



## Exploring the Relationships Between Extreme Levels of Trust on Young People's View of the Future

Serena Petrocchi, Giacomo Angelini, Annalisa Levante, Flavia Lecciso & Caterina Fiorilli

**To cite this article:** Serena Petrocchi, Giacomo Angelini, Annalisa Levante, Flavia Lecciso & Caterina Fiorilli (2025) Exploring the Relationships Between Extreme Levels of Trust on Young People's View of the Future, *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 47:1, 26-36, DOI: [10.1080/01973533.2024.2415925](https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2024.2415925)

**To link to this article:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2024.2415925>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.



Published online: 28 Oct 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 2810



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

## Exploring the Relationships Between Extreme Levels of Trust on Young People's View of the Future

Serena Petrocchi<sup>a,b</sup>, Giacomo Angelini<sup>c</sup>, Annalisa Levante<sup>b,d</sup>, Flavia Lecciso<sup>b,d</sup> and Caterina Fiorilli<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, Institute of Family Medicine, Università della Svizzera, italiana, Switzerland; <sup>b</sup>Lab of Applied Psychology, Università del Salento, Italy; <sup>c</sup>Department of Human Sciences, University of LUMSA, Rome, Italy; <sup>d</sup>Department of Human and Social Sciences, Università del Salento, Italy

### ABSTRACT

The study explored the associations between extreme levels of trust and young people's pessimistic view of the future. The participants were 772 Italian university students (Male, 21%; range 18–57;  $M_{age}=21.6$  years,  $SD = 5.3$  years). Findings supported the expected negative linear associations between trust beliefs and pessimism. However, findings further demonstrated that very high and very low trust were associated with higher pessimism than intermediate trust levels. The study found linear and quadratic relationships between global trust beliefs and pessimism, as well as considering the bases of trust (reliability, emotional, and honesty). Practical implications include using cognitive-behavioral techniques to address maladaptive trust beliefs and promoting trust-building skills to foster healthier relationships and a positive vision of the future.



### Introduction

Various theories promote the idea that trust is essential for psychosocial adjustment, cooperation, and mutual care, supporting the consideration that Trust Promotes Adjustment (TPA; (Rotenberg et al., 2023). In social psychology, theories such as Erikson's psychosocial stages of development (Erikson, 1963) emphasize early experiences' critical role in forming a sense of basic trust in oneself and others. The Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969) posits that the quality of early caregiver-child interactions profoundly influences an individual's ability to form trusting relationships throughout life, highlighting the foundational link between attachment patterns and the development of trust. Social Capital Theory suggests that trust within a community or society creates social networks and cohesive relationships, ultimately enhancing collective well-being and fostering economic development (Algan, 2018).

The TPA receives support from research that has shown positive relationships between trust and adjustment, which have been studied throughout life. Children's trust beliefs in others are concurrently and prospectively associated with lower internalized and

externalized maladjustment (Malti et al., 2013, 2015; Rotenberg & Fonseca, 2024). Children's trust beliefs predicted Theory of Mind ability (Rotenberg et al., 2015), that is, the ability to understand their own and others' states of mind (e.g., emotions, beliefs, thoughts; Beaudoin et al., 2020; Marchetti et al., 2013). Additionally, children's trust belief represented a protective factor for social, mental, and physical health (Marciano et al., 2022; Petrocchi et al., 2018; Rotenberg & Petrocchi, 2018; Venta et al., 2017). Moreover, trust forms the foundation of healthy interpersonal connections and mutual support (Betts et al., 2014).

In adulthood, dispositional trust strengthened the relationships between social anxiety and problematic smartphone use (Annoni et al., 2021; Petrocchi et al., 2020). Furthermore, studies have demonstrated that adults' trust in physicians is associated with well-being (Petrocchi et al., 2019) and adherence to prescribed medical regimens (Birkhäuser et al., 2017). Existing research suggests that the generalized trust beliefs held by elderly individuals are correlated with their psychological well-being, life satisfaction, functional health, and longevity, both at present and in the future (Barefoot et al., 1987, 1998; Kennedy et al., 1998; Miething et al., 2020; Nummela et al., 2012).

**CONTACT** Serena Petrocchi  [Serena.petrocchi@usi.ch](mailto:Serena.petrocchi@usi.ch)  Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, Institute of Family Medicine, Università della Svizzera Italiana, Via Buffi 13, 6900 Lugano, Switzerland.

© 2024 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

Furthermore, interpersonal trust has significant implications for the civic and political spheres. Numerous studies have shown that generalized trust is positively associated with political participation and support for democratic institutions (Dinesen & Bekkers, 2017). Individuals with greater trust in others tend to be more involved in volunteer activities, promote the common good (Bekkers, 2012), vote more frequently, and express a greater sense of political efficacy. Indeed, when trust in government and public institutions is high, citizens are more likely to accept political decisions, pay taxes, and obey the laws (Marien & Hooghe, 2011), reducing the propensity to protest behavior and increasing satisfaction with public services. Conversely, when trust in institutions is low, citizens may become cynical and disengaged, putting the stability and legitimacy of the political system at risk.

The consideration that trust is consistently and undeniably valuable is not without pitfalls. Scholars (Rotenberg et al., 2023) have recently provided insights regarding the right amount of trust an individual should have to stay healthy. Extreme levels of trust can sometimes be detrimental. Individuals with high trust levels may experience complacency or blind faith, potentially overlooking deceit or betrayal warning flags. Blind trust can make individuals vulnerable to manipulation, especially in situations with a power imbalance or when dealing with dishonest partners. Conversely, overly low levels of trust can foster cynicism and hinder genuine relationships. In social interactions, excessively low trust may prevent individuals from forming meaningful connections, leading to isolation and missed opportunities for friendship and support. Trusting others on moderate levels allows for establishing meaningful connections without leaving oneself overly vulnerable to potential exploitation.

