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The confidence for Swedish authorities before and during the pandemic Covid-19

A study of the impact on confidence in time of crisis

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Abstract

Trust has a fundamental importance in a society. Confidence for community institutions such as the government, the healthcare system, the police authority, the media and the public health agency is an important part of the functioning of society. This study aims to examine the confidence, in the institutions mentioned above, in Sweden and how this may differ in a time of crisis due to Covid-19 where these institutions are really put to the test. In this way the comparative part has emerged to see differences in confidence for various authorities among different groups of society. This based on Robert Putnam and Bo Rothstein's theories of social capital. Both Putnam and Rothstein describe the concept of social capital as an important element of trust in society. Confidence for community institutions is examined from two aspects: general confidence and possible change in confidence during a crisis. The analyzes control for gender, education and income. This is a qualitative study based on self-collected data material and taken material from Kantar Sifo. Developed hypotheses have then been tested using a quantitative strategy in the form of linear regression analysis. The result shows that there are some differences in trust depending on community group. The result also shows mostly unchanged confidence in all tested institutions except for the media coverage where trust is affected. This aspect has been highlighted based on Putnam, Pharr and Russell's theory about trust, which states that the media coverage plays the biggest role solo when it comes to the perceived crisis management. The analysis states that that there is a little or no change in confidence for the authorities in Sweden due to Covid-19.

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Introduction

*“In this situation, everybody has to take their responsibility”
Stefan Löfven, Swedish prime minister 2020-22-05*

At the same as the Swedish prime minister Stefan Löfven states this in his speech to the nation, almost half of the world is put in quarantine due to Covid-19. He doesn't mention closed bars, he doesn't mention closed shopping malls, he doesn't mention lockdown, but what he does mention is that we will get through this because our medical service is strong and prepared. Because our society and economy are powerful and that we will manage to pass this together, as a united country. Sweden is the only country that have chosen a different strategy than others. If it's a bummer or not? Only the future can tell. But whether the strategy is considered to be trustworthy among the citizens or not, that is one current topic.

The trust in institutions and authorities are essential for a society to function. Disbelief in the system can cause problems for the welfare and this can in turn result in negative consequences in the long run (BRÅ: brottsförebygganderådet, bra.se). Also, from a democratic point of view the trust is a necessary function. According to BRÅ the trust in Sweden's social system has changed over time and a upcoming issue is that citizens' trust decrease after a meeting with the authorities, for example the police.

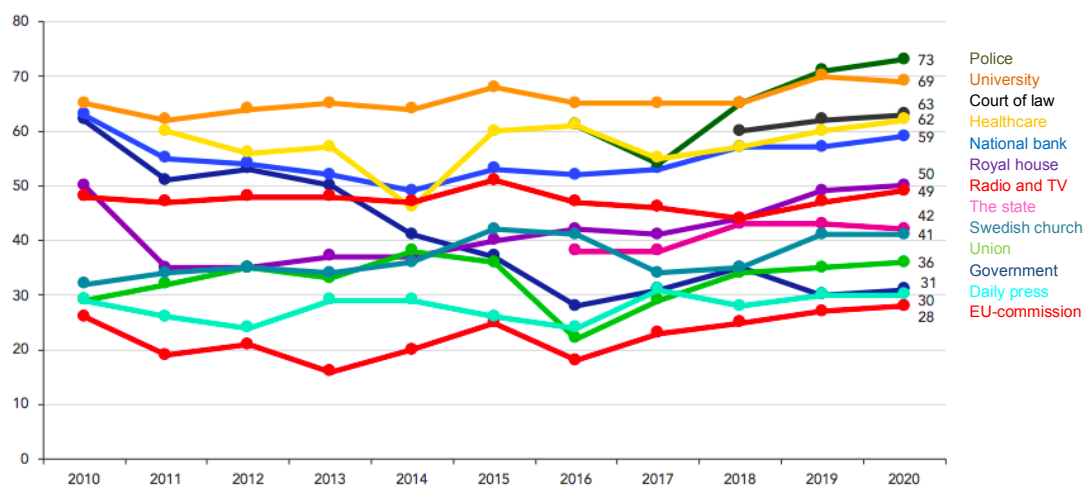
During the tsunami in 2004, the financial crisis 2008 and the swine flu in 2009 the authorities were put in a similar situation where there was a high pressure from the society. Sweden is a country where you have the right to take part of services and cash transfers if you become sick or unemployed. These are the benefits you automatically have the right to due to the years of gainfully active work. Due to these kinds of insurances the trust for the social-political system is a fact. The worries arise when more than usual suffer from health issues or unemployment, can the safety-net carry us all? Of course, the answer is no. One important issue is therefore to enlighten the citizens on how the crisis is developing and how we are dealing with it. Transparency is of high value in these kinds of crisis. This is where the media comes in and takes a big role, hence the trust in media may be the one most elastic out of all the authorities.

There are several definitions of the word trust. According to the Cambridge dictionary trust is “to believe that something is safe and reliable” and “to believe that you can trust someone or something”. According to Bo Rothstein, professor of political science and deputy head of the University of Gothenburg, trust is very hard to regain while lost. He also underlines the fact that in a society with low confidence, many other things are affected negatively and function worse. People's view on society and on their fellow human beings are characterized by their

contacts with the welfare institutions (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005: 347). Rothstein and Kumlin's research show that these meetings are more important for social trust and trust than participation in organizations and in civil society.

In this time of crisis, it is of high interest to investigate if the trust will remain unchanged or not. The virus Covid-19 is now in this very moment, the most spoken subject. The whole world is affected and there is an ongoing debate about how to deal with the pandemic, in the best way. Because we spend most of our days by our phone and social medias, the media's have a great impact on us during these times. The information told by the media affect our opinions and politics. Even though the media has a necessary role in the society it can cause more harm than good. What happens to the quality of the democracy if the media coverage is angled?

Confidence for public institutions no or little change



Source: Kantar Sifo Confidence Barometer 2020

By reading the diagram one can see that there have been changes in confidence over time, but the confidence in the institutions of society has not changed significantly since the survey conducted the previous year. For the second year in a row, the police are at the top of society's institutions. From this chart one can conclude that a confidence collapse is always a possibility, hence there is a big interest and reason to investigate the confidence in public authorities in these times.

There is also a survey done by SIFO (Jonathan Wennö 27/3-2020) that brings up the question of trust and thoughts about Covid-19. The survey presents a summary of the confidence. What we miss is some facts about the trust in the different authorities within different citizens groups. Hence our contribution to the research is just this. This research will therefore try to investigate the trust in several institutions, more specific if there is any change in the confidence due to the Covid-19 pandemic and if various groups think differently. The Scandinavian countries are believed to have a higher amount of trust, compared to the rest of the world (nordiska ministerrådet, Ulf Andreasson 2017). This study will investigate if the trust still holds when the whole world follows one path and Sweden, alone, chose one other.

Definitions

In order to carry out this study, a basic definition of some main concepts is initially required.

The government rules Sweden and is a driving force in the work to change laws, thus affecting the development of our society. The Swedish government consists of a prime minister and 22 ministers. The current prime minister in Sweden is Stefan Löfvén which is the chairman of the social democrats (regeringen.se).

The public health agency is the authority that goes by the name “folkhälsomyndigheten” (FHM) in Sweden and will continue to be referred to with the abbreviation FHM throughout this essay. The FHM is, according to their own website, a Swedish government agency that has a national responsibility for public health issues. The agency works for good public health and works to ensure that the population has protection against infectious diseases and other health threats (folkhalsomyndigheten.se).

The overall aim of *the police authority* is to reduce crime and increase people's safety. The police represent the rule of law and have the right to deprive their citizens of their freedom. The police authority are the only institution in the community that has a monopoly of violence (polisen.se).

Media coverage will throughout this essay include all communication tools used to deliver information to the public such as broadcasting (radio and television), social media, print media and news media.

Trust and confidence will be used as synonyms through out this thesis. Trust is defined in the introduction above, and that is the same explanation we refer to when using confidence.

Aim

The aim of this essay is to investigate if there is a significant difference in the confidence for various authorities among different citizen groups in Sweden, in time of crisis due to Covid-19.

Question at issue

Has the confidence for the Swedish authorities changed due to Covid-19?

