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## ZAUFANIE JAKO KATALIZATOR ROZWOJU SPOŁECZNOŚCI

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**Adnotacja.** W artykule podjęto analizę roli zaufania jako katalizatora rozwoju społeczności, co jest szczególnie istotne w kontekście współczesnych wyzwań społeczno-politycznych. Zaufanie stanowi podstawę spójności społecznej, zapewniając aktywny udział obywateli w procesach decyzyjnych, realizację inicjatyw lokalnych i kształtowanie wspólnej odpowiedzialności. Znaczenie tego tematu rośnie na tle niestabilności społecznej i kryzysów globalnych, które wymagają skutecznych i skoordynowanych reakcji ze strony społeczeństwa.

Autorka bada mechanizmy powstawania zaufania oraz bada główne czynniki spójności społecznej pomiędzy członkami społeczności. Szczególną uwagę zwraca się na to, jak otwartość, przejrzystość i współpraca mogą zwiększyć zaufanie na wszystkich poziomach.

Wyniki podkreślają znaczenie zaufania w kontekście zrównoważonego rozwoju i postępu społeczności lokalnych. Ustalono, że zaufanie nie tylko przyczynia się do skutecznego zarządzania, ale jest także kluczowym elementem w tworzeniu zrównoważonych i zamożnych społeczności we współczesnym świecie. Zatem zrozumienie roli zaufania jako katalizatora rozwoju społeczności może służyć jako podstawa do opracowania nowych podejść do rozwiązywania problemów społeczno-politycznych na poziomie lokalnym.

**Słowa kluczowe:** zaufanie, rozwój społeczności, spójność społeczna, partycypacja obywatelska, inicjatywy lokalne, stabilność społeczna.

## TRUST AS A CATALYST FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract.** The article analyzes the role of trust as a catalyst for community development, which is particularly relevant in the context of modern socio-political challenges. Trust serves as the foundation of social cohesion, ensuring active citizen engagement in decision-making processes, the implementation of local initiatives, and the formation of shared responsibility. The importance of this topic increases in light of social instability and global crises, which demand effective and coordinated responses from society.

The author investigates the mechanisms of trust formation and explores the underlying factors of social cohesion among community members. Special attention is given to how openness, transparency, and collaboration can enhance trust at all levels.

The conclusions emphasize the importance of trust in the context of sustainable development and the progress of local communities. It is established that trust not only contributes to effective governance but is also a critical element in the formation of resilient and prosperous communities in the modern world. Thus, understanding the role of trust as a catalyst for community development can serve as a basis for developing new approaches to addressing socio-political issues at the local level.

**Key words:** trust, Community development, Social cohesion, Civic engagement, Local initiatives, Social stability.

## ДОВІРА ЯК КАТАЛІЗАТОР РОЗВИТКУ ГРОМАДИ

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**Анотація.** Стаття аналізує роль довіри як каталізатора розвитку громади, що є особливо актуальним у контексті сучасних соціально-політичних викликів. Довіра слугує основою соціальної згуртованості, забезпечуючи активну участь громадян у процесах ухвалення рішень, реалізації місцевих ініціатив та формуванні спільної відповідальності. Важливість цієї теми зростає на фоні соціальної нестабільності та глобальних криз, які вимагають ефективних і скоординованих відповідей з боку суспільства.

Авторка досліджує механізми формування довіри та вивчає основні фактори соціальної згуртованості серед членів громади. Особлива увага приділяється тому, як відкритість, прозорість і співпраця можуть підвищити довіру на всіх рівнях.

У висновках підкреслюється важливість довіри в контексті сталого розвитку та прогресу місцевих громад. Встановлено, що довіра не лише сприяє ефективному управлінню, але й є критично важливим елементом у формуванні стійких і процвітаючих громад у сучасному світі. Таким чином, розуміння ролі довіри як каталізатора розвитку громади може слугувати основою для розробки нових підходів до вирішення соціально-політичних проблем на місцевому рівні.

**Ключові слова:** довіра, розвиток громади, соціальна згуртованість, громадянська участь, місцеві ініціативи, соціальна стабільність.