Recently, the assumption that trust is always beneficial and that its relationship with adjustment is necessarily linear has been challenged. The appreciation of the consequences of holding high vs. low levels of trust has been considered by the so-called Centralist Approach to Trust (CAT; Rotenberg et al., 2023). The CAT suggests that very low and very high levels of trust beliefs and associated behaviors deviate from typical and effective patterns of psychosocial functioning. The CAT has been tested on children and adolescents, revealing that extreme trust beliefs—either very low or very high—are linked to loneliness, fewer friendships, lower perceived social acceptance, increased peer exclusion or rejection, higher levels of retaliatory aggression, adherence to the medical regime, and reduced quality of life (Petrocchi &

Rotenberg, 2024; Rotenberg, 2019; Rotenberg et al., 2023). Similarly, adults with extreme trust beliefs, compared to those with moderate levels, exhibit higher levels of retaliatory aggression and anger toward peers and struggle with adjustment in residential care settings (Rotenberg et al., 2023). Moreover, individuals with very low trust beliefs tend to exhibit paranoid-like thoughts and engage in mistrustful behavior (Bebbington et al., 2013; Wong et al., 2014), which can impair their ability to form healthy social connections.

### Theoretical basis of trust

The present investigation is based on Rotenberg's framework of interpersonal trust (Rotenberg, 2010, 2019); for other theoretical models of trust, see for example, Burchard et al., 2020; Newton, 2001), which considers trust as a global concept operationalized on three fundamental bases: reliability, honesty, and emotional bases. Reliability pertains to the consistency and dependability of promises or commitments made by trusted individuals. Honesty involves truthful communication and genuine intentions, distinguishing between benign and malicious actions. Emotional trust involves relying on others to safeguard emotional well-being by maintaining confidentiality, refraining from criticism, and avoiding behaviors that could cause embarrassment or harm.

Therefore, trust is a global concept defined by three bases; these three bases, each with unique characteristics, operate across three domains: cognitive/affective, behavior-dependent, and behavior-enacting (see Rotenberg, 2010). The cognitive/affective domain includes beliefs that others would maintain their promises and words (reliability basis), refrain from causing emotional harm (emotional basis), and act honestly (honest basis). Since this study applied the cognitive/affective domain across the three bases of trust, we suggest crosschecking other publications for a description of the behavioral domains (Rotenberg, 2010, 2019). Additionally, trust can vary in terms of its targets, considering specificity and familiarity (ranging from high specificity and familiarity - Mark my best friend - to low specificity and familiarity - a friend).

### Trust and attributional style

The reformulated theory of Learned Helplessness (Abramson et al., 1978) suggests that when individuals perceive that they have no control over their environment, they may develop a sense of helplessness

that affects their motivation and behavior. The sequence begins when an individual encounters an uncontrollable event and perceives that his or her actions do not influence the event. The individual then postulates an explanation for the cause of the failure to exert control over it. If the individual explains the failure with a non-actable cause, he or she will expect future outcomes to be uncontrollable. This expectancy produces helplessness deficits when the individual next encounters an uncontrollable event. Abramson et al. (1978) suggested that repeated experiences with uncontrollable events lead a person to develop a pessimistic explanatory style, whereas exposure to controllable events will foster an optimistic one. Furthermore, Abramson et al. (1978) suggested that situations in which desirable outcomes are likely and undesirable outcomes are unlikely to predict an optimistic explanatory style. Individuals with a pessimistic explanatory style often interpret setbacks as caused by stable, global, and internal factors. On the other hand, individuals with an optimistic explanatory style typically view setbacks as resulting from factors that are unstable, specific, and external (Schueller & Seligman, 2008).

Trust is linked to the explanatory style via the security of attachment. Early attachment experiences with primary caregivers shape individuals' expectations regarding other individuals' behaviors and guide how they process social information in adulthood (Bowlby, 1969, 1988; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012). Depending on the quality (secure vs. insecure) of the caregiver-child relationship, individuals' developmental trajectories shape a forward-looking vision, manifesting as optimism or pessimism. Similarly, low trust beliefs develop during early childhood when significant others repeatedly fail to safeguard children's emotional and physical needs (Eisner, 1995). The insecure attachment might evolve into anxiety, leading to the development of negative and hopeless views about oneself and the world. Children learn that adults are not responsive and available during aversive events, which are perceived as uncontrollable, and experience low levels of trust toward others. Conversely, individuals whose significant others protect and assist them during aversive events experience those events as controllable and others as trustworthy.

Consequently, we expect that different levels of global trust would be associated with different explanatory styles. Some evidence in the literature partially supports this claim (Eisner, 1995) and demonstrates that global trust predicted the explanatory style, specifically, that low trust predicted pessimism over time. Segerstrom and colleagues (Segerstrom et al., 2011)

found correlations between optimism and pessimism and a dimension of global trust. In a preprint, Li et al. (2023) affirmed that interpersonal trust predicted interpersonal style, which, in turn, was related to high self-esteem and low depression in adolescents. Hence, in support of a linear relationship between trust and pessimism, the first aim of the present study was to replicate the previous findings. Therefore, according to the TPA and previous evidence, global trust beliefs were expected to be linearly associated with a less pessimistic view of the future (*TPA hypothesis*).

The first novel purpose of this paper was to compare this linear relationship against the quadratic relationships between global trust beliefs and pessimism, as proposed under the CAT approach. Specifically, it would be expected that very low levels of global trust beliefs would be related to a highly pessimistic view of the future (*CAT low trust hypothesis*). A possible mechanism for the CAT low trust hypothesis is that individuals with very low levels of trust may perceive the world as unsafe and unreliable. A lack of trust in others might lead them to believe that future outcomes will likely be adverse, as they expect betrayal, failure, or disappointment from those around them. As a result, their worldview becomes pessimistic because they are constantly preparing for unfavorable events, reinforcing a cycle of negativity and low expectations.

Secondly, it was expected that even very high levels of global trust beliefs would be related to a highly pessimistic view of the future (*CAT high trust hypothesis*). In this case, the explanation could be that extremely high levels of trust lead to increased pessimism due to a greater risk of disappointment or betrayal. When individuals place excessive trust in others without considering the possibility of deception, they become more vulnerable to experiencing adverse outcomes. If their trust is misplaced or exploited, it can lead to disillusionment, cynicism, or pessimism about others and the future.