Delimitation

This study is limited to Sweden and the respondents from the data used are registered in the country. Furthermore, the study is limited to the following authorities:

- The government
- The public health agency (Folkhälsomyndigheten or here referred to as FHM)
- The police authority
- The healthcare system
- The media coverage

Other authorities that may appear in charts and tables will not be commented upon.

Data and selection

Data

This study is based partly on data from a self-produced survey and partly on data from Kantar Sifo. Starting with our own data.

In the appendix 1 (page 36-38) there is an explanation of the meaning of the variables and the questions asked in the survey.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

n = 197	
Variabels	Frequency in %
Negatively affected by Covid-19	36
Yes	64
No	
Confidence in FHM	73
Yes	14
No	14
No opinion	
Δ confidence FHM	43
Yes, for the better	15
Yes, for the worse	42
Unchanged	
Confidence in the police	69
Yes	21
No	10
No opinion	
Δ confidence police	3
Yes, for the better	2
Yes, for the worse	96
Unchanged	
Confidence in medical	81
Yes	13
No	6

No opinion	
Δ confidence medical	29
Yes, for the better	10
Yes, for the worse	61
Unchanged	
Confidence in Media	34
Yes	48
No	18
No opinion	
Δ confidence media	4
Yes, for the better	28
Yes, for the worse	68
Unchanged	
Confidence in government	49
Yes	38
No	13
No opinion	
Δ confidence government	22
Yes, for the better	11
Yes, for the worse	67
Unchanged	
Gender	
Female	60
Male	40
Education	
Primary School	5
High school	37
University	58
Income	
Low income	22
Middle income	49
High income	29

In the table above we have stated some descriptive statistics from our own survey. We can see that the confidence for the different institutions are relatively high, with an exception for the media and government that both end up slightly under 50%. There are a pretty high percentage (36%) that answered that themselves or someone close have been negatively affected by Covid-19 either economically or medically. The change in trust for the different institutions doesn't follow any pattern, one outlier is the change in the media where 28% answered that their confidence has changed to the worse since Covid-19. The majority (58%) of the respondents have a education on university level and consider themselves to earn a middle high income with a reference income of the average income in 2019 according to SCB of 308 706 SEK. There are more females than males that answered.

Kantar Sifo's main task is to provide users and customers with statistics for decision-making, debate and research. Kantar Sifo is a company operating in the field of opinion and social research. We have chosen to focus on the national Kantar Sifo-surveys about confidence because it is the most comprehensive survey and has been conducted every year since 1997 with a random sample of people living in Sweden. Each year, the survey has targeted a selection of community institutions such as the Swedish parliament, large companies, the daily press and radio/TV, and several concrete media.

Due to lack of access to raw data from Kantar Sifo, the possibility of performing regressions has been lost. Due to a higher number of respondents and accessibility to the 2019 study on the subject, we have chosen to include already completed diagrams by Kantar Sifo in order to support our own survey. These diagrams therefore contain both periods and certain measurement objects that are not directly relevant to our purpose and will therefore not be commented upon. We have chosen to focus mainly on data from the 2019 and 2020 survey because we want to be able to make a comparison of any potential change in confidence due to Covid-19. The 2019 survey includes 1,200 web-interviews and the field period took place on February 18 - March 5, 2019. The 2020 survey covers the same number of web-interviews and the field period took place on February 10-20th, 2020. The field period for the 2020 confidence barometer took place in February, that is, when only one case was known and just before Covid-19 began to spread in Sweden. For that reason, we have also chosen to use Kantar Sifo's survey regarding the public's confidence, thoughts and behavior during the corona crisis that took place between Mars 9-12th and 19-25th of 2020. At this point the FHM raised the risk of public spread of the virus to very high, and at the same time the first death was reported in Sweden. Is it possible to deduce a change in confidence between these two surveys it is most likely to draw the conclusion that the change is directly due to Covid-19.

Selection

Our self-produced survey was sent out online on various social media, namely Instagram and Facebook. We received 197 answers, all over 15 years old. The survey was written in Swedish and was thus limited to people who understand Swedish.

In the surveys from Kantar Sifo, all respondents are selected through a random sample. In the surveys that are directly relevant to the purpose and issue of our study, the respondents are registered in Sweden. All persons, regardless of language, gender, citizenship or nationality should have the same opportunity to be included in the sample, however, it is limited to those registered in Sweden.

Validity and reliability

When it comes to validity and reliability, we should consider the following: Have we measured what we intended to measure? And are my results reliable? The fact that this study

is partly based on existing data material can have both positive and negative consequences. A positive aspect is that the sample is large, which means that the precision becomes better. The sample framework used by Kantar Sifo were the population register of Sweden, which covers the total population, which reduces the risk of a skewed sample when respondents are chosen randomly without the influence of human factors. A negative aspect of using existing data material may be that the questions that are available are not asked directly for what is intended to be studied. In order to reverse the effect of this we have included our own survey with carefully selected questions that meet our specific purpose. To increase the validity, we have chosen to send out a survey digitally so as not to affect the respondents with for example, our body language. However, there is no guarantee that social desirability does not affect the answers. In this study, therefore, there is a risk that respondents have replied that they have higher confidence in Swedish authorities and institutions than they actually have because they believe it is socially desirable to have confidence in these organs.

The reliability of the qualitative work can also be examined through the consistency of the results. We are in a time where the situation is changing from day to day, which means that many factors can influence the answer. For example, a person who answered the survey at a later stage may have information that people who answered the survey in earlier stages did not have, thus affecting the consistency. We have also used previous research to compare our results with previous results. Important to consider when comparing previous data is that external factors can affect possible differences in the responses. We will never be able to determine whether these differences are due to the current pandemic or due to other circumstances.

Methodology

To answer the question at issue we handed out a survey with the thought of contributing to the qualitative part of the essay. After the answers were collected, we decided to support this with secondary data in form of already completed diagrams within the same area. The reason behind the choice of method is the low collection cost along with the high amount of data. Also due to the pandemic and social distancing, we lost possible answers that we could have received from our own survey. One consequence of this is that we had to rely more on already available data. Another problem we came up against then was that the topic is very recent, and some available authorities have not yet investigated and completed much surveys.

To test the study's hypotheses, a quantitative strategy is used where the method is linear regression analysis (OLS). The program used is STATA. A linear regression analysis has the goal to create a function that matches the observed data the best. Linear regression analysis is a method that can be used to study the relationship between two quantitative variables. If a variable cannot be ranked, one can change it into a dummy variable and in that way function as a quantitative variable in the analysis. The result from an OLS shows a b-coefficient that tells how strong a relationship between two variables is. Furthermore, an R2 value is given

which states how much of the variation of the dependent variable (y) that can be explained from the independent variable/-s (x).

There are some negative aspects to take into consideration. The choice of method may not show exactly *why* the confidence might have changed. The questions in our survey can be interpreted such as a possible change have its foundation in the pandemic situation, but the data collected online is from a general survey made every year and we have to take into consideration that other happenings could have affected the answers there. This kind of flaws could be fulfilled by interviews where people that answered with changed confidence VS those who didn't, could give potential reasons to their answers. In that way we, as researchers, would have been able to have at least some understanding. One downside is that there is then a risk that we would receive answers outside our topic. This is why we consider a quantitative strategy in firsthand along with a quantitative, to be the best fitted method. In the result part we will present both the qualitative and quantitative data to compare those and see if they support each other or show different results.

Theoretical framework

There are earlier studies that have brought up the question about confidence in Sweden's social system during crisis, but there has not been any study focused on a pandemic of this size. A reason is of course that very few persons living today have been through exactly what happens right now. Either way, due to the globalization that we live in today, the strong links between all the countries of the world that causes a huge domino-effect, is what is specific in this scenario. This is how we came up with our idea of investigation whose focus is on change in confidence for meaningful authorities during a worldwide pandemic.

In the following section the theoretical framework will be presented, which later will form the basis of our discussion. The theories will cover the medialized communication and theories regarding the social capital. We will use theories founded by professors in the area.

Confidence and social capital

The concept of social capital exists in a variety of scientific fields. There is no clear consensus on how the term should be defined or used, but it is often associated with the importance of social networks in different contexts. However, social capital is often associated with Robert Putnam and his research in the field. In Swedish research, Bo Rothstein is usually mentioned in connection with the concept.

