Political Trust and Socio-Spatial Contexts

Challenging Eurocentric Models through Ethiopia´s Rural-Urban Disparities

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Abstract

Compared to its urban counterpart, the rural often lacks access to public services. In the global north, this rural-urban divide is said to result in rural areas being perceived as neglected. The concept of geography of discontent investigates this feeling of being left behind, saying it leads to a lower level of trust in political institutions. Similarly, the OECD concludes in their research that a region´s GDP is directly correlated with the level of the so-called political trust. Considering evidential research and survey data for the global south leading to contrary results, the thesis aims to test the concepts and findings from the global north in Ethiopia, exemplified with the urban city Addis Abeba and the rural village Koyo. The research is theoretically framed within the discussion of social capital as a broader perspective of how place-based differences influence the formation of political trust. Using a quantitative approach, a survey was conducted with 100 participants. The study employs statistical analysis, including t-tests and correlation coefficients, to assess the relationship between these variables across the two locations. Despite having a lower level of access to public services, Koyo holds an equal level of political trust compared to Addis Abeba. While the correlation in Koyo is strongly positive and in Addis Abeba it is non-significant, the data does not just suggest a differences in relationship between the two places, but also that the rural-urban dynamics within this research differs compared to the global north. The outcomes highlight and exemplify the complexities of political trust and how incentives are underlying place-based differences and therefore adds to the debate around the universality of theories and concepts developed in the global north.

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1. Introduction

At latest with the Great Renaissance Dam which produces power from the volume-rich river of the Blue Nile, Ethiopia aims the next step on the path to a prosperous future (BBC, 2022). The dam will provide the country with cheap and renewable electricity, while the surplus in the rainy season can be exported to neighbouring countries (Holleis, 2023). As a byproduct of this path, the country just recently decided to only allow the import of electric vehicles, where people can charge their cars comfortably at home and are not dependent on the sky-rocketing fuel prices (Ehl, 2024). The chosen path towards sustainable development shows potential change in a country, which image is still very often connected to deadly famines. But how do those decisions and development paths translate into a country, where only 7,6% of the rural population have access to electricity at their households (World Bank, 2016)? While in Addis Abeba, the capital city, people can park their electric vehicles in the underground garages of the high-rise buildings, the rural lacks behind with access to basic services and change is awaited in vain, although the existence of many promising rural development plans (OECD, 2020). In Ethiopia, the geographical location (being urban or rural) is one if not the major driver of welfare inequality, since it implies differences in educational and health possibilities, employment prospects, as well as recourse and service accessibilities (Abate et al., 2020; Dula et al., 2023). Public services such as education, health provision, public transportation, clean water, or electricity, are defining features for the development status of a country, the capacity and performance of a state, and the level of well-being within a region (Brinkerhoff et al., 2016; Abate et. al., 2020).

In the global north[1], the rural-urban divide, where the rural environments lack in access to and quality of services and recourses compared to the urban, often provokes discontent among the rural community towards governments and institutions (Stroppe, 2023; Hyland & Mascherini, 2023). The concept of *geography of discontent* evaluates on this gap and finds that the rural communities often feel neglected, which turns into a lower level of trust towards the governments and the people in power, as well as national and international institutions, the so-called *political trust* (Zmerli, 2014; Stroppe, 2023; Rodriguez-Pose et al., 2023).

Staying in the global north, OECD studies about the relevance of political trust conclude that the higher a region´s GDP, the higher the level of political trust (OECD, 2017; Algan, 2018). In the global north, where the rural often holds a lower GDP as well as a lower level of political trust, this might be valid (Hyland & Mascherini, 2023; Stroppe, 2023). But how about other socio-spatial contexts?

For Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA), where the rural-urban gap is as evident as in the global north, the conclusions of the OECD and the geography of discontent ought to be tested as well (UN DESA, 2021). Does the gap between rural and urban also converts into political discontent of the rural? Brinkerhoff et al. (2016) and McKay et al. (2023) have researched about the correlation between political trust and access to public services in SSA and find evidence that the claims of the OECD and geography of discontent are indeed not applicable. When taking the data of the World Bank (2016) and the World Value Survey (WVS) (2020) for Ethiopia into account, it shows that while access to public services is lower in rural Ethiopia, they do trust the institutions more than their urban counterparts.