Moreover, Rotenberg (2010, 2019) theory of trust suggests that the three core components of trust—reliability, emotional trust, and honesty—may have distinct impacts on psychosocial adjustment. Reliability offers a sense of stability and predictability, emotional trust ensures safety and emotional support, and honesty fosters transparency and moral integrity. Consequently, the significance of each trust component may shift based on the specific outcome considered, and each basis may play a unique role in shaping overall well-being and psychosocial adaptation. Research provided mixed confirmation of this

claim. For instance, Rotenberg and Renhard (2022) found that only the belief that the coworkers fulfilled their promises to do their duties (i.e. reliability basis of trust) correlated with firefighters' decreased stress levels. However, they also found correlations between all three bases of trust and measures of firefighters' adjustment. Rotenberg et al. (2015) and Petrocchi et al. (2021) found that the emotional basis of trust was associated with the theory of mind abilities in children and adults, respectively. This evidence provided confirmations to the emotional trust hypothesis, according to which the willingness to share personal information is linked to emotional trust in others, as individuals expect their self-disclosure to be non-threatening and possibly beneficial (Rotenberg et al., 2015). Self-disclosure promotes reciprocal exchanges between the partners in a relationship, which scaffolds the development of theory of mind abilities. Similarly, Venta et al. (2017) observed that emotional trust in mothers was linked to lower suicide attempt rates in depressed adolescents, highlighting the protective role of self-disclosure in relationships.

While research on global trust provided relevant insights in the study of psychosocial adjustment, the examination of the impacts of the three bases of trust is in its infancy. Appreciating the role that the specific bases play may provide information on how adjustment and trust are related according to the specific relational domains, which may inform prevention programs. In this line, the associations of each of the three bases of trust and pessimism have not yet been explored in the literature. This is a second novel aspect introduced by the present research.

Similar to what was proposed for the global level of trust, we explored linear and quadratic relationships between the three bases of trust and pessimism. Because the literature does not indicate the significance, direction, and strength of those associations, two research questions have been formulated. Based on the TPA approach, we explored the linear relationships between the three bases of trust and pessimism (*TPA bases of trust research question*). Furthermore, the present study examined whether high vs. low levels of the three bases of trust (i.e., reliability, emotional, and honesty) have a differential association with a pessimistic view of the future (*CAT bases of trust research question*), analyzing the quadratic relationships.

Under the TAP approach, it could be expected that when all three fundamental bases of trust—reliability, honesty, and emotional trust—are consistently high, individuals are less likely to develop a pessimistic view of others and society. However, based on the definitions of the three bases, it might be possible to

suggest some differential contributions. Reliability and trust beliefs directly influence daily expectations, making violations more likely to foster pessimism. If people or systems are unreliable, the ability to make plans, build long-term relationships, or engage in predictable behaviors become compromised. This may suggest that reliability trust represents a crucial determinant of pessimism. Emotional trust beliefs, on the other hand, vary greatly depending on personal experience. A breach of emotional trust might hurt but not lead to broad pessimism. Instead, individuals may seek emotional safety in different ways (e.g., by abandoning non-trustworthy relationships or by developing internal coping mechanisms) without necessarily developing a pervasive pessimistic attitude. Honesty lies somewhere in between, as its violations can sometimes be forgiven or rationalized, especially if they are isolated or insignificant. Repeated dishonesty can, on the other hand, gradually undermine trust, leading to skepticism and possibly fostering pessimism. In contrast, a single instance of dishonesty may not have a lasting impact on one's overall sense of trust or optimism. In summary, under the TAP approach, while we could expect that reliability, honesty, and emotional trust each plays a role in shaping one's worldview, reliability trust may influence fostering pessimism when violated. Emotional trust and honesty, though impactful, can be more context-dependent and open to repair, which may not necessarily lead to a pervasive pessimistic outlook when breached.

In a similar way, it could be expected under the CAT approach that extreme levels of any of the three bases of trust—either too low or too high—may lead to high levels of pessimism. In the case of reliability trust, moderate trust might offer a balanced sense of predictability and flexibility. However, excessively high levels of reliability trust could foster unrealistic expectations, leading to greater disappointment and pessimism if a violation occurs. Conversely, extremely low levels of reliability and trust could lead to constant uncertainty and a persistent pessimistic worldview. Thus, the curvilinear model suggests that both very high and very low-reliability trust may foster pessimism, albeit through different mechanisms.

For emotional trust, the CAT approach suggests that moderate emotional trust allows for healthy interpersonal relationships, while excessively high emotional trust could lead to heightened vulnerability. In this case, breaches may feel more personally devastating, amplifying pessimism. On the other hand, too low emotional trust might result in emotional isolation, which could also foster a negative outlook. Therefore, the model implies that both extreme levels can contribute to pessimism, depending

on the context. Regarding honesty, the CAT model proposes that moderate honesty and trust lead to a realistic balance of forgiveness and skepticism. Too much honesty could make individuals less forgiving of minor infractions, potentially heightening pessimism when even small violations occur. In contrast, too low of honesty may encourage cynicism and a consistently pessimistic view of others' motives. Thus, the curvilinear approach suggests that both extreme honesty and trust (too high or too low) can foster pessimism, although through different pathways.

However, based on the definitions of the three bases, it might also be possible to hypothesize some differential contributions of high vs low levels of the three bases of trust with reliability playing a decisive influence on fostering pessimism compared to emotions and honesty. Finally, gender, like many other personality factors, seems to be related to trust beliefs (Feingold, 1994), with females showing higher scores in their trust evaluations than males. Therefore, this study also controlled the hypothesized relationships for gender.

## Method

### Participants

The participants were 772 Italian university students (164 males, 21%; range 18–57;  $M_{\text{age}}=21.6$  years,  $SD = 5.3$  years). Most of them, 83%, attend a course in Humanistic or Social Science; the others in medicine (4.5%) or information technology (8%). 24% of the participants were working students. The study sample's mean academic performance was 27.26 ( $SD = 2.09$ ) out of 30 (equivalent to approximately 3.6 on a 4.0 GPA scale).

### Procedure

Data was collected using a cross-sectional design and convenience sampling. University students completed an online survey administered on Google Forms, which took approximately 15 minutes. The survey included measures of trust, pessimism, and socio-demographic variables. All participants were informed of the research objectives and signed an informed consent form before completing the questionnaire. The students did not receive any incentive; they knew participation was voluntary and that their responses would remain anonymous. The Ethics Committee for Scientific Research (CERS) of LUMSA University provided ethical approval for this research project. The study followed the privacy requirements laid down by current Italian law (Law Decree DL-196/2003) and in conformity with the Declaration of Helsinki.