Putnam believes that civic engagement and participation in organizations, associations and such creates social capital that also leads to increased interpersonal trust, and eventually this also builds confidence in the political institutions. Putnam writes in his book *"making democracy work"*: "Trust is a crucial component of social capital" (Putnam, 2011, pp. 191), and trust and social capital also facilitate cooperation of various kinds. Confidence leads to a

kind of predictability, which is reflected, for example, in relations between citizens and authorities (Putnam, 2011, pp. 190 - 192). In *"Making Democracy Work"* Putnam defines social capital as:

"Trust, norms and networks, which can improve community efficiency by facilitating coordinated operations" (Putnam, 2011, pp. 188).

In the book *Making Democracy Work* (2011), Putnam searched during the 1970's in Italy in for explanations of what affects democracy's way of working. A reform was carried out in Italy and this meant that responsibility for health care, agricultural policy, school policy, elderly care and so forth was placed on 27 different regional parliaments. For nearly 20 years, Putnam was able to study developments in the different regions. According to Putnam, democracy is not just about formal rights or how well the various regional parliaments were composed, but also the concrete measures that resulted from this new reform. The results in Putnam's study showed that it was the local organizational system that was decisive for how well democracy worked. The conclusion was that it was not economic growth that gave rise to the strong voluntary organizational life, but that it was the organizational system that created the economic growth. Participation in the organizational system creates, according to Putnam, a social capital which means that citizens' confidence in each other and in community institutions increases (Putnam, 2011).

According to Rothstein social trust is the main ingredient in social capital. High confidence is correlated with stable democracy, low corruption and limited economic inequality (Rothstein, 2003, pp. 77).

How is social capital created? According to Rothstein, the political institutions set up to administer the policy are central. This may include police, medical care and school. Whether or not the citizens gain confidence depends, to a large extent, on how one experiences authorities (Rothstein, 2003, pp. 174). Rothstein's main idea is that social capital is created by how well the public administrative institutions work. Rothstein also believes that it is essential not only what decisions are made in the administrative process, but also that people are interested in the procedure being fair and that everyone is treated equally. Rothstein finds that Swedish citizens show both each other and the authorities an internationally high degree of trust since the post-war period (Rothstein, 2003, pp. 184).

Rothstein also believes that social capital can be considered from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective. Here, Rothstein emphasizes the importance of trust in social capital and argues that participation in networks and the social relationships that it can contribute should also be considered based on how reliable these relationships are. "It is not only the number of social contacts that are important, but also their qualitative character in terms of the degree of trust that they include" (Rothstein, 2003, pp. 111).

According to Rothstein, social trust is the main ingredient in social capital. The political institutions set up to administer the policy are central to the creation of social capital

according to Rothstein. Rothstein's main idea is therefore that social capital is mainly created by how well the public administrative institutions function. But he also adds that trust between citizens is needed in order to build good institutions. What makes us collaborate is the mixture of customs, guarantees, knowledge of other people's behavior and trust in other people that are social capital. According to Rothstein this agrees well with two observations. Consequently, those who have the greatest trust in other people in all systems are also the ones who earn the most from the system in question. But overall, it is those societies that are the most equal, that have the most stable democracy and the lowest degree of corruption that are also richest in social capital (Rothstein, 2003, pp. 156-157).

Rothstein believes that collective memory is important for social capital. He gives examples of how the Germans remembered 1918 during the interwar period and in Rwanda in the 1990s people remembered earlier massacres. From this, it is possible to create a strong sense of "we against them". One of the roles of political leaders is to build trust within a group and this can be done through references to the common culture or to a shared experience. However, more than collective memories are required for this to succeed. Leaders must also defend the principles of impartial governments (Rothstein, 2003, pp. 177-178).

Thus, it seems clear that high confidence is correlated with democracy and good institutions. However, it is not entirely clear whether Rothstein has any general theory of how trust is created. He discusses some arguments about the collective memory and clear and transparent leaders, but in the end, Rothstein argues that high trust is due to social capital. This is a very general hypothesis and without any extensive empirical research on how to build trust, it is difficult to see a statistically significant relationship.

Confidence and equality

In the article *All for all, equality, corruption and social trust* by Eric Uslaner and Bo Rothstein, they argue that social trust is created by two different kinds of equality, i.e. both economic equality and that people feel that they have the same opportunities in society (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005, pp. 42). Social trust is thus created by equality economically and socially. Rothstein and Uslaner consider in their article that economic equality and social equality are important for the creation of well-functioning institutions but also the creation of high social trust among the citizens.

Rothstein and Uslaner show in their study that equality and trust are strongly correlated. By having faith in the future, social trust is created and for that economic equality is required, so that you have a chance to increase your income. By giving everyone the same opportunities in society, in school and in the labor market, greater trust is created. People with the lowest incomes who feel discriminated because of this are likely to feel that they do not have the same opportunities as others and thus feel an exclusion from society. This, in turn, will lead to a lower degree of trust. Countries that work for the collective, instead of how everyone manages individually, creates greater general trust (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005, pp. 51). The Scandinavian and Swedish welfare state has always been great in comparison with other

countries. Strong welfare creates a strong social capital and support for the welfare state and trust in other people has been great in Sweden for many years (Kumlin & Rothstein, 2005, pp. 58).

Furthermore, Rothstein and Uslaner describe that social welfare programs are important when it comes to equality and social trust. These programs create confidence for the state but also for our fellow human beings. With these programs, such as healthcare or education, it creates a sense of optimism and equal opportunities for all citizens (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005, pp. 63).

Rothstein and Uslaner conclude that high levels of inequality generate low confidence, and this affects both the state's opportunities to create welfare programs but also that the population is feeling worse and groups are becoming more segregated in society.

Confidence and institutional transformations

The design of the institutions is of great importance for the political, social and cultural development of societies. Depending on the welfare state model, individual citizens' choices and opportunities vary.

In the article *Making and breaking social capital: The impact of welfare-state institutions* by Staffan Kumlin and Bo Rothstein argue that a strong welfare creates a strong social capital. The support for the welfare state and trust in other people has been great in Sweden for many years. The high level of social capital in Sweden can be explained by the design of the welfare state (Kumlin & Rothstein, 2005, pp. 340-341).

In the article by Kumlin and Rothstein, they conclude that contact with the welfare state institutions tends to mobilize social trust, while other experiences from institutions can also minimize social trust. What is important is that as the welfare state shrinks, social capital also decreases (Kumlin & Rothstein, 2005, pp. 342-343).

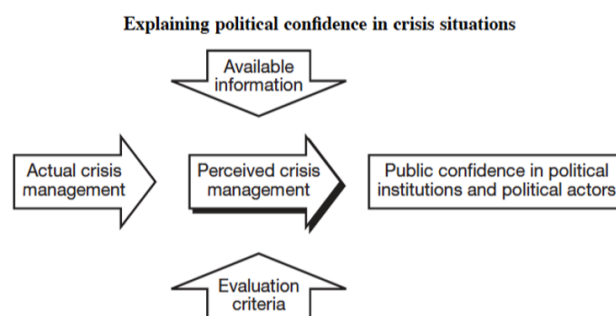
Kumlin's and Rothstein's article shows that the welfare states' institutions both have the capacity to create and destroy social capital. Personal meetings with institutions, where people feel mistreated, show that confidence in other people is diminishing. Whether or not the citizens have confidence depends consequently to a large extent on how one as an individual experience the authorities. Individual perceptions and experience can thus have an impact on social capital (Kumlin & Rothstein, 2005, pp. 360). Their research shows that the overall confidence in Sweden is stable over time, but groups that are more vulnerable in society generally have less confidence. Examples of groups that are considered more vulnerable and therefore encounter with different institutions more often are low-income earners, young people, working class and immigrants.

The impact of media reporting

To begin with research shows that traditional mass media is the main source of information on politics and social issues, for the overwhelming majority of Sweden. The question of who influences the media's agenda and shift the spotlight on various social problems is often regarded as a central issue in the matter of democracy (Strömbäck, 2009). Since the media has the power to decide over which information is to be presented and how, they have power over the whole media image. In this case the reality is mediated which means that the media influence people's perception of reality. When the media logic rules, the media is defined as commercial companies whose only mission is to meet the needs of the customers and hence lacks democratic responsibility. Therefore, the media logic can be compared to a market model that is characterized by being profit-driven (Strömbäck, 2008, pp. 233-234).

