

Devos, T., Spini, D., & Schwartz, S. (2002). Conflicts among human values and trust in institutions. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *41*, 481-494.

Abstract

Institutions contribute to maintaining social order and stability in society. At the same time, they restrain the freedom of individuals. Based on the theory of value structure and content (Schwartz, 1992), we hypothesized about the relations of people's trust in institutions to their value priorities. More precisely, we predicted and found that the level of trust in various institutions correlated positively with values that stress stability, protection, and preservation of traditional practices, and negatively with values that emphasize independent thought and action and favor change. In addition, we demonstrated that groups defined on the basis of religious affiliation or political orientation exhibited contrasting value priorities on the same bipolar dimension. Moreover, differences in value priorities accounted for the fact that religious individuals and right-wing supporters expressed more trust in institutions than non-religious individuals and left-wing supporters.