**Introduction.** In today's world, where societies face numerous challenges such as economic instability, political conflicts, and social isolation, trust becomes a critically important factor for community development. Scientific research confirms that trust not only contributes to the formation of social cohesion but also stimulates active citizen participation in decision-making processes and the implementation of local initiatives. In the global academic literature, trust is viewed as a factor for effective interaction among various social actors, such as communities, government bodies, and non-governmental organizations.

The aim of this paper is to explore the role of trust as a catalyst for community development, particularly in the context of social cohesion and civic engagement. The article seeks to analyze the mechanisms of trust formation, its impact on social stability and the progress of local communities, as well as to identify practical recommendations for strengthening trust in the face of contemporary challenges. The results of this research may serve as a foundation for developing new strategies aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of local governance and ensuring sustainable community development.

**Main Part.** In this article, the main objective is to investigate trust as a catalyst for community development. To achieve this goal, the following tasks have been formulated: to analyze the mechanisms of trust formation among community members; to explore the impact of trust on the implementation of local initiatives and social stability; to identify the challenges faced by communities in conditions of instability; and to consider possible recommendations for strengthening trust.

To accomplish these tasks, qualitative research methods were employed, including interviews and focus groups with representatives of executive and local government bodies, the public sector, business, volunteer organizations, and representatives of informal initiatives. An analysis of the scientific literature related to trust and its role in community development was conducted. This allowed for the collection of data on the level of trust, civic engagement, and the implementation of local initiatives.

The results of the research showed that trust is a key factor influencing social cohesion. In communities with a high level of trust, there is more active involvement of residents in the implementation of local projects, which, in turn, positively affects social stability. For example, in communities where volunteer initiatives were organized, the level of trust between residents and authorities increased, which facilitated improved cooperation.

The discussion of the results indicates the importance of openness and transparency on the part of local authorities, as well as the necessity of developing platforms for civic participation. The challenges faced by communities, such as living in wartime, political instability, and economic difficulties, can negatively impact trust; however, these challenges can be overcome through active community-level actions.

Thus, trust as a catalyst for community development is an important aspect that requires further research and practical implementation to ensure the sustainable development of local communities. The results of this study can serve as a foundation for developing new strategies aimed at increasing trust among residents and enhancing their participation in community development.

**Materials and Methods of Research.** The empirical basis of our study consists of interviews with representatives of executive and local self-government bodies, the public sector, business, volunteer organizations, and representatives of informal initiatives conducted within the framework of the Polish-Ukrainian research grant project

«Multilevel Governance of the Humanitarian Crisis Caused by the Russian Aggression on Ukraine: Examples of Activities in the Lublin Voivodeship (PL) and the Volyn Oblast (UA)» (funded by NAWA).

To analyze the theoretical aspects of trust, social cohesion, and civic engagement, scientific articles, monographs, and reports were reviewed. The focus was primarily on works related to the mechanisms of trust formation in communities, as well as studies examining the impact of trust on social stability.

The methods of in-depth interviews and focus groups provide a deeper understanding of the context and factors influencing trust within communities.

In addition to primary data, an analysis of reports from local authorities regarding various aspects of community development was conducted.

Overall, the application of these materials and research methods allows for a comprehensive understanding of the role of trust as a catalyst for community development and provides the opportunity to replicate the study in other contexts.

**Results and Discussion.** Trust is a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses various aspects of social life. Studying trust as an inter-individual characteristic, a factor in the functioning of institutions, a social foundation of culture, and a component of social capital allows for a deeper understanding of its role in contemporary society.

For instance, R. Putnam emphasizes the importance of social participation and trust for community development. In his book «Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community» (2000), R. Putnam analyzes the decline of social participation and connections in American communities. He argues that the decreasing level of social activity, particularly participation in community organizations and clubs, leads to the weakening of social capital. Putnam notes that this phenomenon, which he describes as «bowling alone», illustrates the loss of trust and social cohesion in society.

R. Putnam emphasizes that the restoration of social connections and trust is critically important for improving the quality of life in communities. According to him, a high level of social capital contributes to economic development, security, and well-being. Thus, R. Putnam demonstrates that trust and active citizen participation in social processes are the foundation for creating healthy and thriving communities capable of effectively addressing contemporary challenges (Putnam, 2000).