The trust model

The model developed by the political scientists Robert Putnam, Susan Pharr and Russell Dalton is often used to analyze important factors for the political trust. Their model is aimed to highlight the importance of the public's picture of the perceived crisis management. This view is of course affected by the actual crisis management, but also by the available information about the happening and the evaluation criteria's that are used to evaluate the political institutions and actors' actions.



There are several different ways that these functions can cooperate to form the political trust in a crisis. If the public have high expectations on the politician's ability to handle a crisis, and the negative opposite is shown during real time crisis, there will be a negative effect on the trust of the society. According to this model the combination of negative information and experiences of politicians that don't match the expectations, are the prerequisites that most likely creates a decrease in the confidence of the political authorities.

The factor that can play the biggest role solo when it comes to the question about the political trust, is how the crisis management is perceived by the public. In most modern democracies today, the citizens mainly receive their view of politics through media consumption (Bennett & Entman, 2001). Therefore, it is of high interest to examine how the media relates the current crisis with the central authorities. One of many researchers that share the belief in the big role of the media is Doris graber. She states the following:

“During crises, the public depends almost totally on the media for news and for vital messages from public and private authorities. The news media are the only institutions equipped to collect substantial amounts of information and disseminate it quickly” (Graber 2005, pp. 129).

The word “totally” in the sentence should be taken with precaution, of course the media play a big role in the presentation of the news but our whole reality is not media based. The media is hence not just an information channel, it is also a place where the dramatic happening is discussed and analyzed.

Previous research within the area

While searching for the literature view we discovered some interesting papers. Among these we found one research paper similar to our idea of structure, "The financial crisis, expectations and confidence - studies of the crisis communicative interaction between power holders, authorities, media and citizens". The research had an overall aim to investigate the crisis communicative opinion building processes in Sweden's' society during and after the financial crisis in 2008, also to discuss their meaning for the public's perception of the reality in this crisis. In terms of financial security, preparedness and the public's continued confidence in these social functions. For us this means that it is possible to investigate the citizens confidence during a crisis and it is meaningful and interesting for both the society and the government. This study showed that the media and its reporting about the crisis play a big role in the matter of confidence. Our study will include the media influence during the Covid-19 pandemic but also several other authorities that are up to date in the current situation.

Two other researchers, Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, have focused on discussing inequality in their book *The spirit level*. Previous research, including the study made by Rothstein and Uslaner that we mentioned earlier, has understood that inequality is socially disruptive, but only in recent years have researchers been able to measure these effects in detail.

Their survey is based on extensive statistics from 23 rich countries, including Sweden. The variables that are used are only those that are internationally comparable. The underlying variables are, age, class and ethnicity. Why these groups have been chosen is because it is these groups that Wilkinson and Pickett believe are affected by the inequality more than other groups in society. The research believes that trust is more related to class effects than to meetings with the institutions. When these groups are exposed to inequality, it leads to lower confidence among these groups (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2009, pp. 28).

The authors' theory of what inequality contributes to deals with the relationships between social status and social confidence. Thus, the author's' main conclusion is that major social

improvements can be achieved for all groups throughout society if the policy is aimed at reducing inequality (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2009, pp. 43-44).

Hypotheses

Based on the study's theoretical framework, the following hypotheses have been constructed.

Based on Rothstein (2003) and Kumlin and Rothstein (2005), who in their research show that theories of social capital, trust and well-developed institutions are closely related, we formulate a hypothesis. Both Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005) and Rothstein and Uslaner's (2005) articles show that groups that are more vulnerable in society have less confidence. There are also differences of trust based on the number of institutions you have experience with. Given the above, we formulate the following hypothesis that cover a part of the investigation. It will be discussed further in the discussion part of the essay.

H1. Low confidence towards other people and institutions in Sweden are most commonly occurring among groups that are extra dependent on the welfare society and therefore has had more contact with one or more institutions.

With the help of the results from the data collection, the aim is to investigate whether the following hypotheses can be defended or not.

H2. The confidence for xxx depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, on gender, on level of education and/or income.

H3. A potential *change* in confidence for xxx depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, on gender, on level of education and/or income.

Where xxx represents each authority: police, government, media, healthcare and FHM.

Results

The following presentation of results is divided into two main parts. The first part (1) deals with regressions in which the data is taken from and conducted through a self-produced questionnaire survey. This was produced to investigate any potential changes in confidence for different public institutions before and during the crisis due to Covid-19. The second part (2) of the result consists of already completed diagrams and deals with the confidence in various public institutions among citizens in society.

Results (1)

Regression analysis

In the following section we present our result from the regressions (OLS). The tables present the beta values for each variable with robust standard errors in parentheses. Robust regressions were used to obtain unbiased standard errors. “U” represents the error term. The model used is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * NEGCOVID19 + \beta_2 * male + \beta_3 * primaryschool + \beta_4 * highschool + \beta_5 * middleinc + \beta_6 * highinc + U$$

where Y represents the dependent variables “confidence for xxx” and “change in confidence for xxx”. Where xxx represents each authority analyzed.

See appendix 2 (on page 38) for motivation behind the chosen variables and explanations behind the models in the tables below.

Table 2. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable confidence in FHM

n = 197				<i>Std. error in()</i>
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Confidence				
NEGCOVID19	-0,088 (-0,082)	-0,088 (0,083)	-0,076 (0,083)	-0,086 (0,083)
Gender				
Female (ref)				
Male		-0,006 (0,08)	0,007 (0,079)	0,046 (0,082)
Education				
University (ref)				
Primary school			0,357 (0,234)	0,301 (0,233)
High school			0,046 (0,081)	0,037 (0,084)
Income				
Low (ref)				
Middle				-0,101 (0,099)
High				-0,255 (0,116)
R2	0,007	0,007	0,026	0,056
----- P<0,05*				

The confidence for FHM depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, gender, level of education and income cannot be confirmed based on the results from table 2. There is

no significant relationship between trust in FHM and the independent variables in the analysis, apart from Model 4, where persons with high income have higher confidence compared to persons with low income. Hence the variable high income is significant. Gender and education do not affect the confidence in FHM. People with preschool education have higher confidence in FHM compared to persons with university education.

Table 3. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable change in confidence FHM

n = 197				<i>Std. error in ()</i>
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Confidence				
NEGCOVID19	-0,266* (0,105)	-0,275* (0,107)	-0,263* (0,109)	-0,273* (0,11)
Gender				
Female (ref)				
Male		-0,11 (0,104)	-0,096 (0,104)	-0,072 (0,107)
Education				
University (ref)				
Primary school			0,37 (0,219)	0,336 (0,23)
High school			0,025 (0,107)	0,026 (0,11)
Income				
Low (ref)				
Middle				-0,111 (0,122)
High				-0,193 (0,145)
R2	0,033	0,038	0,05	0,059

P<0,05*				

A possible change in confidence in FHM depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, gender, level of education and income. There is a significant relationship between a change in confidence for FHM and the independent variable “negatively affected”. The negative sign implies a negative change in confidence. In other words, 1% decrease in the negative effect by Covid-19 decrease changed confidence for FHM with 2.66%, everything else held constant.

Table 4. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable confidence for the police

n = 197				<i>Std. error in ()</i>
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Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Confidence				
NEGCOVID19	0,0284 (0,082)	0,018 (0,081)	0,015 (0,082)	0,013 (0,084)
Gender				
Female (ref)				
Male		-0,142 (0,083)	-0,144 (0,083)	-0,133 (0,088)
Education				
University (ref)				
Primary school			-0,034 (0,191)	-0,051 (0,196)
High school			-0,038 (0,086)	-0,042 (0,088)
Income				
Low (ref)				
Middle				-0,023 (0,109)
High				-0,074 (0,114)
R2	0,001	0,017	0,018	0,021
----- P<0,05*				

The confidence for the police depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, on gender, on level of education and income cannot be confirmed based on the results from table 4. There is no significant relationship between the confidence for the police and the independent variables in the analysis. The confidence for the police is lower for persons with primary and high school education compared to persons with a university degree. Worth to point out is that the middle- and high-income variables takes on negative values, indicating that low income takers have higher trust. Which seem to be the opposite of what the education variable indicates.