## Measures

### Trust beliefs in others

The 24-item Adults' Generalized Trust Beliefs scale (AGTB, Randall et al., 2010) was used to measure the reliability, emotional, and honesty bases of trust in young adults. The AGTB has been validated elsewhere (Petrocchi et al., 2021; Randall et al., 2010). The three bases of trust demonstrated internal consistency, and the three-factor structure demonstrated good fit indices. Each item describes an interaction between an adult and a target individual (mother, father, romantic partner). The story's protagonist expects the target individual to show reliability (e.g., "Maria's father tells her that if she finds a job, he will help her pay one instalment of her new car. Maria finds a job. How likely is it that her father will pay an instalment for her new car?"), emotional trust (e.g., "Claudia tells her mother that she has fallen in love with a boy. Claudia asks her not to tell her father. How likely is it that Claudia's mother will not tell her father that Claudia has fallen in love?"), or honesty (e.g., "Giorgia asks her friend Luca to help her organize some boxes. Luca tells her that he doesn't have time. How likely is it that Luca truly doesn't have time?"). Participants rated the likelihood that the target person would demonstrate the relevant basis for trust, ranging from 1 ("very unlikely") to 5 ("very likely"). Average scores were calculated for global trust and each basis of trust, with higher scores indicating stronger trust beliefs in the reliability ( $\alpha=0.62$ ,  $\omega=0.60$ ,  $rs>0.25$ ), emotional trust ( $\alpha=0.68$ ,  $\omega=0.67$ ,  $rs>0.26$ ), or honesty ( $\alpha=0.63$ ,  $\omega=0.63$ ,  $rs>0.20$ ) of others.

### Pessimism

The 19-item Vision About the Future scale (VAF, Ginevra et al., 2017) assessed the orientation toward the future. The specific subscale measuring pessimism (6 items; e.g., "It is useless to hope for the future: I will not be able to do what I have in mind") is considered in the present paper. A five-point scale was selected as a response format, from 1 ("It does not describe me at all") to 5 ("It describes me very well"). An average score has been created, with high scores indicating high pessimism ( $\alpha=0.95$ ,  $\omega=0.94$ ,  $rs>0.80$ ).

### Data analysis strategy

Data were analyzed with SPSS v.29. Correlations between the measures have been provided. Regression analyses tested whether there were linear and curvilinear (i.e., quadratic) concurrent relationships between trust beliefs and pessimism. Gender has been included

as a covariate. Moreover, multiple regression analyses have been carried out separately for males and females.

## Results

Table 1 reports the correlations between the measures. Global trust and the three bases of the AGTB correlated with each other, as expected, and with pessimism with negative signs. Female participants showed lower reliability trust and pessimism than males.

Table 2 shows the results of the regression analyses considering global trust, its quadratic term, and pessimism. Both quadratic and linear terms were related to pessimism. Tables 3, 4, and 5 report the results of the regression analyses between trust beliefs, gender, and pessimism. Negative linear relationships were observed between global trust, reliability, emotional, honesty, and pessimism, confirming the TBA hypothesis. Quadratic relationships have been found between global trust, three bases of trust, and pessimism, confirming the CAT hypothesis.

The regression analyses have been replicated separately for females and males. Male participants showed negative

linear relationships between global trust, reliability, emotional, and pessimism. In contrast, female participants showed both negative linear and quadratic relationships between the trust variables and pessimism. Table 6 shows the results of those analyses.

According to the expectations, low trust beliefs in others were associated with higher levels of pessimism than intermediate levels of trust (see Figures 1, 2, and 3). Similarly, high levels of trust were associated with higher pessimism than intermediate levels of trust. Females showed less pessimism compared to males.

## Discussion

The paper explores the relationship between global trust beliefs and pessimism, contrasting linear and quadratic models. According to the TPA approach, higher global trust was expected to be associated with a less pessimistic view of the future. Consistent with the hypothesis, linear relationships were observed between global trust beliefs and pessimism, with higher trust associated with less pessimism. This evidence aligns with Erikson's psychosocial stages of development (Erikson, 1963) and the Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969), which emphasize the role of early experiences and interpersonal relationships in shaping trust beliefs and their significance in fostering emotional well-being and social cohesion. Moreover, the results are consistent with previous research on global trust and pessimism (Eisner, 1995; Li et al., 2023; Segerstrom et al., 2011).

The paper also aimed to assess whether this linear relationship holds or if a quadratic model, as suggested by the CAT approach, is more appropriate. The evidence shows that very low global trust levels are linked to a pessimistic view. Individuals may perceive the world as unsafe and unreliable, anticipating adverse outcomes due to a lack of trust in others. This leads to a pessimistic view, preparing them for unfavorable events. Conversely, the CAT high trust hypothesis posits that very high trust levels can also result in pessimism, as excessive trust increases the risk of disappointment and betrayal. In this study, we found that individuals with high trust also expressed high pessimism, maybe because they are more

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics and correlations for study variables.

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		2	3	4	5	6
Global Trust	772	3.3	.47	–					
Reliability (2)	772	3.2	.54	.80	–				
Emotional (3)	772	3.5	.61	.80	.44	–			
Honesty (4)	772	3.1	.61	.79	.51	.45	–		
Pessimism (5)	772	2.01	.98	–.18	–.12	–.18	–.11	–	
Gender <sup>ab</sup> (6)	772	–	–	.004	–.16	.06	.07	–.10	–

<sup>a</sup> 0 = male.

<sup>b</sup> Kendall's tau correlations.