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[1] Although dividing the world into a "global north" and a "global south" might be invalid, the terms describe less of a geographical differentiation, but more of a geo-political that not just focuses on economic development, but also "an entire history of colonialism, neo-imperialism, and differential economic and social change through which large inequalities in living standards, life expectancy, and access to resources are maintained" (Dados & Conell, 2012).

The findings of Brinkerhoff et al. (2016) and McKay et al. (2023) and the trust data of the WVS (2020) therefore contradict with the findings of the geography of discontent and the research of the OECD. In light of this contradiction, this thesis aims to test the concepts and findings from the global north in Ethiopia, exemplified with the urban city of Addis Abeba and a rural village in the Ethiopian Highlands, namely Koyo. The outcomes are not applicable for the whole of Ethiopia but carry a rather conceptual than a generalizable nature and are therefore a valid example for testing concepts and findings of the global north in the global south. With collecting data through a survey about the personal conception of access to public services (independent variable) and political trust (dependent variable) in the two selected locations, this thesis aims the answer the following research question:

> *How does the relationship of access to public services and political trust in the Ethiopian village of Koyo and the city Addis Abeba differ and how can these findings be evaluated in light of the concept of geography of discontent and the established methodology of relevant OECD studies?*

This question is built upon the consideration that the global development strategies are often Eurocentric and based on knowledge that is gained from research in the global north. The OECD is understood as one of the major global institutions for governance, guiding the way for international development. While citing itself as a "unique forum and knowledge hub for data, analysis and best practices in public policy", "that works to build better policies for better lives" (OECD, 2021), it follows the aim of an interconnected globalized capitalism (Horner, 2020). Not uncommonly named a "rich-mans-club" (Camps, 1975), it must hold up to the accusation that its "vision, positioned as universal while simultaneously firmly grounded in Eurocentric epistemologies, is neocolonial as much as it is neoliberal" (Hughson, 2022).

Further, the concept of geography of discontent is used as an example of an uprising scientific and academic concept that is, inter alia, adopted by supra-national organisations such as the European Commission's Department for Regional and Urban Policy that builds upon

gained knowledge of the global north and is therefore tested for its validity and applicability in other socio-spatial settings, namely Ethiopia (Rodriguez-Pose et al., 2023).

To investigate the formation of trust and ask if and why it might differ between places, it is necessary to take one step back and evaluate on socio-spatial conditions that may affect the patterns of people´s trust behaviour. To do so, this thesis follows with introducing *social capital*, which is also theoretically understood as a compositional element of trust (Lin, 1999; Siisiäinen, 2003). Here, there are different approaches on how to see and evaluate it. One is built upon the research of Robert Putnam (1993; 2000), which sees it as a necessity for a functioning society and says the more the better, ignoring socio-spatial complexities. The other approach is built upon the *social capital theory* by the structuralist Pierre Bourdieu (1986; 1990), which sees it as the (re-)producer of social inequality and class struggle. The literature review is introducing both, while criticising the former and utilizing the latter for a geographical reconceptualization of social capital, which helps when evaluating place-based differences in trust patterns. For the comprehension of the OECD studies and their conclusions, it is important to show Robert Putnam´s take on social capital und trust since this is also the theoretical understanding of the OECD research (OECD, 2017; Algan, 2018).

After evaluating on a geographical understanding of social capital and how socio-spatial differences affect the formation and the nature of it, the thesis introduces the main research objective, political trust. It is the glue that holds the society together and a main indicator for the relationship between the citizens and the state (Zmerli, 2014). Utilizing the gained understanding about the geographical component of social capital, political trust serves as an indicator for place-based differences in social behaviour. Highlighting the diverse interplay of effects that influence its formation, this thesis justifies the use of political trust as a phenomenon that underlies socio-spatial differences and is therefore well fitting when testing concepts and research outcomes of the global north in another geographical setting.

To do so, relevant OECD studies and the concept of geography of discontent, which importance has been highlighted above, are presented to introduce conclusions of the relationship between political trust and access to public services, in respect to the rural-urban dynamics and a region´s GDP.