Table 5. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable change in confidence police

n = 197				<i>Std. error in ()</i>
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4

Confidence				
NEGCOVID19	-0,023 (0,044)	-0,024 (0,045)	-0,019 (0,046)	-0,013 (0,049)
Gender				
Female (ref)				
Male		-0,014 (0,046)	-0,009 (0,045)	0,008 (0,039)
Education				
University (ref)				
Primary school			0,082* (0,035)	0,078* (0,038)
High school			0,072 (0,037)	0,059 (0,031)
Income				
Low (ref)				
Middle				0,078 (0,059)
High				0,048 (0,072)
R2	0,002	0,002	0,018	0,028
----- P<0,05*				

A possible change in confidence in FHM depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, gender, level of education and income. The hypothesis cannot be confirmed based on the results from table 5 until we add the education variables. Where the primary school variable is significant for both model 3 and 4. This implies that respondents with primary school education have changed their confidence for the police during COVID19 crisis, compared to university educated. The confidence for the police increases with 8,2% if primary school educated, same for model 3 and 4. The variable male becomes positive in model 4 which can indicate a correlation between gender and income.

Table 6. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable confidence in healthcare

n = 197				<i>Std. error in ()</i>
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4

Confidence				
NEGCOVID19	-0,043 (0,064)	-0,044 (0,064)	-0,044 (0,065)	-0,045 (0,068)
Gender				
Female (ref)				
Male		-0,011 (0,063)	-0,011 (0,065)	-0,0002 (0,069)
Education				
University (ref)				
Primary school			0,052 (0,172)	0,036 (0,175)
High school			-0,038 (0,066)	-0,042 (0,065)
Income				
Low (ref)				
Middle				-0,013 (0,093)
High				-0,061 (0,108)
R2	0,002	0,002	0,005	0,008
----- P<0,05*				

Do you have confidence for the healthcare system today?	male		Total
	0	1	
no	16	10	26
yes	94	65	159
no opinion	8	4	12
Total	118	79	197

The confidence for the healthcare system depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, on gender, on level of education and income cannot be confirmed based on the results from table 6. There is no significant relationship between the confidence for the police and the independent variables in the analysis. We added the allocation for the answers to this question as support to our discussion later.

Table 7. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable change in confidence healthcare

n = 197				Std. error in ()
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4

Confidence				
NEGCOVID19	0,138 (0,094)	0,145 (0,094)	0,151 (0,094)	0,187* (0,09)2
Gender				
Female (ref)				
Male		0,097 (0,096)	0,104 (0,099)	0,063 (0,098)
Education				
University (ref)				
Primary school			0,114 (0,245)	0,162 (0,211)
High school			0,085 (0,099)	0,045 (0,099)
Income				
Low (ref)				
Middle				0,426* (0,138)
High				0,48* (0,148)
R2	0,009	0,015	0,019	0,096
----- P<0,05*				

. tab highinc

highinc	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	140	71.07	71.07
1	57	28.93	100.00
Total	197	100.00	

A possible change in confidence for healthcare depends on possible negative effect caused by Covid-19, gender, level of education and income. This can be confirmed for the variable income. In other words, if you have a higher income the change in medical trust increases. Interesting in this aspect is that among our respondents more males have high income than females (71.07% against 28.93%). Model 4 shows a significant relationship between being negatively affected by Covid-19 and a change in the confidence for the healthcare. In numbers it means that 18,7% increase in the confidence for healthcare if you or someone close have been negatively affected by Covid-19 either economically or medically, everything else held constant.

Table 8. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable confidence in media

n = 197				Std. error in ()
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4

Confidence				
NEGCOVID19	0,108 (0,113)	0,086 (0,112)	0,098 (0,113)	0,085 (0,114)
Gender				
Female (ref)				
Male		-0,284* (0,109)	-0,27* (0,109)	-0,295* (0,111)
Education				
University (ref)				
Primary school			0,309 (0,338)	0,357 (0,349)
High school			0,094 (0,114)	0,139 (0,115)
Income				
Low (ref)				
Middle				-0,187 (0,145)
High				0,007 (0,156)
R2	0,005	0,038	0,047	0,062
----- P<0,05*				

The confidence for the media depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, on gender, on level of education and income. The results show that the relationship between the confidence for media and the independent variable “male” is statistically significant. It also indicates that the confidence for media is considerably lower for males compared to females. Hence, being a male gives a negative effect on the change of confidence for healthcare.

Table 9. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable change in confidence media

n = 197				<i>Std. error in ()</i>
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4

Confidence				
NEGCOVID19	0,019 (0,133)	0,009 (0,133)	0,015 (0,134)	0,034 (0,134)
Gender				
Female (ref)				
Male		-0,132 (0,134)	-0,127 (0,134)	-0,179 (0,138)
Education				
University (ref)				
Primary school			-0,012 (0,339)	0,065 (0,335)
High school			0,194 (0,132)	0,198 (0,133)
Income				
Low (ref)				
Middle				0,197 (0,181)
High				0,393* (0,191)
R2	0,0001	0,005	0,016	0,039
----- P<0,05*				

A possible change in confidence for media depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, gender, level of education and income. Model 4 point out that people with higher income have a significant possibility to change their confidence in media. Further the result still follows the pattern of being a male suggest lower confidence. Though, here it is not significant.

Table 10. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable confidence in government

n = 197					<i>Std. error in ()</i>
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5

Confidence					
NEGCOVID19	0,056 (0,099)	0,037 (0,097)	0,037 (0,096)	0,025 (0,097)	0,036 (0,096)
Gender					
Female (ref)					
Male		-0,279* (0,098)	-278* (0,097)	-0,243* (0,01)	-0,243* (0,099)
Education					
University (ref)					
Primary school			0,158 (0,237)	0,108 (0,283)	0,099 (0,287)
High school			-0,144 (0,098)	-0,146 (0,094)	-0,136 (0,092)
Income					
Low (ref)					
Middle				-0,13 (0,127)	-0,127 (0,124)
High				-0,257 (0,142)	-0,242 (0,143)
CONMEDICAL					0,238 (0,128)
R2					
-----	0,002	0,043	0,058	0,076	0,099
P<0,05*					

The confidence for the government depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, on gender, on level of education and income. In conformity with what we previously stated in table 8 the results show that the relationship between the confidence for the government and the independent variable “male” is statistically significant. We added the variable for confidence in medical to see if there is any correlation between medical and government confidence. The variable “male” were still significant in model 5 which indicate that there is some correlation between medical and government. The education follows the same pattern as in table 6 which is interpreted as the fact that elementary school has a bearing on confidence.

Table 11. Linear regression analysis with the dependent variable change in confidence government

n = 197				<i>Std. error in ()</i>
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4

Confidence				
NEGCOVID19	-0,08 (0,104)	-0,089 (0,104)	-0,098 (0,104)	-0,104 (0,105)
Gender				
Female (ref)				
Male		-0,115 (0,104)	-0,125 (0,105)	-0,112 (0,105)
Education				
University (ref)				
Primary school			-0,281 (0,321)	-0,301 (0,325)
High school			-0,022 (0,103)	-0,021 (0,111)
Income				
Low (ref)				
Middle				-0,061 (0,132)
High				-0,106 (0,148)
R2	0,003	0,009	0,017	0,02
----- P<0,05*				

A possible change in confidence for the government depends on possible negative effect caused by covid-19, gender, level of education and income. The fact that every beta value is negative implies small negative change in confidence among measured variables. The relationship is remaining for all independent variables. Even though these results do not show significance, we can still not determine that there is no difference. This only means that we do not have enough evidence to reject the hypothesis.

The R2 values in all regression analyzes is low, which means that the independent variables in the analysis explain only a small part of the variation in the dependent variables.