Trust is one of the key social phenomena that forms the basis of interaction among individuals, social groups, and institutions. In modern research, trust is examined from several perspectives, each of which opens new horizons for understanding this complex phenomenon.

In his work «Trust: Reason, Routine, Reflexivity» (2006), G. Möllering analyzes the complex nature of trust, emphasizing its multifaceted impact on social interactions. The author argues that trust is not only an emotional or psychological phenomenon but also the result of rational considerations, routine practices, and reflexive processes. G. Möllering notes that trust is formed in the context of social connections and interactions, where it serves as an important element that ensures stability and predictability in relationships between people. In his work, the scholar emphasizes that trust is foundational for effective collaboration in communities, as it creates conditions for open exchange of information and resources. G. Möllering also points out that in environments with a high level of trust, citizens are more inclined to participate in joint initiatives and address collective problems. Thus, fostering trust at the local level becomes critically important for the development of an active civil society and the achievement of common goals (Möllering, 2006). The approach proposed by the scholar underscores that trust is not only a personal characteristic but also a critically important element for the development of active and healthy communities, ensuring stability and prosperity in society.

Trust is a key element of social interaction, and different researchers identify various types of trust, including strong, weak, and abstract trust. This classification helps to better understand how trust is formed in different social contexts and what implications it has for society as a whole.

In the article «The Strength of Weak Ties» (1973), M. Granovetter explores the importance of weak ties in social networks and their impact on information flows and collaboration opportunities. The author argues that weak ties, although less intense, can play a crucial role in providing access to new resources and information.

M. Granovetter emphasizes that these ties, which are typically formed between unfamiliar or slightly known individuals, can be key to creating new opportunities for development. The researcher also notes that weak ties promote social integration, as they connect different social groups, which in turn can strengthen trust within communities. According to the author, successful interaction between different groups can lead to the development of joint initiatives and projects that contribute to the overall well-being. Thus, M. Granovetter demonstrates that weak ties, despite their nature, are important for fostering trust and social cohesion in communities, leading to their prosperity (Granovetter, 1973).

Strong trust typically arises in small communities, such as church congregations, sects, national minorities, or other social groups with strong internal connections. In such communities, trust among members is extremely high, which fosters the formation of deep personal relationships and supports social cohesion. However, this type of trust is often accompanied by distrust toward external groups, which can lead to isolationism and conflicts with others. For example, closed communities may exhibit hostility toward the outside world, limiting their opportunities for integration and collaboration with others.

Weak trust is evident among members of various voluntary organizations, such as interest clubs or professional associations. This type of trust is impersonal, as it is not based on deep personal connections but rather on shared interests or goals. Weak trust can be beneficial in situations where individuals collaborate to achieve common

objectives; however, it can also lead to insufficient engagement and limited accountability. This, in turn, can negatively impact the effectiveness of organizations that rely on this type of trust.

Abstract trust is the third type, which is formed in contemporary society through educational institutions and mass media. This form of trust does not depend on personal contacts and is based on general norms and values disseminated through curricula, media, and other communication channels. Abstract trust is important for the functioning of large social systems, where individuals may not have personal experience of interaction but rely on widely accepted norms and rules. For example, trust in government institutions or the justice system often hinges on abstract notions of their functionality and fairness.

Each of these types of trust has its own characteristics and impact on social structure. Strong trust fosters the formation of cohesive communities but can lead to isolation. Weak trust supports collaboration at an impersonal level but may be unstable in critical situations. Abstract trust is necessary for the functioning of large social systems, but its absence can lead to a crisis of trust in society.

In the book «Trust: A Sociological Theory» (1999), P. Sztompka examines trust as a key social phenomenon that influences the structure and functioning of society. The author argues that trust is the foundation of social connections, allowing individuals to interact and collaborate in complex social conditions. P. Sztompka emphasizes that trust not only contributes to the formation and maintenance of social relationships but also serves as an important element of social capital. The scholar also highlights that trust is necessary for community development, as it provides predictability in interactions and reduces risks associated with collective actions. According to the author, a high level of trust in communities leads to greater social cohesion, which in turn fosters economic growth and stability. Thus, P. Sztompka demonstrates that trust is a catalyst for community development, as it stimulates active citizen participation in social processes and strengthens social ties (Sztompka, 1999).