**Table 2.** Hierarchical regression analysis with global trust on pessimism.

	Step 1			Step 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE(B)</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE(B)</i>	$\beta$
Constant	3.6	.29		7.9	1.1	
Gender (0 = male)	–.24	.08	–.18	–.25	.08	–.10
Global trust	–.37	.07	–.10	–2.99	–1.4	–1.4
Global trust quadratic term		–	–	.39	1.26	1.2
R <sup>2</sup> (R <sup>2</sup> adj.)	.042 (.04)			.06 (.06)		

**Table 3.** Hierarchical regression analysis with the reliability basis of trust beliefs on pessimism.

	Step 1			Step 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE(B)</i>	$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE(B)</i>	$\beta$
Constant	3.4	.28		5.2	.87	
Gender (0 = male)	–.31	.08	–.13	–.29	.09	–.12
Reliability trust beliefs	–.26	.06	–.14	–1.4	.53	–.78
Reliability quadratic term	–	–	–	.17	.08	.64
R <sup>2</sup> (R <sup>2</sup> adj.)	.030 (.028)			.04 (.032)		

**Table 4.** Hierarchical regression analysis with the emotional basis of trust beliefs on pessimism.

	Step 1			Step 2		
	B	SE(B)	$\beta$	B	SE(B)	$\beta$
Constant	3.3	.24		5.4	.85	
Gender (0 = male)	-.21	.09	-.10	-.22	.09	-.10
Emotional trust beliefs	-.28	.06	-.17	-1.4	.48	-.93
Emotional quadratic term	–	–	–	.17	.07	.77
R <sup>2</sup> (R <sup>2</sup> adj.)	.04 (.04)			.05 (.05)		

**Table 5.** Hierarchical regression analysis with the honesty basis of trust beliefs on pessimism.

	Step 1			Step 2		
	B	SE(B)	$\beta$	B	SE(B)	$\beta$
Constant						
Gender (0 = male)	-.23	.09	-.09	-.23	.09	-.10
Honesty trust beliefs	-.17	.06	-.11	-1.12	.42	-.70
Honesty quadratic term				.15	.07	.60
R <sup>2</sup> (R <sup>2</sup> adj.)	.02 (.02)			.03 (.024)		

vulnerable to adverse outcomes, leading to disillusionment and a cynical perspective on the future. These findings underscore the importance of considering the nuanced effects of trust beliefs on psychosocial adjustment, which could influence well-being and good citizenship.

More specifically, by considering future orientation in young adolescents, research has shown its influence on life choices regarding commitment, motivation, and resilience in the face of adversity (e.g., Ginevra et al., 2017). A negative view of the future represents a condition of hopelessness and disenchantment or cynicism toward what may happen (e.g., Bryant & Cvengros, 2004). The study findings indicate a quadratic relationship between trust and pessimism, supporting the CAT approach. This suggests that extreme levels of interpersonal trust—whether very low or very high—are not beneficial for young adolescents. Specifically, excessive pessimism can serve as a defensive mechanism against future disappointments stemming from past negative experiences (Marshall et al., 1992). Individuals with a highly negative view may find that high trust in others does not yield positive results; instead, it exacerbates feelings of betrayal and disappointment.

High levels of trust coupled with a negative view of the future may reveal a disconnection in explanatory or attributional styles. For instance, adolescents may attribute their negative experiences to external factors or specific individuals rather than recognizing a pattern of trust leading to repeated disappointment. This could result in a cycle where they maintain high trust levels, hoping for better outcomes despite past betrayals, often leading to further disappointment.

Their high trust may be sustained by an optimistic bias, where they believe that future interactions will be different or that they will not face the same adverse outcomes as before.

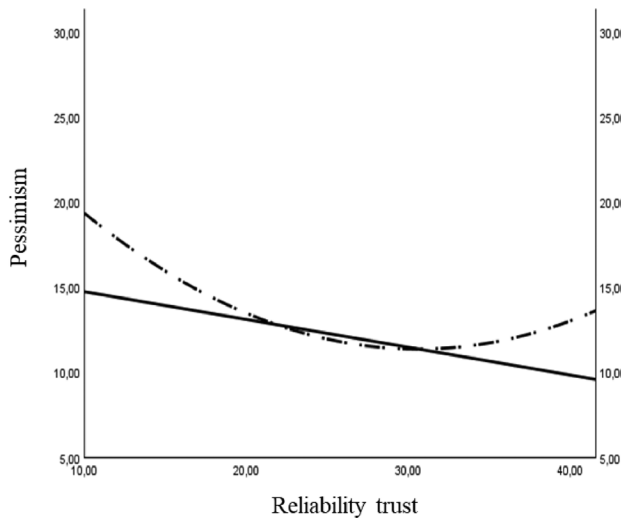
Future research should explore the role of attributional styles in this dynamic. By explicitly measuring attributions, researchers could gain deeper insights into how extreme levels of trust correlate with pessimism. For example, understanding whether individuals attribute their adverse outcomes to their shortcomings or external circumstances could help clarify why they continue to trust despite prior disappointments. This could lead to more effective interventions to foster a balanced perspective on trust and resilience in adversity.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed quadratic relationships between the three bases (reliability, emotional trust, and honesty) and pessimism, further confirming the CAT hypothesis. While it was proposed that reliability may have differential effects on pessimism compared to emotional trust and honesty, the overall results indicate similar effects across all three bases of trust. This suggests that regardless of the specific type of trust considered, higher levels of trust are associated with lower levels of pessimism, and extreme trust levels lead to a more pessimistic view of the future.

The gender-specific results provide valuable insights into how trust beliefs relate to pessimism in young adults, revealing distinct patterns for males and females. Among males, negative linear relationships between global trust, reliability, emotional trust, and pessimism indicate a straightforward connection: higher levels of trust consistently correlate with lower levels of pessimism. This suggests that trust acts as a protective factor for males, helping them maintain a more optimistic view of the future. In contrast, females exhibit negative linear and quadratic relationships between trust and pessimism, showing that both very low and very high levels of trust are associated with increased pessimism. This complexity points to a curvilinear relationship for females, where extreme levels of trust may lead to more negative expectations of the future. Moreover, the results showed that females generally exhibit less pessimism than males, which could be due to socialization factors or