Results (2)

Descriptive statistics in diagrams

In this section, general trust over time will be examined in descriptive statistics from another source. The focus will be on the years 2019 and 2020 as it is of interest to investigate whether a possible change in confidence is founded in the Covid-19 crisis, also since changes from earlier years are more likely to depend on other happenings. The data is based on Kantar Sifo's annual confidence barometer, which in itself has no connection to the outbreak of Covid-19. Each year, the survey has designated a selection of public institutions that are significant to our study. Why this supplementary material is presented is because the material

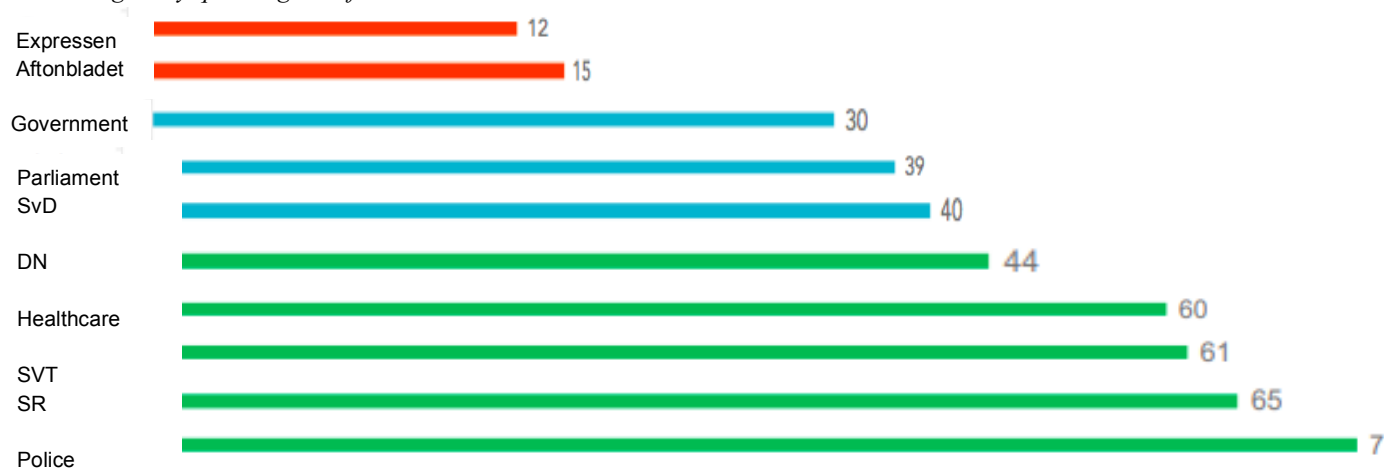
allows us to compare the general confidence over a period, more specific this time last year and just before Covid-19 came to Sweden. This allows us to analyze possible changes in confidence from last year at this time, which will give the discussion a greater foundation.

To enable an analysis of possible changes in confidence during Covid-19, we have chosen to present supplementary material in the form of a survey regarding public confidence, thoughts and behavior during the crisis caused by Covid-19. This report can be seen as a supplement to our own survey.

Diagram 1: Comparison between 2019's and 2020's confidence

Confidence Barometer 2019: Summary

Percentage very/quite high confidence



Source: Kantar Sifo Confidence Barometer 2019

Confidence Barometer 2020: Summary

Percentage very/quite high confidence



Source: Kantar Sifo Confidence Barometer 2020

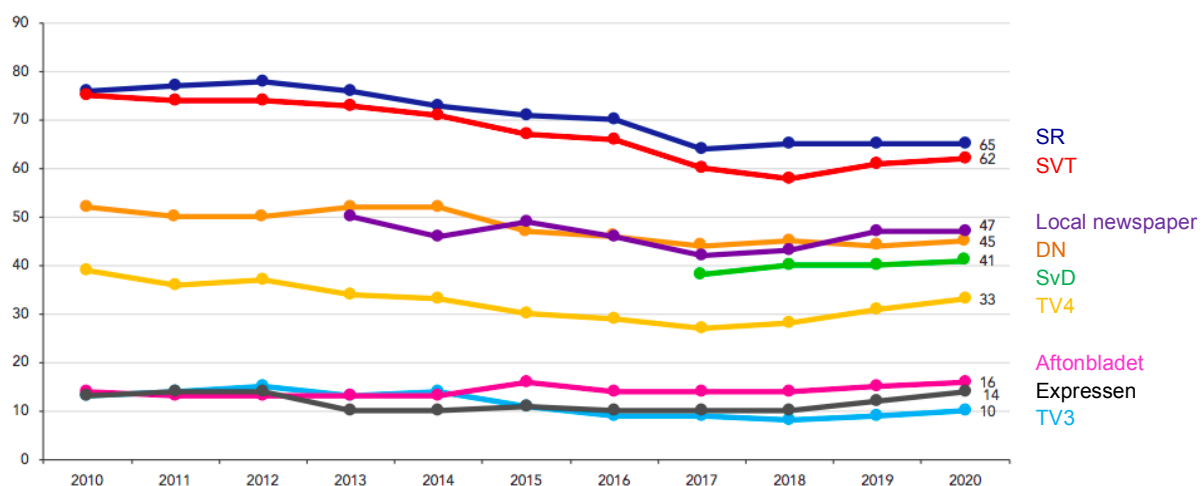
For the total number of measurement objects that Kantar Sifo measured during 2019 and 2020, we have compiled the institutions and companies that are most relevant to our study and composed the above compilation for 2019 respective 2020.

The police increase (+2) up to 73 percent in 2020 compared to 2019. It is the police's highest listing in the history of the Confidence Barometer. Since the terror attack on Drottninggatan in Stockholm 2017, the police have had a very positive development in terms of confidence. This could possibly be compared to the high level of trust that the health care system is now experiencing during the corona crisis.

We have selected the variables that can contribute to a reasonable comparison with the results of the above regressions. The most important table here is the one from 2019, with the help of that we can compare over time. To keep in mind are any other events in 2019 that may have affected the results. Therefore, we will present results from surveys of third parties in the months just before and during the crisis caused by Covid-19.

Diagram 2: Confidence for Media

Percentage very/quite high confidence



Source: Kantar Sifo Confidence Barometer 2020

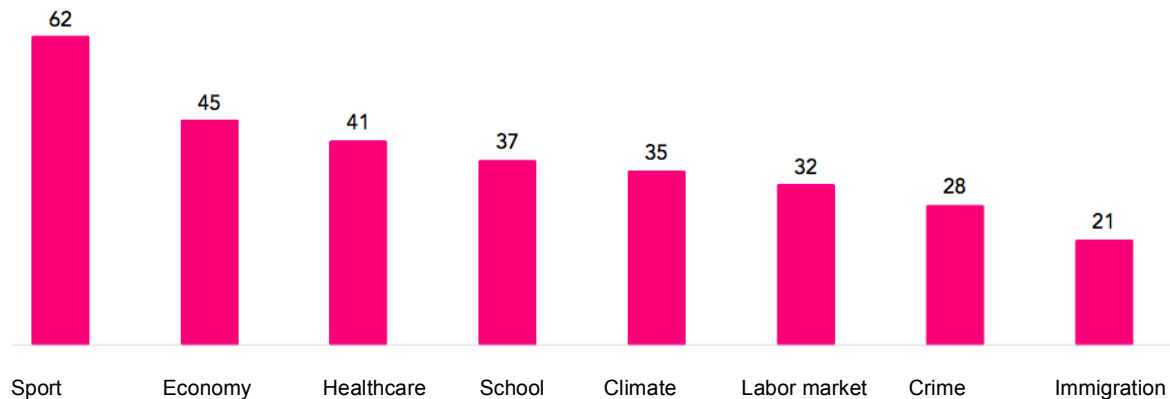
Here it is possible to see a shift among the papers Kantar Sifo has chosen to measure where the local newspaper is at the top in 2019 and 2020. There are still no dramatic differences among DN, SvD and the local newspaper. Even though confidence remains low for Aftonbladet and the Express it is possible to read that confidence in recent years has slowly gone up. Confidence in all papers is thus rising.

SR is on top with 65 % who feel confident in them and SVT comes shortly afterwards. Public service has had a great deal of confidence, which has remained stable at around 70% for the first part of the decade. Followed by a rather steep decline in 2016. Since then, the measurement has hardly changed slightly in four years. Confidence for public service has dropped about 10 percentage points since the beginning of the decade. The remaining are at a very stable level.

For a long time we have been able to see a decline, but in recent years both SVT, TV4 and TV3 have shown an increase in confidence. There are no major changes. SVT stands out with over 60 % of people's confidence.

Diagram 3: Confidence in news media reporting; In general, how much confidence do you have for news media reporting on the following?