Therefore, understanding the different types of trust is important for sociological analysis and the formulation of strategies to enhance social cohesion. Studying these aspects of trust not only helps in examining its mechanisms but also in developing recommendations for improving interpersonal and intergroup relations in society. In today's world, where social connections are becoming increasingly complex, awareness of the nature of trust and its varieties is critically important for ensuring stability and development.

The results of the study indicate a significant impact of trust on community development, as confirmed by the analysis of interviews and focus groups.

The analysis of the empirical research results conducted by the author of this article points to new aspects that may be important for practical application. For example, it was found that openness and transparency in communication between authorities and the community are key factors in strengthening trust. Respondents noted that regular reports on the activities of local authorities and involving citizens in discussions on important issues enhance their trust.

However, it is important to note that this study revealed that real interaction with the population, rather than just formal reports, plays a crucial role in building trust.

Based on the findings, it is recommended to develop programs that stimulate citizen participation in local initiatives, for example, through organizing open forums and consultations. This can contribute not only to increasing the level of trust but also to activating the community as a whole.

Future research prospects may include studying specific mechanisms that influence the formation of trust in other social contexts, as well as analyzing the effectiveness of implemented programs. This will allow for a deeper understanding of how trust can serve as a catalyst for social development and stability.

**Key Results of the Conducted Research.** 1. Trust fosters social cohesion, which is an important factor for the sustainable development of the community. When people trust each other, they are more likely to cooperate within local initiatives, which can lead to improved living conditions. A high level of trust among residents is a critical factor that promotes social cohesion in communities. When people trust each other, as well as their leaders and local authorities, it creates an environment where positive social connections and cooperation can develop.

First, trust among residents promotes the formation of shared values and norms. When people feel they can rely on their neighbors, they are more likely to participate in joint activities such as celebrations, volunteering, or organizing local initiatives. This not only strengthens social ties but also creates a sense of common purpose and belonging within the community.

Second, trust is the foundation for open communication. When residents trust each other, they are willing to share their thoughts, experiences, and problems, which helps resolve conflicts and misunderstandings. Open dialogue helps avoid tension and fosters constructive discussions on local issues, which, in turn, strengthens social cohesion.

Furthermore, trust in local authorities and their representatives has a significant impact on community cohesion. If residents believe that their interests are taken into account and that decisions are made considering their needs, they become more active in governance and development processes. This may include participation in public hearings, initiating projects, or collaborating with authorities to address pressing issues. This not only enhances the well-being of the community but also strengthens social ties.

Trust is the foundation of social cohesion, which, in turn, has a significant impact on the development of Ukrainian communities. In the context of the modern challenges faced by Ukraine, the level of trust among residents, as well as between the community and local authorities, becomes a decisive factor for stability, development, and prosperity.

J. S. Coleman emphasizes the importance of social capital for the development of human capital in communities. In the article «Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital» (1988), J. S. Coleman analyzes the role of social capital in the process of forming human capital. The scholar argues that social capital, particularly trust and social networks, is critically important for the development of skills and knowledge in communities. He highlights that social connections provide the support and resources necessary for learning and personal development. J. S. Coleman emphasizes the significance of trust in creating an environment that fosters the exchange of information and collaborative activities. He notes that a high level of social capital leads to greater community participation in educational initiatives and increases the chances of successful human capital development. Thus, J. S. Coleman demonstrates that social capital is the foundation for forming active and cohesive communities capable of achieving common goals and ensuring prosperity (Coleman, 1988).

In the chapter «Building Trust in Government: The Role of Social Capital» (2005), J. Brehm and A. Cohen explore how social capital influences trust in government and, accordingly, the development of society. The authors argue that social capital, which includes trust, networks, and norms of interaction, is critically important for strengthening trust in government institutions. They emphasize that a high level of trust between citizens and the state fosters greater participation of the population in political processes and enhances governance effectiveness. J. Brehm and A. Cohen highlight that trust in government not only improves interaction between state structures and citizens but also leads to increased social cohesion. According to them, when citizens trust the government, they become more active participants in public life, which, in turn, strengthens the foundations of democratic governance. Thus, the authors demonstrate that the development of social capital is necessary for building trust in communities, leading to stability and societal prosperity (Brehm & Cohen, 2005).

