toward another person," "confidence in another person's readiness to selflessly mind one's affaires as if they were his/her own."

The respondents tried to add confidence to their everydayness as a way to organize conscientious, emotionally open interactions in which the interests of all parties are taken into account. Mistrust blocks access to emotional, activity-based, intellectual resources of subjects' life support, hinders their self-realization in the course of communication, and undermines their belief in virtue and morality. Busygina and Zotova (2010, p. 378) draw our attention to the fact that "the rapid advancement of information technologies, the ecological threat exacerbation, and other challenges of modernity generate new types of dangers and threats and, consequently, enhance the necessity to work out strategic measures for their prevention".

It goes without saying that these factors do not univocally determine an individual's dissatisfaction with life or the interpersonal relationships that in their extreme variants can provoke a suicide. Nowadays the number of suicides, as Russian anthropologists argue, "considerably exceeds the number of fratricides: according to the World Health Organization, for example, in 2000 about 199,000 domestic murders were committed, 310,000 people died from injuries and traumas due to military conflicts, and 815,000 committed suicide" (Nazaretyan, 2012, p. 374). Confidence contributes a moral-psychological component to intersubject relations at all levels of human activity. Zinchenko (2011a, p. 13) emphasizes the fact that, with regard to "each of the 'subjacent' levels, a 'superjacent' level is supra-subject. The subject performs a certain activity that provides individual security, and [the subject] acts simultaneously with regard to the superjacent level as an object that accomplishes activities with specific goals, motives, objectives." And confidence can act as a component of psychological mediation in different forms at all levels of human activities.

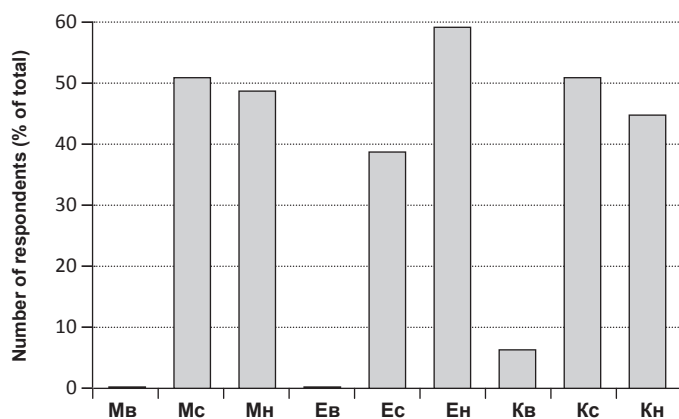


Figure 1. Degree of confidence (express diagnostics data)

MB — high degree of confidence in Moscow; Mc — average degree of confidence in Moscow; MH — low degree of confidence in Moscow; EB — high degree of confidence in Yekaterinburg; Ec — average degree of confidence in Yekaterinburg; EH — low degree of confidence in Yekaterinburg; KB — high degree of confidence in Krasnoyarsk; Kc — average degree of confidence in Krasnoyarsk; KH — low degree of confidence in Krasnoyarsk.

Because uniting people depends on mutual trust, and trust, in its turn, is determined by existing culture, there are grounds to conclude that in different coun-

tries voluntary communities will develop to different degrees; appeal to universal cultural models is fading, and, as a result, the role of transpersonal confidence is increasing. At present public polls show that the level of confidence in socioeconomic institutions is quite low; individuals, in their interpersonal contacts, prefer caution. The results of express diagnostics carried out in Moscow (N = 35, age 18–36, complete and incomplete higher education, 16 males, 19 females) indicate no respondents with a high level of trust, 18 respondents with an average level of confidence (51.4% of the respondents), and 17 respondents with a low degree of confidence (49.6%). The data obtained for Moscow, Yekaterinburg, and Krasnoyarsk are presented in Figure 1.

Social capital is the potential of a society or its parts; this potential emerges as a result of its members' trust in each other. It differs from other forms of human capital in that it is created and communicated through cultural mechanisms such as religion, traditions, customs. Accordingly, not excluding the significance of transpersonal confidence between individuals and selfish interests as constructive foundations of interaction, it should be emphasized that the most effective organizations are united by common ethical values, and the existing moral consensus serves as a basis of mutual trust (Fukuyama, 2008, pp. 48–52).

Through distinguishing cultural patterns and ethical values, different mechanisms of social organization are formed, and, as a negative aspect, so are mechanisms of communicative disorganization. In Great Britain, famous for preserving and respecting conventions, there exist traditional models of an extreme nature: “In London a law hindering a man from beating his wife after 9 p.m. so that the woman's wail cannot disturb their neighbors is still in effect” (Nazaretyan, 2012, p. 186).

Given the globalization of development and the fact that international political and economic relations are generating new threats and risks for the growth of people, societies, and states, the policy of providing social security by systemically creating conditions for personal psychological security and by developing a trusting attitude toward others seems topical and urgent. “The lack of security takes the lead, starts to determine motives for an individual's social behavior through rebuilding and rearranging this motivation and specifically transforming other groups of his basic needs, psychic characteristics, and personal traits” (Dontsov & Zotova, 2013, p. 81).

The surveys we conducted give grounds to argue that trust in others and confidence in social institutions manifest themselves when the gap between the self and the secure self is bridged. Mistrust in social interaction distorts these bases and provokes the establishment of another way of interacting.

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