**Table 6.** Regression analyses split by gender.

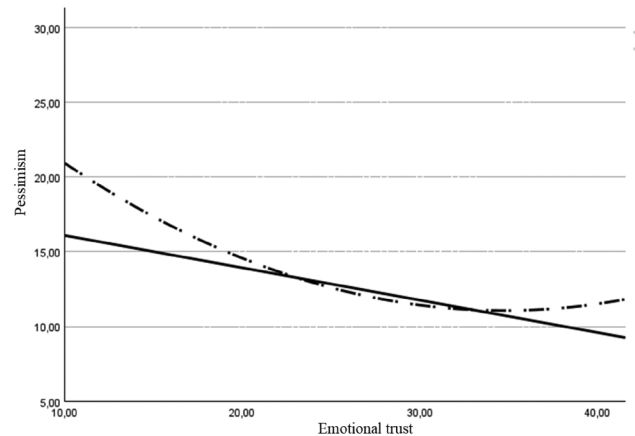
	Step 1 Males			Step 2 Males			Step 1 Females			Step 2 Females		
	B	SE(B)	$\beta$	B	SE(B)	$\beta$	B	SE(B)	$\beta$	B	SE(B)	$\beta$
Global trust	-.52	.16	-.25	-1.39.13	1.45.21	-.69.40	-.32	.08	-.15	-3.4.46	.72.11	-1.61.5
Global trust quadratic term												
R <sup>2</sup> (R <sup>2</sup> adj.)		.06(.05)			.06(.05)			.025(.024)			.054(.051)	
Reliability trust beliefs	-.34	.13	-.20	-1.32	1.08	-.77	-.23	.07	-.12	-1.5	.61	-.82
Reliability trust quadratic term				.14	.16	.58				.20	.09	.71
R <sup>2</sup> (R <sup>2</sup> adj.)		.04(.034)			.045(.033)			.015(.014)			.023(.019)	
Emotional trust beliefs	-.55	.12	-.33	-1.4	1.05	-.85	-.20	.06	-.13	-1.36	.54	-.86
Emotional trust quadratic term				.13	.15	.53				.16	.07	.74
R <sup>2</sup> (R <sup>2</sup> adj.)		.11(.10)			.11(.10)			.017(.016)			.025(.021)	
Honesty trust beliefs	-.11	.14	-.06	.21	-.04	.17	-.18	.06	-.12	-1.4	.45	-.92
Honesty trust quadratic term				-.05	.16	-.18				.19	.07	.81
R <sup>2</sup> (R <sup>2</sup> adj.)		.004(.002)			.004(.008)			.014(.012)			.026(.023)	



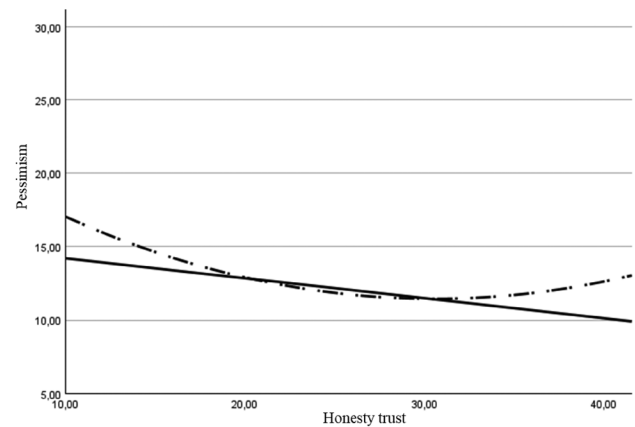
**Figure 1.** Relationships between reliability trust beliefs and pessimism.

resilience mechanisms that allow females to better cope with disappointment or betrayal.

These gender-specific differences highlight the importance of tailored interventions. Since males show a direct decrease in pessimism as their trust levels rise, interventions might focus on creating supportive social environments that foster trust through positive and reliable interactions. For females, the more complex curvilinear relationship between trust and pessimism suggests that both extreme levels of trust—whether too low or too high—can be detrimental. This implies that interventions for females should promote trust and teach them how to manage expectations and prepare for the possibility of disappointment without becoming



**Figure 2.** Relationships between emotional trust beliefs and pessimism.



**Figure 3.** Relationships between honesty trust beliefs and pessimism.

overly cynical or pessimistic. Developing emotional resilience and coping strategies to deal with betrayals or failures could be crucial for maintaining a healthy perspective on trust and relationships.

Limitations of the study include its reliance on self-report measures and cross-sectional design, which limit the ability to establish causality or infer temporal relationships. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to examine the developmental trajectories of trust beliefs and their causal impact on adjustment over time. Another limitation concerns the gender imbalance in the sample. Since we found that gender affects the relationship between trust and pessimism, that is, the relationships between trust beliefs and pessimism may vary between men and women, future research needs to accommodate this characteristic. Additionally, qualitative approaches could provide deeper insights into the subjective experiences and perceptions underlying trust beliefs and their implications for future outlooks.

Overall, the study contributes to the growing literature on trust and adjustment in young adults, highlighting the need for a comprehensive understanding of trust dynamics in promoting positive psychosocial outcomes. Indeed, the relationship between trust and adjustment in young adults plays a critical role in their emotional and psychological development. High levels of trust are associated with increased resilience, higher self-esteem, and improved coping strategies in the face of adversity (Bhattacharjee & Baruah, 2017; Demir et al., 2011). Conversely, it is possible to experience feelings of loneliness, depression, and social withdrawal, which are particularly detrimental during the formative years of young adulthood. By focusing on this demographic, the study not only sheds light on the dynamics of trust and pessimism but also emphasizes the broader implications of trusting relationships on young adults' life trajectories. Understanding these relationships can inform interventions aimed at fostering healthier social connections, ultimately enhancing the psychosocial well-being of this population.

## Conclusion

Understanding the nuanced relationship between trust beliefs and adjustment can guide interventions promoting healthy trust development and fostering individual resilience. For example, in clinical practice, therapists can use cognitive-behavioral techniques to help patients challenge overly negative or overly positive trust beliefs and develop more balanced and adaptive patterns of trust. Additionally, psychoeducation about the role of trust in relationships and its effect on psychosocial

well-being can empower clients to navigate interpersonal dynamics more effectively (Sorrenti et al., 2024). Moreover, interventions focused on enhancing trust-building skills, such as communication skills and setting boundaries, can support individuals in developing more secure and fulfilling relationships.

Communication skills foster trust and understanding in relationships, reducing misunderstandings and conflicts that may contribute to pessimistic outlooks. Furthermore, boundary-setting skills empower individuals to establish healthy limits and protect themselves from emotional harm or exploitation (Buzzai et al., 2021). By setting boundaries, individuals can maintain a sense of autonomy and control in their relationships, reducing feelings of vulnerability and pessimism. Promoting adolescents' positive views about the future may contribute to enhancing their well-being with greater purposefulness toward their professional and career future and, on the other hand, with greater flexibility and adaptability to changes.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Funding

The authors received no specific funding for this work.