In his chapter «The Place of Social Capital in Understanding Social and Economic Outcomes» (2001), M. Woolcock examines the impact of social capital on social and economic outcomes. He underscores that social capital, which includes networks, trust, and norms of interaction, is an important factor influencing the quality of life in communities. Woolcock notes that social capital creates conditions for cooperation and resource exchange, which, in turn, contributes to improved social welfare and economic development. He emphasizes the importance of trust within communities, asserting that a high level of trust leads to greater social cohesion and active citizen participation in collective initiatives. This, in turn, creates a favorable environment for the development of institutions that support economic growth and social stability. Thus, Woolcock demonstrates that social capital is critically important for achieving successful social and economic outcomes in communities (Woolcock, 2001).

Thus, a high level of trust among residents is the foundation for social cohesion in communities. It contributes to the formation of shared values, open communication, engagement in local governance, and economic development. As a result, communities with high levels of trust become more resilient, cohesive, and prepared to address the challenges arising in the modern world.

A high level of trust in local authorities contributes to greater governance effectiveness. Citizens who trust their leaders are more willing to support their decisions and participate in public processes, leading to more transparent and accountable governance.

Trust is essential for active citizen participation in local self-government. When residents believe that their voices will be heard, they are more willing to engage in public hearings, discussions, and initiatives. This not only increases the level of democracy in governance but also helps authorities better understand the needs and expectations of the population. As a result, decisions made at the local level become more relevant and effective.

In the article «Trust in Government: A Review of the Empirical Literature», Van Der Meer and his co-author examine the importance of trust in government as a key factor that contributes to effective governance and community development. The authors emphasize that a high level of trust in society not only enhances the legitimacy of government institutions but also stimulates active citizen participation in political processes. In particular, they note that trust in government can facilitate cooperation among different social groups, which, in turn, contributes to social cohesion and improved economic outcomes. The research supports the idea that social capital, particularly trust, is a catalyst for community development, as it creates a favorable environment for collaborative action, resource exchange, and collective problem-solving. Thus, understanding and fostering trust at the local level is critically important for the successful implementation of development initiatives and ensuring stability in communities (Meer et al., 2017).

Social trust is a key factor that determines the effectiveness of local self-government, as it creates a foundation for interaction between the community and authorities. A high level of trust allows citizens to actively engage in decision-making processes, which, in turn, increases their interest in the development of their community. When people believe that local authorities act in their interests, they are more likely to support initiatives, participate in public hearings, and get involved in various projects.

Trust stimulates active citizen participation in decision-making processes. When people feel that their opinions matter, they are more engaged in discussions, which can improve the quality of decisions and ensure more sustainable outcomes.

Researching trust within the local governance system is an important tool for identifying contemporary trends in community development. In the context of rapid social, economic, and political changes, understanding the level of trust between the community and local self-governments helps to reveal how these changes impact interaction and cooperation among various stakeholders.

First, analyzing trust allows for identifying factors that promote or hinder the formation of trusting relationships. For example, aspects such as the transparency of decision-making processes, citizen participation in governance,

and the quality of services provided can significantly influence perceptions of trust. This, in turn, helps local authorities adjust their strategies and management approaches, tailoring them to citizens' needs.

Second, trust research can uncover new social trends, such as the rise of civil society activity or shifts in priorities regarding local development issues. For instance, if it is found that the population has more trust in non-governmental organizations than in local authorities, this may indicate the need to change approaches to community interaction and strengthen partnerships with such organizations.

W. Baker emphasizes the importance of trust and social networks in the corporate environment and their impact on development. In the article «Market Networks and Corporate Behavior», W. E. Baker explores the relationship between market networks and corporate behavior, highlighting how social connections influence economic outcomes. The scholar argues that «trust networks» among businesses not only provide access to information and resources but also contribute to the formation of stable business relationships, leading to more effective market functioning. W. Baker emphasizes that trust in business networks plays a key role in reducing risks and costs associated with transactions. When market participants trust one another, they are more likely to collaborate, which allows for the creation of new opportunities for development and innovation. This approach underscores the importance of social capital not only in an economic context but also in a social context, indicating that trust can be a catalyst for the development of both business and the community as a whole (Baker, 1990).