Percentage very/quite high confidence

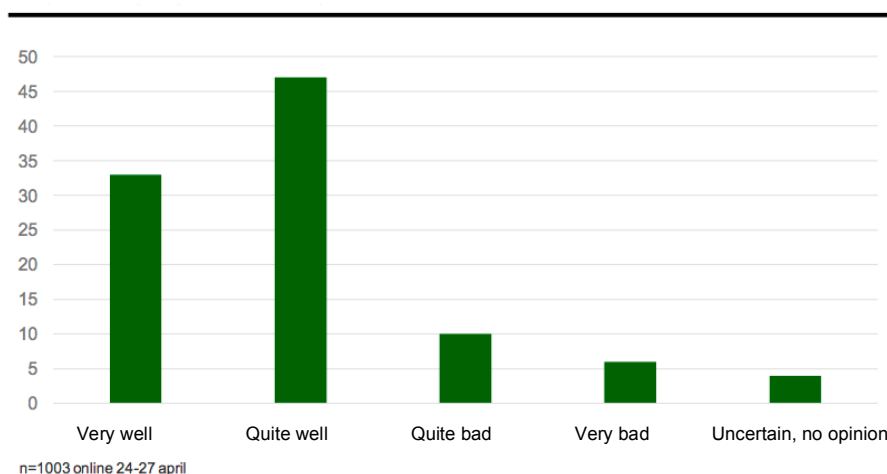


Source: Kantar Sifo Confidence Barometer 2020

Here you can read how the confidence is for different types of news. Confidence in the media is not actually measured for specific news but for the entire media channel, but here it is limited to a number of news areas, sport, healthcare, crime and so on.

The reason why this table is included is because it gives us the opportunity to expand the reasoning around the media since we only asked about the media in general.

Diagram 4: How do you think the government has handled the management of the corona pandemic?



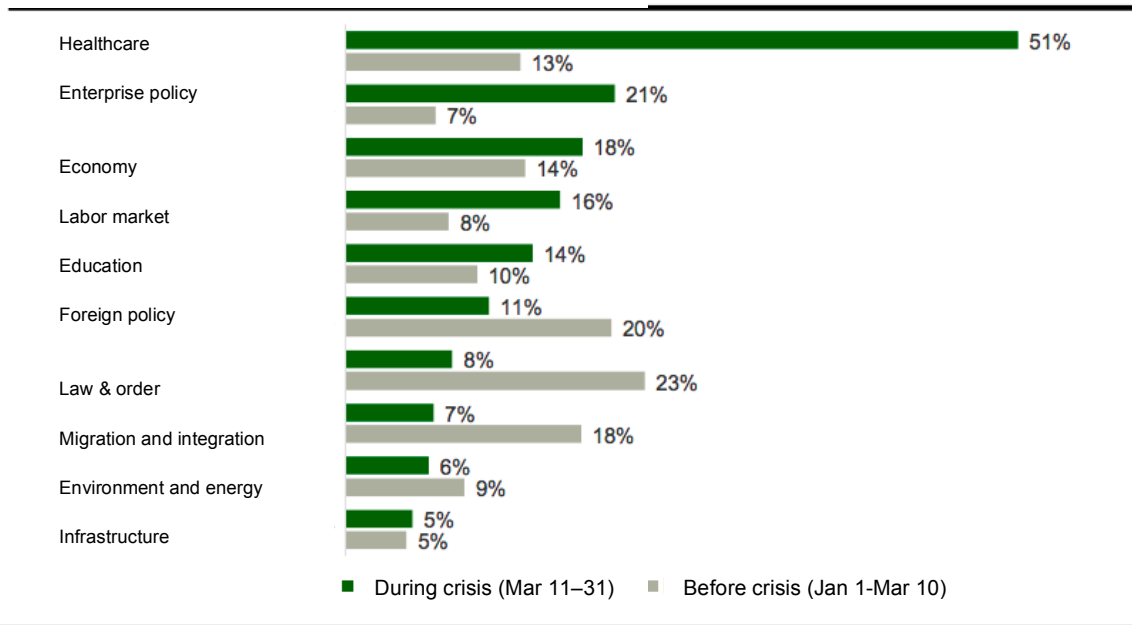
Source: Kantar Sifo; Public confidence, thoughts and behavior during the corona crisis

16 percent think the government is handling the corona virus quite or very badly and four percent are uncertain. There is a clear majority that supports the government's management.

This table is included because we can compare the results with the results of our own survey regarding change in confidence in the government, whether the results are similar or not and thus draw conclusions about significance.

Diagram 5: Media focus

Current topics before and during the crisis



Source: Kantar Sifo; Public confidence, thoughts and behavior during the corona crisis

It is a new political media landscape as a result of the corona crisis. Health care dominates the discussion right now. Focus on economy, labor market and business are to a greater extent on the agenda than before.

Diagram 6: Confidence in authorities and institutions during Covid-19

Confidence, quite/very great	2-8 april (n=700, online)	26 mars-1 april (n=700, online)	21-25 mars (n=625, online)	9-12 mars (n=982, telefon)
FHM	76%	77%	75%	65%
Government	59%	62%	54%	38%
Healthcare	81%	80%	80%	68%

Source: Kantar Sifo; Public confidence, thoughts and behavior during the corona crisis

As early as 9-12th of March, confidence in the key authorities handling the pandemic was relatively high; 65 percent stated that they have fairly or high confidence in the handling of the spread of the new coronavirus in Sweden made by the Public Health Agency. Corresponding value for the government was 38 percent and for the healthcare 68 percent.

9-12th of March the question was asked by phone. When the question was asked 21-25th of March the method was changed from phone to an online panel. Therefore, comparisons should be made with some caution. However, it is possible to see clear increase in confidence in several of the authorities and institutions that fight the pandemic.

The confidence towards authorities and institutions associated with the spread of the Coronavirus is rather stable from March 9-12th to April 2-8th.

Discussion

In the following section a discussion of the results will be presented. The significant results from the first part of the result section will be in focus and supported by the diagrams from the second part. Further, we will use the literature review as a tool to connect the result with earlier research in purpose of explaining and conclude an even stronger implication.

The aim of this essay was to investigate if there is a significant difference in the confidence for various authorities among different citizen groups in Sweden, in time of crisis due to Covid-19. The question in mind where (1) if the confidence for the Swedish authorities has changed due to Covid-19. Based on theories and earlier research, it was assumed that low confidence towards other people and institutions in Sweden are most commonly occurring among groups that are extra dependent on the welfare society and therefore has had more contact with one or more institutions. Also, that citizens who feel that they are treated equally have increased confidence in other people and public institutions. It also stated that the media plays a big role in the perception of the authorities' actions and hence is even more important and influence the most during a crisis as Covid-19. Trust in the media is therefore seen to be highly important for a society to stick together and survive a crisis.

Based on the result from this study it is clear that males have reduced their confidence in all institutions with one exception (as you can see in table 7), namely in the case of change in confidence for the healthcare system. In this case males seem to have increased their confidence since Covid-19 became current in Sweden. In the same table there is a statistically significant relationship between high income and the variable "change in confidence for the healthcare system". Since the trend says that men usually earn more than women, which is also evident from our survey, we can conclude that high-income earners, who are usually men, have increased their confidence in the healthcare system. One possible reason may be that this group, unlike low-income earners, have the opportunity to seek private healthcare. In our survey we have not chosen to specify healthcare to either public or private, which means that respondents could have referred to both public and private healthcare.

When you compare the Confidence barometer from 2019 with the Confidence barometer from 2020 you can see that the confidence in the government has hardly changed at all. A slight increase of one percentage point from 2019 to 2020 is the only difference. Also diagram 4 that answers the question how well the government has handled the management of the corona pandemic show similar results, where close to 80% think the government is handling the corona virus quite or very well. This result is supported by the results of our survey. Table 11 clearly imply a minor change in confidence in the government among measured variables. According to Putnam (2011), trust can be based in the existing citizen spirit of society. Thus, there may be a norm in society that a person should trust the government which can explain that the general trust is high. This is also in line with what Rothstein (2003) argue, namely that trust is high in societies with high social capital. Rothstein claim that high confidence is correlated with stable democracy, low corruption and limited economic inequality, all of which characterize Swedish society. Another explanation may lie in Sweden's unconventional handling of Covid-19 in comparison to the rest of the world. This goes in line with what Rothstein (2003) says about the importance of creating a sense of belonging, or “we against them” as he puts it.

In Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005) and Rothstein and Uslaner's (2005) articles it is shown that groups that are more vulnerable in society have less confidence. There are also differences of trust when it comes to the number of institutions you have had experience with. From this we formulated a hypothesis which has now been tested. Based on the results from our survey it can be concluded that high-income earners generally have higher confidence. The regressions in table 7 and 9 confirm this hypothesis with a significant positive beta-value. This can have its explanation in the higher need of contact with several authorities for a low-income citizen that suffers from possible unemployment, economic support and/or private health problems. Also, this particular group is likely to perceive society as unequal. To increase confidence within this group in society, Pickett and Wilkinson (2009) mean that major social improvements can be achieved for all groups throughout society if the policy is aimed at reducing inequality.

