

Building Trust in Hyperconnected World

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Abstract. In today's hyperconnected world, trust has become a cornerstone for success, both in business and governance. The rapid digitalization of everyday life, particularly due to advancements in communication technologies, has fundamentally changed the way individuals, governments, and institutions interact. This paper explores the role of trust in the hyperconnected world and how governments and organizations can foster it. Drawing upon the theoretical insights of Assoc. Prof. Wasan Luangprapat and case studies from Thailand, the paper highlights the challenges faced by governments in fostering trust among diverse target groups. It argues that the government must act as a solution enabler, providing timely support and actively engaging society to build trust, especially among vulnerable populations such as the elderly. Using a qualitative research approach, data from surveys of different demographic groups are analyzed to assess levels of trust in digital public policies. The results reveal that while digitalization has improved communication and access to services, it has also introduced challenges in ensuring inclusivity and fairness, particularly in areas like elder care. The findings underscore the importance of tailoring government policies to specific groups to build long-term trust in a hyperconnected society. The paper concludes with recommendations for governments to improve policy frameworks to better address the evolving needs of society, emphasizing inclusivity, timely problem resolution, and communication improvements in public services.

Keywords: building trust, governance policy, digitalization

INTRODUCTION

Trust is a fundamental element in the successful functioning of societies, enabling cooperation, facilitating communication, and underpinning governance. However, in the digital age, the mechanisms through which trust is built and sustained have been radically transformed. With the rise of the internet, social media, and real-time digital platforms, the world has entered a phase of hyperconnectivity, where interactions occur instantaneously, often without the need for physical presence. This creates new opportunities for engagement but also presents challenges in maintaining trust between individuals, organizations, and governments.

Hyperconnectivity refers to the ability of people, devices, and systems to communicate with each other through multiple digital channels in real-time. In such a world, traditional face-to-face interactions that were once the bedrock of trust-building have been replaced by digital interactions. Governments and public institutions are increasingly using digital platforms to engage with citizens, provide services, and respond to public concerns. However, this shift also increases the risk of eroding trust if systems are not secure, transparent, or responsive enough.

Digitalization has accelerated the need for governments to adapt to a hyperconnected reality. In this new environment, trust is not merely a product of interpersonal relationships but is shaped by how public institutions manage information, protect privacy, and respond to the needs of the public. Trust is built when institutions demonstrate transparency, accountability, and efficiency, particularly when dealing with complex social issues such as aging populations, economic inequality, and public health.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wasan Luangprapat's policy insights on elderly care in Thailand serve as an illustrative case of how governments can build trust by being responsive to societal needs. In Thailand, where the aging population is rapidly increasing, the government introduced policies that

not only provide financial support for the elderly but also take into account their varying needs. For instance, Luangprapat's policy recommendation to provide differentiated allowances based on age demonstrates the government's attempt to create a more inclusive and targeted approach, fostering trust among diverse elderly groups.

This journal seeks to investigate the role of public policy in building trust within the hyperconnected world. It explores the theoretical underpinnings of trust in the digital age and presents case studies that highlight how governments can create policies that enhance trust. Special attention is paid to the role of transparency, responsiveness, and inclusivity in fostering trust. By analyzing Thailand's elderly care policy, the journal provides insights into how governments can use tailored, real-time policy solutions to address societal challenges in a way that promotes trust.

METHODS

This research adopts a qualitative approach to investigate the mechanisms of trust-building in a hyperconnected world. The study utilizes document analysis, expert interviews, and case study analysis as its primary methods. The selected case study is the elderly care policy in Thailand, specifically the work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wasan Luangprapat, who presented strategies to address the needs of the aging population through differentiated government support.

Qualitative research is best suited to this study because it allows for an in-depth examination of the complex social phenomena that underpin trust in the digital era. Through document analysis, relevant public policies, official reports, and scholarly articles were reviewed to contextualize how governments approach trust-building. Expert interviews were conducted with public policy professionals to gather insights on the challenges and opportunities of fostering trust in a hyperconnected environment.