After presenting the research conclusions and concepts for the global north that are to be tested for the global south, the thesis evaluates on the socio-economic focus of this research. With the socio-political context of SSA, the country Ethiopia and its rural-urban dynamics, as well as the rational justification of location choices for Addis Abeba and the village of Koyo, the thesis gives an understanding on why the established methodology of the OECD and the concept of geography of discontent are investigated in the realm of this research topic, since it comes to light that the rural in Ethiopia lacks behind in access to public services as well as GDP and other socio-economic indexes when comparing with the Ethiopian urban, especially Addis Abeba.

Subsequently, the thesis dives deeper into access to public services as a second research objective, to provide a better understanding on why the relationship between political trust and access to public services is needed to be evaluated in different socio-spatial contexts. Services provide a capability and a substantial freedom for the actors receiving and accessing it and is therefore a substantial factor for the formation of political trust (Sen, 1999). The provision of services can be used for judging governmental performance as well as what citizens expect their government to provide and how this provision impacts the solidarity and support towards the political system and its institutions (Brinkerhoff et al., 2016; Stroppe, 2023; McKay et al., 2023).

Furthermore, research about the relationship between political trust and access to public services in a SSA context (Brinkerhoff et al. (2016) and McKay et al. (2023)) as well as the

WVS (2020) data for Ethiopia are presented. The outcomes are opposing to the before mentioned conclusions and concepts of the global north, namely that the rural of either SSA or Ethiopia has a higher level of political trust, despite having less access to public services.

These claims of an opposing relationship of the two research objectives build the deductive hypotheses of this thesis, which are tested with the help of an anonymous questionnaire survey in Addis Abeba as well as Koyo, where 100 participants are asked about their personal conception of their access to public services, as well as their level of political trust. The questions cover a selection of services such as clean water, electricity, education, health, or public transportation and selected institutions such as churches/mosques, the press and media, the regional and the domestic government, as well as banks and humanitarian organisations. With the selected data of the survey, the relationship can be analysed within the context of the rural-urban dynamics in Ethiopia, although not conclusive for neither the whole country, nor SSA. Through examining the data with a quantitative analysis, the thesis provides a meaningful testification of the research claims and concepts of the global north and answers the question if these research claims and concepts are applicable for the chosen case.

After presenting the methodology in the framework for analysis chapter, this thesis evaluates on the analytical tests as well as presenting the statistical results. The discussion section answers the research question through interpreting the results and what they imply for the presented contradiction in the literature, as well as presenting the limitations. As a conclusion, the thesis finishes up with summarizing the results as well as an outlook on further research in this field.

2. Literature review

To show the diversity of the disputed viewpoints around social capital, this chapter firstly dives into Robert Putnam and his economic lens, to further criticise it with employing a set of geographic researchers that have done so too. It is those geographic researchers[2] that are calling for a theoretical reconceptualization which uses an understanding of social capital based on Pierre Bourdieu and his social capital theory (Naughton, 2013; Withers, 2018). Before doing the reconceptualization, this chapter therefore introduces Bourdieu´s theory as a foundation, which helps to see social capital in a geographic understanding. Social Capital and trust are compositional elements of each other and with the help of the geographic notion of social capital, this chapter sets a tone to not just look at trust, which will subsequently be discussed, but also the empirical research that has been done from the diverse set of viewpoints (Lin, 1999; Siisiäinen, 2003). With introducing different research such as the OECD and the geography of discontent, the chapter moves towards the deductive hypotheses, which are built upon the argumentation that Putnam´s theoretical understanding of social capital, the research of the OECD and the concept of geography of discontent is not applicable for the socio-spatial conditions in Ethiopia.

2.1. Theoretical Background: Social Capital

The two main approaches on social capital stand for contrary ideologies (Braun, 2002). Within the neoclassic economics, Social Capital is discussed as a public good and a collective asset. It is a free choice to either use or not, since "these collective assets and features are available to all members of the group or community" (Lin, 1999: 32). From a structuralist viewpoint, social capital reproduces social exclusion. It is seen as "a process by which

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[2] Using the term `geography scholars` shall not imply that every single geographic research would go along with these critiques of the mainstream. Economic geographers such as Grillitsch & Nilsson (2022), for example, are building on the understanding Putnam and Coleman have provided.

individuals of the dominated class (…) reinforce and produce a privileged group which holds various capital" (ibid.). On the functionalist corner, we have Putnam asking, "what are the preconditions for the development of strong, responsive representative institutions and a prosperous economy?" (Siisiäinen, 2003: 3). On the structuralist corner, Bourdieu asks about the production and reproduction of social structures, focusing on class struggle and social exclusion (Bourdieu, 1986). Nevertheless, both are getting the same answer: Social Capital (Lin, 1999).