According to the descriptive statistics table 1 the most untrustworthy authority is the media. Both when it comes to the confidence and change in confidence the majority answered negatively, with other words the media coverage has suffered from lack of confidence both before and changed to the worse during the Covid-19 reporting. Diagram 5 implies that the healthcare system has taken the first place and is the most current topic in the media. The fact that the media reporting is characterized by ostentatious headlines that mostly are angled to the negative, are one risky participator to decreased confidence. According to the trust model (Putnam, Pharr & Russell) one of two prerequisites for a decrease in confidence during crisis management is precisely negative information. This can be an explanation to the decreased trust in the media, though the second prerequisite is experiences of politicians that don't match the expectations. As mentioned above that is not the case in Sweden. This supports what we managed to conclude from both our survey and the comparison in diagram 1, namely minor changes in trust for political authorities. To attract readers by using shocking

headlines also affects the confidence in newspapers as Expressen and Aftonbladet, as you can read from diagram 2.

So, why is confidence so low for Aftonbladet and Expressen when they have such a wide drawing and are so diligently used by the public? The reason is that we have different types of expectations for the different newspapers. We expect a different content when we open Aftonbladet which contains much more entertainment and sports while we have higher expectations in for example, DN. This indicates that trust is a consequence of the expectations we have. It is therefore reasonable to compare Aftonbladet and Expressen over time with each other. When comparing, not much has happened since 2010 and the confidence remain stable and around 10-17 percentage points. At the same time as we see stability, it is also possible to see increased confidence in, among other things, public service.

It may seem surprising that given the strong criticism against public service lately, SVT is still in the top with 60% confidence. Public service has recently become increasingly questioned, partly because of the changed payment model, which is now financed through the tax bill. However, public service has been on the top of the agenda recently, which means that one would expect a decrease in confidence. This is not the case. One possible reason is what Strömbäck (2008) discuss, namely the question of who influences the media's agenda and shift the spotlight on various social problems. SVT in Sweden are assumed to be the most reliable source since it is owned by the state and have excluded any type of commercials. Hence in times of crisis, people might act according to the trust model where expectations on politicians are strived to match the experiences. A media as SVT may therefore have such high confidence and value from before, that it takes even more to demolish.

Diagram 3 presents the areas where confidence in news reporting is lower; immigration, crime, climate, are also issues that were high on the agenda at the time of the survey, which can be compared to today's media reporting on Covid-19. In agreement with both Strömbäck's (2008) and Grabers (2005) thoughts, it is highly possible that the profit-driven and the need to provide the consumers with the hottest news, affects the way media presents happenings during crisis. The big influence and lack of confidence that media has shown to have, may be seen as a danger against the democracy as well as the attitude against the ruling parliament at the time.

The regressions (table 8-9) also supports what is already showed about the media. One subject worth to mention is the significant variable high income that again, can show a correlation between high income takers and change in the confidence for media. A possible reason might be the fact that a person with higher education may have higher ability to detect misleading information and consider it from a critical point of view.

What we have discussed in this part seem to have its conclusion in the fact that the change is non existing or minor, which can also be supported by Kantar Sifo's survey where they asked the same thing as we, namely "trust in FHM/Government/Healthcare system". Diagram 6 shows an increase in the confidence for those, that we did not manage to detect, but it is

highly possible since the respondents are a random chosen amount of 625-985 citizens while our 197 respondents are living in the same area in Gothenburg. The spread can affect the results here.

Conclusion

There are two primary aspects that should be highlighted in the end of this paper. The first is the one about that it is shown that males, in majority, have lower overall confidence for the authorities with an exception for the healthcare system. The second deal with the fact that high income takers seem to have higher confidence than those with a low income. Further, we can conclude that there is a little or no change in confidence for the authorities in Sweden due to Covid-19. When it comes to the media coverage the confidence has been affected, which follows the pattern over the years where media is the most fluctuate institution.

Further research

The aim of this study is to investigate the confidence for various institutions and whether the confidence for these are affected by Covid-19. An interesting aspect of further research is to repeat the same survey but after the crisis is over, rather than during. Consequences will then be much clearer, and people will have a before and after situation that is much more comparable to both the rest of the world as well as between the periods. An evaluation can be issued, and possible improvements are easier to point out.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 - Questions and explanations behind the descriptive statistics from our survey “Confidence in Swedish authorities in times of crisis”.

The dependent variable (Y) represents both the confidence in the authorities and possible change in the confidence for the authorities. The independent variables are gender, level of income, level of education and potential economically and/or medically negative effects caused by Covid-19. The model used is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * NEGCOVID19 + \beta_2 * male + \beta_3 * primaryschool + \beta_4 * highschool + \beta_5 * middleinc + \beta_6 * highinc + U$$

Where NEGCOVID19 is the variable negatively affected by Covid-19 either economically or medically, regarding yourself OR someone close. Reference variables used for education and income are university respectively low income. “U” represents the error term.

The questions asked in our survey are the following:

Gender:

Male []

Female []

Education:

Primary school []

High school []

University []

Income: (*Reference: middle income 2019 according to SCB 308 716 SEK.*)

Low []

Middle []

High []

Have you or anyone close been negatively affected by Covid-19? (*temporary interruption in work does not count*)

Yes []

No []

Do you have confidence in Folkhälsomyndigheten (FHM) today?

Yes [] No [] No opinion []

Have your confidence for Folkhälsomyndigheten (FHM) changed due to Covid-19?

Yes, to the positive [] Yes, to the negative [] Unchanged []

Do you have confidence in the police authority today?

Yes [] No [] No opinion []

Have your confidence for the police authority changed due to Covid-19?

Yes, to the positive [] Yes, to the negative [] Unchanged []

Do you have confidence in the healthcare system today?

Yes [] No [] No opinion []

Have your confidence for the healthcare system changed due to Covid-19?

Yes, to the positive [] Yes, to the negative [] Unchanged []

Do you have confidence in the media today?

Yes [] No [] No opinion []

Have your confidence for the media changed due to Covid-19?

Yes, to the positive [] Yes, to the negative [] Unchanged []

Do you have confidence in the government today?

Yes [] No [] No opinion []

Have your confidence for the government changed due to Covid-19?

Yes, to the positive [] Yes, to the negative [] Unchanged []

In table 1 where the descriptive results from the survey are presented, we used some shortenings explained below:

“**Confidence in xxx**” refers to the confidence for each authority at the time the survey was handed out, that is between May 8-11th 2020.

“**Δ confidence**” refers to the change in confidence for each authority before and during Covid-19.

Appendix 2 - Motivations and explanations to chosen variables and models in the regression tables under the result (1)

Variables:

Gender: We have chosen to include the variable “Gender” because we wanted to investigate if there was a significant difference in confidence between males and females

Education: We have chosen to include the variable “Education” because we wanted to investigate if there was a significant difference in confidence depending on education level.

Income: We have chosen to include the variable “Income” because we wanted to investigate if there was a significant difference in confidence depending on income level.

All variables above (gender, education, income) were not included in the survey made by Kantar Sifo, hence adding these variables gave value to our contribution.

NEGCOVID19: We have chosen to include the variable “NEGCOVID19” because we wanted to investigate if there was a potential correlation between having been negatively affected (oneself or relative) by Covid-19 and the confidence in various authorities.

Error term (U): The error term (U) is included since the model does not fully represent all possible influential factors, such as age and ethnical background. This can cause possible OV-bias. The reason we chose to exclude these variables was because we had to limit the depth, given the scope of the essay.

Models:

(For each added column, moving to the right, adds one more variable)

Model 1: Model 1 includes “NEGCOVID19” which shows its impact on the dependent variable.

Model 2: Model 2 includes “NEGCOVID19” and “Gender” which shows its impact on the dependent variable.

Model 3: Model 3 includes “NEGCOVID19”, “Gender” and “Education” which shows its impact on the dependent variable.

Model 4: Model 4 includes “NEGCOVID19”, “Gender”, “Education” and “Income” which shows its impact on the dependent variable.

Model 5: Model 5 includes “NEGCOVID19”, “Gender”, “Education” and “Income” which shows its impact on the dependent variable. Model 5 is an exception and also includes the variable for confidence in medical to see if there is any correlation between healthcare and government confidence.