Moreover, trust is essential for the effective implementation of local programs and projects. If the community does not trust the authorities, it may lead to reluctance to support local initiatives, even if they could be beneficial. For example, participation in environmental programs or beautification projects may decrease if citizens believe that their efforts will not be valued or that the results of these projects will not bring real benefits.

It is also worth noting that trust can foster the development of partnerships between authorities, non-governmental organizations, businesses, and activists. When trust exists, the community is willing to collaborate with various stakeholders to achieve common goals. This can lead to more effective decisions and projects that consider the needs of all participants. In the absence of trust, such collaboration becomes unlikely, as each party suspects the other of dishonesty or lack of transparency.

Thus, the interaction between authorities and the community without trust is ineffective and leads to numerous problems. Only by strengthening trust between authorities and society can constructive dialogue be achieved, conflicts be reduced, successful projects be implemented, and partnerships be developed to improve the quality of life in communities. Therefore, it is important to work on restoring and strengthening this trust in contemporary conditions.

Trust has a positive impact on the economic development of the community. When entrepreneurs and businesses trust each other, conditions are created for investment and collaboration, which in turn stimulates economic activity and job creation.

F. Fukuyama emphasizes the importance of trust for economic development and social cohesion. In his book «Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity» (1995), F. Fukuyama explores the role of trust in economic development and social prosperity. He argues that trust is a social virtue that contributes to economic growth and the development of society. F. Fukuyama highlights that a high level of trust among people reduces transaction costs, fosters cooperation, and ensures more effective market functioning. The scholar also emphasizes that trust not only supports economic relationships but also strengthens social cohesion within communities. According to him, when citizens trust one another and institutions, it creates a favorable environment for collective action and initiatives. Thus, F. Fukuyama demonstrates that trust is a critically important factor for the development of prosperous and stable communities capable of successfully addressing social and economic challenges (Fukuyama, 1995).

Moreover, studying trust can help identify regional characteristics and differences in the perception of local governance. This is important for developing tailored development strategies that take into account the specifics of each community. In particular, different regions may exhibit varying levels of trust in authorities, which depend on historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors.

Overall, research on trust within the local governance system is a necessary element for forming effective management mechanisms that meet the needs and expectations of citizens. It allows for understanding the current state of affairs as well as anticipating potential challenges and opportunities for the future development of local communities.

5. Trust helps reduce conflicts within communities. When people trust one another, they are more inclined to compromise and constructively resolve disputes, which contributes to stability and development. Trust fosters the reduction of conflicts and misunderstandings. When citizens trust their representatives, they are more open to constructive dialogue and willing to compromise when disagreements arise. In the absence of trust, conflicts can intensify, as community representatives may feel that the authorities act in their interests only formally, while their concerns are ignored. This can lead to protests, social unrest, or even a loss of support for the authorities.

Information wars and disinformation, which are actively used in modern conflicts, also contribute to a decline in trust. When citizens cannot distinguish truth from manipulation, it leads to distrust in information sources and government bodies. As a result, people become less willing to trust one another, making it more difficult to form healthy social connections.

Socialization, experiences of interaction with others, and cultural traditions shape individual perceptions of trust. For example, in cultures that value cooperation, collectivism, and mutual assistance, the likelihood of forming trust among community members is significantly higher. This is because such cultures promote the development of shared understanding and expectations, which become the foundation for building trusting relationships.

Cultural norms that support trust can vary depending on the social context. In some cultures, emphasis is placed on individual achievements, which can lower the level of trust among people, as competition may dominate over cooperation. In such cases, trust may be more limited and require additional efforts to establish.

In the book «The Moral Foundations of Trust» (2002), E. M. Uslaner explores the ethical and social foundations of trust, emphasizing its significance for fostering healthy social relationships and communities. The scholar argues that trust is a moral foundation for creating social connections that promote cooperation and mutual understanding. E. M. Uslaner analyzes how moral values and social norms shape trust within society, which, in turn, influences social cohesion and stability.

E. M. Uslaner also emphasizes that trust not only improves interactions among citizens but also encourages active participation in decision-making processes. According to the author, a high level of trust leads to greater civic engagement, which is key to the development of democratic institutions and community strengthening. Thus, E. M. Uslaner demonstrates that the moral underpinnings of trust are critically important for forming cohesive and active communities that can effectively address contemporary challenges (Uslaner, 2002).

