Abstract

This thesis extends the developing research on the sources of generalized trust by analyzing how the character of the parent-child relationship influences its formation and transfer – an aspect of trust genesis not previously addressed in the Czech context. Using data from a unique survey Distinctions and Values 2008, we explore the heterogeneity in the parental influence on trust on the case of Czech 30-year-olds and their parents. We first delimit the concept of generalized trust, presenting its most relevant current conceptualizations as well as a review of the current state of knowledge on its origins and transmission. Using Bengston’s model of intergenerational transmission of values as our framework, we then in the second part of the paper look into the degree of similarity between parents and their offspring in terms of their willingness to trust others, and use logistic ordinal regression to examine how it is influenced by a number of aspects of the parent-child relationship including perceived closeness, gender interplay, parenting style, sibling constellation, and the experience of parental divorce. While we find a moderately strong positive association between the parental and children’s level of generalized trust, the influence of the parent-child relationship is found to be marginal at best. The mostly negative results suggest that adults’ disposition to trust others is not, at least in the case of the studied Czech generation and based on our data, significantly influenced by the character of their relationship with parents.

Keywords

Trust, Generalized trust, Social trust, Sources of generalized trust, Intergenerational transmission of values, Parent-child relationship