Finally, the case study analysis of Thailand's elderly care policy serves as a focal point for understanding how governments can build trust through targeted public policies. This qualitative approach not only allows for a rich, contextual understanding of trust but also facilitates the exploration of new ways to foster public trust in digital governance.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Trust in the Digital Age

In today's hyperconnected world, trust has taken on a new dimension. Traditional trust-building processes, such as personal relationships and face-to-face interactions, are being replaced by digital interfaces, where decisions are made based on data and algorithms. In this context, trust is built when governments and public institutions demonstrate transparency, responsiveness, and a commitment to the well-being of their citizens. Digital tools, while offering efficiency and convenience, also create new vulnerabilities that can erode trust if not managed correctly. Public institutions must now navigate an environment where trust depends not only on their actions but also on the perceived security, accuracy, and fairness of their digital platforms.

2. Responsiveness and Public Policy

Governments play a crucial role in maintaining trust in hyperconnected societies by being

responsive to their citizens' needs. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wasan Luangprapat's policy recommendations for elderly care in Thailand provide an example of how responsiveness can foster trust. By offering differentiated benefits for elderly citizens based on age, the Thai government has demonstrated a nuanced understanding of the diverse needs within the elderly population. This approach not only enhances trust but also shows that the government is adaptable to real-time data and evolving social needs. The elderly care policy is a prime example of how targeted public policies can build trust by addressing specific concerns.

3. Inclusivity and Trust-Building

Another key finding is the role of inclusivity in building trust. Inclusivity ensures that public policies do not marginalize any segment of the population but instead provide equitable solutions for all. In Thailand's elderly care policy, the government recognized the different socio-economic conditions of its elderly citizens and crafted policies that cater to both the more vulnerable elderly population and those who are relatively financially secure. Inclusivity in public policy not only fosters trust but also strengthens the social contract between the government and its citizens.

4. Transparency and Digital Trust

The hyperconnected world has created a demand for greater transparency in how governments operate. Citizens now expect real-time access to information and want to see that their governments are making fair and transparent decisions. In Thailand's elderly care policy, transparency is critical in ensuring that elderly citizens understand the benefits they are entitled to and how these benefits are distributed. Transparency in government processes and communication is vital for maintaining trust in a digital-first world where misinformation and disinformation can easily undermine credibility.

5. Security and Data Protection

Trust in the hyperconnected world is closely tied to how governments manage data. With increasing digitalization, citizens are more concerned about the security and privacy of their personal information. Governments that fail to secure digital platforms or protect sensitive data risk losing public trust. In Thailand, the digital management of elderly care benefits must ensure robust data protection protocols to maintain the confidence of citizens in the government's ability to handle personal information securely.

6. Case Study: Thailand's Elderly Care Policy

Thailand's elderly care policy serves as a model for how governments can build trust in a hyperconnected world by implementing responsive, inclusive, and transparent policies. The policy, as outlined by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wasan Luangprapat, offers financial support to elderly citizens with differentiated allowances based on age. This approach not only acknowledges the diverse needs of the elderly population but also fosters trust by ensuring that government resources are distributed fairly.

Additionally, the government's efforts to make the policy process transparent and accessible have

further strengthened public trust. The ability of citizens to understand how decisions are made and who benefits from the policy fosters a sense of fairness and equity. In a hyperconnected world where information is readily available, the Thai government's transparency and responsiveness in addressing the needs of the elderly population have played a crucial role in maintaining trust.

CONCLUSIONS

Trust in the digital age is crucial for governments and public institutions to maintain trust in a hyperconnected world. Trust is built through transparency, responsiveness, and commitment to citizens' well-being. In Thailand, the elderly care policy demonstrates responsiveness by offering differentiated benefits based on age, demonstrating adaptability to real-time data and evolving social needs. Inclusivity in public policy strengthens the social contract between the government and its citizens. Transparency in government processes and data protection are also essential for maintaining trust in a digital-first world. The Thai government's elderly care policy serves as a model for implementing responsive, inclusive, and transparent policies.

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