Traditions and rituals that function as mechanisms for strengthening trust are also important. For example, many cultures have ceremonies that symbolize friendship or partnership, which can foster the formation of trusting relationships. These social practices help reinforce connections between people, creating a sense of community and mutual understanding.

In societies that have experienced conflict or social upheaval, the level of trust can be significantly diminished. In such cases, rebuilding trust becomes a challenging task that requires efforts from the community to restore damaged social bonds.

Overall, understanding the cultural aspects of trust can help ensure social stability and development, promoting the formation of healthy and productive social relationships.

6. Communities with a high level of trust are better equipped to cope with crises (economic, environmental, or social). Trust enables quicker mobilization of resources and mutual support during difficult times.

Historical events, social changes, and transformations impact the level of trust in society. This aspect is extremely important, as trust does not exist in isolation; it is formed and altered depending on broader social and cultural conditions.

One of the key factors influencing trust is the historical experience of society. For example, in countries that have experienced crises, wars, or social upheavals, trust in government institutions may decline. This process is often driven by deep traumas that remain in the collective memory of society and can evoke feelings of distrust towards a system that, in the citizens' view, has failed to meet their needs or provide protection. Conflicts, corruption, and governance failures can contribute to the formation of a negative image of government institutions, which in turn weakens the social fabric of trust.

In the context of social changes, it is important to note that rapid transformations, such as economic crises or political upheavals, can induce uncertainty and anxiety among the population. In such conditions, people often become skeptical about the ability of the state and other social institutions to fulfill their functions. This can lead to increased social tension and conflicts, as citizens begin to seek alternative sources of trust or form parallel structures that can provide them with a sense of security.

At the same time, in stable societies where historical experience, social institutions, and cultural values work together to maintain trust, the level of trust is usually high. In such contexts, citizens feel that their interests are represented and that social institutions act for their benefit. This creates a positive cycle where high trust leads to stability and cooperation, and stability, in turn, enhances the level of trust.

7. Trust can serve as a catalyst for the development of civic engagement in Ukraine, as it creates a foundation for effective interaction between residents and local authorities, as well as among the citizens themselves. In a context where society faces numerous challenges, such as economic difficulties, political changes, and social tensions, trust becomes an important element for building resilient and active communities.

The formation of trust in local communities is a key factor in enhancing their activity. Trust stimulates social connections, opens opportunities for constructive dialogue, increases willingness to participate in local affairs, and strengthens community resilience. As a result, active communities are better equipped to tackle challenges and achieve positive changes in their development.

Trust effectively acts as a catalyst for the growth of civic engagement in Ukraine, laying the groundwork for positive social connections, active participation in local governance, and involvement in community initiatives. In the face of the contemporary challenges confronting Ukrainian society, strengthening trust between citizens and local authorities is critically important for forming resilient and active communities capable of achieving positive changes.

**Conclusions.** The results of the study open new perspectives for further scientific research, which may focus on the specific mechanisms of trust formation in various social contexts. Overall, trust is not only the foundation for effective governance but also contributes to the creation of resilient and prosperous communities.

The analysis of trust provides valuable insights for developing strategies aimed at strengthening social bonds. This knowledge can serve as a basis for creating a society with a higher level of trust, where citizens feel safer and social institutions perform their functions more effectively.

Trust can be seen as a necessary condition for successful collaboration. When parties share a common goal and are willing to work together to achieve it, having at least a degree of trust becomes essential. This applies not

only to formal relationships, such as cooperation between government agencies and citizens, but also to the informal connections that are formed within society.

Institutions that demonstrate a high degree of openness and accountability typically foster a high level of trust. For example, organizations that regularly report on their activities and involve members in decision-making can serve as role models in the context of building trust. This also applies to governmental institutions, which must ensure the transparency of their actions to maintain citizens' trust.

In summary, it is essential to emphasize that trust is a complex social phenomenon that can be viewed from various perspectives. It represents a mental state that cannot be measured directly, as it relates to an individual's internal feelings towards another person, organization, or institution. Confidence in the outcomes of the trust process can be assessed through behavior, as well as through self-assessment of trust, making this concept multifaceted and complex for analysis.

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