## Reference list

- Abramson, L. Y., Seligman, M. E., & Teasdale, J. D. (1978). Learned helplessness in humans: Critique and reformulation. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 87*(1), 49–74. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-843X.87.1.49>
- Algan, Y. (2018). Trust and social capital. In J. Stiglitz, J. Fitoussi, & M. Durand (Eds.), *For good measure: Advancing research on well-being metrics beyond GDP*. (pp. 283–320). OECD Publishing.
- Annoni, A. M., Petrocchi, S., Camerini, A.-L., & Marciano, L. (2021). The relationship between social anxiety, smartphone use, dispositional trust, and problematic smartphone use: A moderated mediation model. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18*(5), 2452. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18052452>
- Barefoot, J. C., Maynard, K. E., Beckham, J. C., Brummett, B. H., Hooker, K., & Siegler, I. C. (1998). Trust, health, and longevity. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 21*(6), 517–526. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1018792528008>
- Barefoot, J. C., Siegler, I. C., Nowlin, J. B., Peterson, B. L., Haney, T. L., & Williams, R. B. (1987). Suspiciousness, health, and mortality: A follow-up study of 500 older adults. *Psychosomatic Medicine, 49*(5), 450–457. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00006842-198709000-00002>
- Beaudoin, C., Leblanc, É., Gagner, C., & Beauchamp, M. H. (2020). Systematic review and Inventory of theory of

- mind measures for young children. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FPSYG.2019.02905>
- Bebbington, P. E., McBride, O., Steel, C., Kuipers, E., Radovanović, M., Brugha, T., Jenkins, R., Meltzer, H. I., & Freeman, D. (2013). The structure of paranoia in the general population. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 202(6), 419–427. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.bp.112.119032>
- Bekkers, R. (2012). Trust and volunteering: Selection or causation? Evidence from a 4 year panel study. *Political Behavior*, 34(2), 225–247. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-011-9165-x>
- Betts, L. R., Rotenberg, K. J. F., Sakai, A., Maeshiro, K., Judson, H., Petrocchi, S., & Lecciso, F. (2014). An investigation of children's peer trust across culture: Is the composition of peer trust universal? *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 38(1), 33–41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025413505248>
- Bhattacharjee, R., & Baruah, J. (2017). Effect of parental resilience on self esteem. *Journal for ReAttach Therapy and Developmental Diversities*, 12(9), 2.
- Birkhäuser, J., Gaab, J., Kossowsky, J., Hasler, S., Krummenacher, P., Werner, C., & Gerger, H. (2017). Trust in the health care professional and health outcome: A meta-analysis. *PLOS One*, 12(2), e0170988. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0170988>
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss*. [https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as\\_sdt=0%2C5&q=bowlby+1969&btnG=](https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=bowlby+1969&btnG=)
- Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base: Parent – child attachment and healthy human development*. Basic Books.
- Bryant, F. B., & Cvengros, J. A. (2004). Distinguishing hope and optimism: Two sides of a coin, or two separate coins? *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23(2), 273–302. <https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.23.2.273.31018>
- Burchard, M. A., Grunberg, N. E., & Barry, E. S. (2020). Toward understanding and building trust for practicing and emerging healthcare professionals: the ASC-DOC trust model. *MedEdPublish*, 9(1), 280. <https://doi.org/10.15694/mep.2020.000280.1>
- Buzzai, C., Sorrenti, L., Tripiciano, F., Orecchio, S., & Filippello, P. (2021). School alienation and academic achievement: The role of learned helplessness and mastery orientation. *School Psychology*, 36(1), 17–23. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000413>
- Demir, M., Özen, A., Doğan, A., Bilyk, N. A., & Tyrell, F. A. (2011). I matter to my friend, therefore I am happy: Friendship, mattering, and happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 12(6), 983–1005. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-010-9240-8>
- Dinesen, P. T., & Bekkers, R. (2017). The foundations of individuals. In Van Lange P.A.M., Rockenbach, B., Yamagishi, T. (Eds) *Trust in social dilemmas*. Oxford University Press. 77–100.
- Eisner, J. P. (1995). The origins of explanatory style: Trust as a determinant of optimism and pessimism. In G. M. Buchanan and M. E. P. Seligman (ed.). *Explanatory Style*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. pp. 49–55.
- Erikson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood and society: Vol. (2nd Ed.)*. Norton. [https://www.scirp.org/\(S\(351jmbntvnsjt1aadkposzje\)\)/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=254848](https://www.scirp.org/(S(351jmbntvnsjt1aadkposzje))/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=254848)
- Feingold, A. (1994). Gender differences in personality: A meta-analysis. *Psycnet. Apa.Org* *A Feingold Psychological Bulletin*, 1994•*Psycnet.Apa.Org*, 116(3), 429–456. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1995-09434-001>
- Ginevra, M. C., Sgaramella, T. M., Ferrari, L., Nota, L., Santilli, S., & Soresi, S. (2017). Visions about future: a new scale assessing optimism, pessimism, and hope in adolescents. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 17(2), 187–210. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-016-9324-z>
- Kennedy, B. P., Kawachi, I., Glass, R., & Prothrow-Stith, D. (1998). Income distribution, socioeconomic status, and self-rated health in the United States: Multilevel analysis. *BMJ (Clinical Research ed.)*, 317(7163), 917–921. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.317.7163.917>
- Li, L., Tang, L., Lai, Y., Liu, J. (2023). *Understanding depression in female adolescents: Correlations between interpersonal trust, self-esteem, and interpersonal attributional style*. Preprint Retrieved from <https://www.Medrxiv.Org/Content/> <https://doi.org/10.1101/2023.02.09.23285684v1.Full.Pdf>
- Malti, T., Averdijk, M., Ribeaud, D., Rotenberg, K. J., & Eisner, M. P. (2013). “Do you trust him?” children's trust beliefs and developmental trajectories of aggressive behavior in an ethnically diverse sample. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 41(3), 445–456. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-012-9687-7>
- Malti, T., Averdijk, M., Zuffianò, A., Ribeaud, D., Betts, L. R., Rotenberg, K. J., & Eisner, M. P. (2015). Children's trust and the development of prosocial behavior, 40(3), 262–270., <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025415584628> <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025415584628>
- Marchetti, A., Castelli, I., Cavalli, G., Di Terlizzi, E., Lecciso, F., Lucchini, B., Massaro, D., Petrocchi, S., & Valle, A. (2013). Theory of mind in typical and atypical developmental settings: Some considerations from a contextual perspective. In A. Antonietti, E. Confalonieri, A. Marchetti (Eds.), *Reflective Thinking in Educational Settings: A Cultural Framework* (pp. 102–136). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139198745.005>
- Marciano, L., Petrocchi, S., & Camerini, A. L. (2022). Parental knowledge of children's screen time: The role of parent-child relationship and communication. *Communication Research*, 49(6), 792–815. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650220952227>
- Marien, S., & Hooghe, M. (2011). Does political trust matter? An empirical investigation into the relation between political trust and support for law compliance. *European Journal of Political Research*, 50(2), 267–291. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2010.01930.x>
- Marshall, G. N., Wortman, C. B., Kusulas, J. W., Hervig, L. K., & Vickers, R. R. (1992). Distinguishing optimism from pessimism: Relations to fundamental dimensions of mood and personality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 62(6), 1067–1074. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.62.6.1067>
- Miething, A., Mewes, J., & Giordano, G. N. (2020). Trust, happiness and mortality: Findings from a prospective US population-based survey. *Social Science & Medicine* (1982), 252, 112809. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.112809>
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2012). Attachment theory expanded. In K. Deaux & M. Snyder (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Personality and Social Psychology*. (pp. 466–492) Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195398991.013.0019>