2.1.1. Criticizing Robert Putnam

Within Putnam´s research around the question why some regions develop a prosperous economy while others don´t, he concludes that a civic community with "an atmosphere of mutual co-operation, vital social networks, equal political relations and the tradition of citizen participation" (Siisiäinen, 2003: 3) is the base for a prosperous economy with well-functioning institutions (Putnam, 1993). The Harvard professor sees the participation in clubs and associations such as sports or voluntary cultural events as key for a functioning, democratic society. His main measurement of social capital is therefore civic engagement:

> Skills and dispositions such as initiative, attentiveness, trust, organizational ability, egalitarian attitudes, and tolerance towards strangers, which are acquired and reinforced in club life, extend beyond their respective social, thematic, and temporal contexts of origin and can make a significant contribution to democratic political culture. Offe & Fuchs, 2001: 429f.

Putnam´s social capital can be divided into three components: trust, social norms and obligations, and social networks of citizens´ activity (Braun, 2002; Siisiäinen, 2003).

Putnam used a macro-economic approach to explain social human behaviour. A society with a well-working governance, an active democracy, and a prosperous economy is founded on the available social capital (Naughton, 2013). Putnam (1993) sees the engagement in civic and communal societies as main proxies for a well-functioning society. Here, social capital is

there to purely do good for the individual and the society as a whole (Naughton, 2013; Westlund & Larsson, 2016; Baycan & Öner, 2022). But the more the better does not always count when it comes to social capital. Among others, corruption or organized crime can appear more often when a thick social setting, with high amount of social capital, is given (Baycan & Öner, 2022). At some places, some social capital might be doing good for the region´s development, while for other regions, the same social capital could be hindering (Westlund & Larsson, 2016). When speaking about trust, Putnam emphasizes on the fact that it always creates a positive outcome (ibid.). But, as one knows, "all people should not be trusted. There is a need also for distrust" (Ibid: 14). Trust is only seen from a perspective where it can harness economic success and political stability. Unfortunately, this is far from reality, ignoring socio-spatial complexities (Tranter & Booth, 2019).

It is these ignored socio-spatial complexities that let a geographer's mind unrest. The assumptions about social capital being universally accountable and objectivist, where humans act within a given, static, and isolated space, create a homogenic, one-dimensional society with everyone being undifferentiated actors following the same aim (Mohan & Mohan, 2002; Holt, 2008; Hutchison & Johnson, 2011; Naughton, 2013; Westlund & Larsson, 2016; Tranter & Booth, 2019; Lipps & Schraff, 2021). No matter what the problem is or where it sits, "the answer is to ´build´ social capital through community organization regardless of the sociospatial or socio-economic context" (Naughton, 2013: 11).

The economic notion of social capital is seen as a simplification that is trying to model human´s behaviour within a context, where all humans mean the same when talking about a civic society and what it means to improve it (Mohan & Mohan, 2002; Naughton, 2013; Withers, 2018). Putnam´s description underlies the assumptions that human´s behaviour is purely rational and based on utility-maximation (Naughton, 2013). Non-economic motives and uncivic attitudes such as unrest or protest are disregarded and the modelled household is that

of a nuclear family where the mother stays at home and on Sunday all go to church (ibid.). Saying that "civic connections help us make us healthy, wealthy, and wise", Putnam (2000: 228) follows the idea of the do-it-yourself attitude, where the shift of responsibility goes from the political economy, with its structural inequality, exclusion, and oppression, towards the individual civic engagement (Holt, 2008; Naughton, 2013). The individual serves the civic in order to create a prosperous life, having nothing in mind but managing his or her economy through civic connections, completely unattached from the bigger picture, the political economy. With giving the responsibility for someone´s well-being to the individual only, it creates a "blaming-the-victim" environment, which fits into the pro-market ideology, where "society is seen as shaped by the needs of the market, and not the other way round" (Naughton, 2013: 11).

To summarize, geographers criticize the economic notion of social capital for three main reasons: seeing social capital as entirely good, saying the more the better (1), modelling human behaviour not just homogenously, but also in an isolated container (2), and imply that human behaviour is based on utility-maximization, where the responsibility lies on the individual and the political, economic, social, and cultural environments are ignored (3).