- Newton, K. (2001). Trust, social capital, civil society, and democracy. *International Political Science Review*, 22(2), 201–214. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512101222004>
- Nummela, O., Raivio, R., & Uutela, A. (2012). Trust, self-rated health and mortality: A longitudinal study among ageing people in Southern Finland. *Social Science & Medicine* (1982), 74(10), 1639–1643. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2012.02.010>
- Petrocchi, S., Filippini, C., Antonietti, C., Levante, A., & Lecciso, F. (2021). Theory of mind as a mediator between emotional trust beliefs and interpersonal communication competence in a group of young adults. *Psychological Reports*, 124(2), 555–576. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033294120913489>
- Petrocchi, S., Iannello, P., Lecciso, F., Levante, A., Antonietti, A., & Schulz, P. J. (2019). Interpersonal trust in doctor-patient relation: Evidence from dyadic analysis and association with quality of dyadic communication. *Social Science & Medicine* (1982), 235, 112391. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.112391>
- Petrocchi, S., Marciano, L., Annoni, A. M., & Camerini, A.-L. (2020). “What you say and how you say it” matters: An experimental evidence of the role of synchronicity, modality, and message valence during smartphone-mediated communication. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0237846>
- Petrocchi, S., & Rotenberg, K. J. (2024). The relationships between trust beliefs in physicians by children with asthma, those by their mothers and the children’s medical health. *Child Care, Health and Development*, 50(6), e13334. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cch.13334>
- Petrocchi, S., Rotenberg, K. J., Levante, A., & Lecciso, F. (2018). Children’s trust in social workers: Scale development and relations to children’s engagement with social workers. *Child & Family Social Work*, 23(2), 239–247. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12410>
- Randall, B. A., Rotenberg, K. J., Totenhagen, C. J., Rock, M., & Harmon, C. (2010). A new scale for the assessment of adolescents’ trust beliefs. In K. J. Rotenberg (Ed.), *Interpersonal Trust during Childhood and Adolescence* (pp. 247–269). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511750946.012>
- Rotenberg, K. J. (2010). The conceptualization of interpersonal trust: A basis, domain, and target framework. In K. J. Rotenberg (Ed.), *Interpersonal Trust During Childhood and Adolescence* (pp. 8–27). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511750946.002>
- Rotenberg, K. J. (2019). The relation between interpersonal trust and adjustment: Is trust always good?. In M. Sasaki (Ed.), *Trust in Contemporary Society* (pp. 161–173). BRILL. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004390430>
- Rotenberg, K., & Fonseca, A. (2024). The relationship between mistrust and aggression from childhood to adulthood. *Aggressive Behavior*, 50(1), e22119. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.22119>
- Rotenberg, K. J., & Petrocchi, S. (2018). A longitudinal investigation of trust beliefs in physicians by children with asthma and their mothers: Relations with children’s adherence to medical regimes and quality of life. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, 44(6), 879–884. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cch.12604>
- Rotenberg, K. J., Petrocchi, S., Lecciso, F., & Marchetti, A. (2015). The relation between children’s trust beliefs and theory of mind abilities. *Infant and Child Development*, 24(2), 206–214. <https://doi.org/10.1002/icd.1891>
- Rotenberg, K., & Renhard, N. (2022). Firefighters’ trust beliefs in co-workers: Psychosocial adjustment and years of service. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 24(3), 481–493.
- Rotenberg, K. J., Teunisse, A. K., Case, T. I., Fitness, J., & Sweller, N. (2023). How much should we trust others? The relationship between trust beliefs in others and psychosocial adjustment. 42(1), 85–102. <https://doi.org/10.1521/JSCP.2023.42.1.85> <https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2023.42.1.85>
- Schueller, S. M., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2008). Optimism and pessimism. In K. S., Dobson, & D. J. A., Dozois (Eds.), *Risk Factors in Depression* (pp. 171–194). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-045078-0.00008-3>
- Segerstrom, S. C., Evans, D. R., & Eisenlohr-Moul, T. A. (2011). Optimism and pessimism dimensions in the life orientation test-revised: Method and meaning. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 45(1), 126–129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2010.11.007>
- Sorrenti, L., Caparello, C., Nicita, A., Fumia, A., Meduri, C. F., & Filippello, P. (2024). Social support and risk of victimisation: the mediating role of emotional intelligence. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 29(1–2), 70–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2024.2339113>
- Venta, A., Sharp, C., Hatkevich, C., & Rotenberg, K. (2017). Low emotional trust in mothers is associated with increased suicide attempts in inpatient adolescents with depressive symptoms. *Journal of Clinical and Social Psychology*, 36, 221–237. <https://doi.org/10.1037/t00742-000>
- Wong, K. K., Freeman, D., & Hughes, C. (2014). Suspicious young minds: paranoia and mistrust in 8- to 14-year-olds in the UK and Hong Kong. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 205(3), 221–229. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.bp.113.135467>