2.1.2. Using a different approach: Pierre Bourdieu

To internalize the critique further, geographers are calling for Pierre Bourdieu´s capital theory as a foundation for social capital (Holt, 2008; Naughton, 2013). Many years after Karl Marx defined capital as a key term within the capitalist process, Pierre Bourdieu (1986) added a social and cultural side to the before purely economic understanding. Social capital can be seen as the aggregate of the resources that are based on the membership of a social group (ibid.). One person´s social capital is therefore depending "on the size of the network of connections he [*sic*] can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his [*sic*] own right by each of those to whom he [*sic*] is connected"

(ibid.: 21). Although one´s network gives one the possibility to mobilize social capital, it also limits the amount of possible mobilized social capital.

As a structuralist sociologist, Bourdieu focused most on the (re-)production of social inequality and the different forms of capital that serve as tools to show that one´s social stand is dependent on not just money, but also on who you know and which group you belong to. Since one member can mobilize the possible social capital according to one's group and one group can have more capital than others, social inequalities are getting reproduced through those group memberships. For Bourdieu, class struggle is real and social capital hinders social mobility (Braun, 2002).

Social capital is also interdependent with other forms of capital. Cultural capital, which is embodied through the cultural etiquette, values or norms, "facilitates the development of social capital" (Holt, 2008: 232). It can be a door-opener for specific social relationships, since it can "facilitate the types of appropriate sociability" (ibid.) that are necessary to build up social capital within a group or a society. The economic capital can also impact someone´s group membership and vice versa. All forms of capital are interconnected and affect each other (Bourdieu, 1986). One´s social capital can be converted to cultural capital which in turn could be converted into economic capital as well (ibid.).

Another key concept of Bourdieu´s Social Capital Theory is the *Habitus*, which forms the way actors interact in the everyday social environment (Bourdieu, 1990). It is unconsciously produced, mostly throughout childhood, as a mirror of one´s "society written into the body, into the biological individual" (Bourdieu, 1990: 63). The culture of one´s particular group is embodied as durable dispositions in, for example, speech or taste. "Habitus is the embodied materialization of individual capitals, or internalized capital" (Holt, 2008: 233). The cultural and social capital of one group, becomes, through an unconscious formation, internalized and embodied as the Habitus of the individual. The cultural and social capital

varies between the different groups and classes (Bourdieu, 1990). The working class fosters a different culture than the upper class, consequently they have a different Habitus. Although one´s Habitus is shaped throughout time and can be partially reformed, it is both structured and structuring (ibid.; Holt, 2008). For Bourdieu, the Habitus is the embodiment of the (re-)production of social inequality, since social structures form human behaviour, but also the behaviour limits the social mobility within the structures. It is "the product of structure, producer of practice, and the reproducer of structure" (Bourdieu, 1990: 221). Furthermore, Habitus differs not just between class structures, but also places. Different cultures create different cultural and social capital, which results in a different Habitus. For Bourdieu, space is social and the Habitus influences this social space, the so-called *Habitat*. In reverse, this Habitat is influencing the Habitus (Ibid.). Although different settings create a different Habitus, Bourdieu´s theory does not imply a dichotomous way of looking at social structures. Cultural and social capital as well as the Habitus are within a spectrum that is not dichotomous, nor there is a good and bad (Naughton, 2013).

The reasons why geographers call for Bourdieu within the debate around social capital is that, as an opposition to Putman's view, it is seen as relational and interdependent with other forms of capital and conditions within a group. Also, while Putnam favours Social Capital being an entirely good thing, Bourdieu uses it for describing class-relations, including power, domination, and oppression. It is more sensitive to not just spatial, but also socio-economic, historic and political contexts, since it doesn't just sit there, it is embodied within the interconnection of a diverse set of environmental conditions. When comparing trust levels in different socio-spatial conditions, the Habitus is an attractive tool to understand that human behaviour is a result of a diverse set of impacts and that different people from different cultures trust differently.

2.1.3.Geographic reconceptualization of Social Capital

With settling the theoretical foundation of how to look at social capital from a geographic perspective using Bourdieu´s social capital theory, it is now possible to evaluate and reconceptualize it.

As known from several studies within neurobiology and psychology, a person´s decision-making is a result from the experiences and memories of that person (Damasio, 1994). Although this is a complicated and complex field to argue with, it can be said that every person lives its own reality, its own Habitus. Combining the realities of a diverse set of persons (e.g. into one society) results into a clash of conflicting realities and rationalities. Social capital is to be analysed on a behavioural dimension which distinguishes between specific socio-spatial conditions. Hence, social capital is "a set of relations, processes, practices and subjectivities that affect, and are affected by, the contexts and spaces in which they operate" (Naughton, 2013: 13).

With this geographic concept, social capital becomes "dehomogenized" (Ettlinger, 2003), sensible to power relations (Allen, 2004), including gender, ethnicity, sexuality differences (Radcliffe, 2004), and an analytical counterpart to the "market-triumphalism", which, instead of just proving a given theory that is seen as ultimate, "help us see openings, to provide a space of freedom and possibility" (Gibson-Graham, 2008: 619). Instead of just looking at utility maximization, social capital can now also look at the care of others, third-sector activities, fair trade, community-supported agriculture, informal financial networks, etc. (ibid.). Instead of deflecting the "real problem", inequality and deprivation, it looks at how actors benefit from group recourses, allowing a more differentiated view, with more disaggregated measurements (Mohan & Mohan, 2002; Naughton, 2013). In essence, Linda Naughton says it best:

> Contemporary human geography celebrates the multiple, the diverse, the partial, the contingent, the dynamic, and the embodied performances of the social in and through space and place. Neoclassical economics privileges the predictable, the ordered, the rational, the ceteris paribus of an undifferentiated world modelled on quantifiable variables and equations that auto-equilibrate.   Naughton, 2013: 5

The geographic reconceptualization of social capital is important to analysis socio-spatial differences, which have a high political currency and a high analytical value (Holt, 2008). To do so, this paper follows up with diving deeper into trust.

2.2. Trust

Trust is one if not the major component of social capital and it works as a glue that holds the society together (Lin, 1999; Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000; Putnam, 2000; Dasgupta, 2010; Coleman, 1993; Algan, 2018; Holt, 2008; Withers, 2018). "Human beings need trust" (Lin 1999: 147) for either an instrumental interchange for economic exchanges (Coleman, 1993), or as a basis for the legitimacy of power, the achievement of collective goals, or the integration of society (Parsons, 1963). A trusting society is seen as stable, cohesive, and collaborative (Misztal, 1996).

Although scholars seem to agree on the importance of trust, there has not been a shared definition and it is "one of the most fascinating and fundamental social phenomena yet at the same time one of the most elusive and challenging concepts one could study" (Lyon et al., 2012: 1). Nonetheless, Coleman (who sits on the functionalist corner and is one of the most influential trust-scholars) defines it as such: "an individual trusts if he or she voluntarily places resources at the disposal of another party without any legal commitment from the latter, but with the expectation that the act of trust will pay off" (Coleman, 1990). A less homo-economicus perception would be Newton´s, who comes from political science and being influential especially on political trust: "trust is defined here as the actor's belief that, at worst, others will not knowingly or willingly do him [*sic*] harm, and at best, that they will act in his [*sic*] interest" (Newton, 2001: 202). But while following up, he agrees with the above-

mentioned, saying that the terminology of trust is not easily defined. Although this paper works with trust, it does not try to find the ultimate solution for a short definition, but rather looks at the concept of it and what it means for societal understanding.

Throughout the literature, many scholars separate trust in three distinct types (Galindo-Pe´rez-de-Azpillaga et al., 2013). Zmerli and Newton (2011) get to the point best, naming them *particular social trust*, *general social trust*, and *political trust*.

The first two types sit on an inter-personal foundation where it depends if people trust one another. Particular social trust means trusting someone in particular, someone you know. Kinships, family, friends, neighbours, or work colleagues are within the social circle and the trust towards them is knowledge-based and builds upon shared experiences (Zmerli & Newton, 2011). Trusting people with a shared religion, ethnicity, language, or culture, can be seen as particular social trust as well (Uslaner, 2002). Hence, it is about trusting "those we know or are like us" (Zmerli & Newton, 2011: 69). General social trust, one the other hand, is value-based. This is the type of trust where the before-mentioned glue that holds the society together gets conceptualized (Siisiäinen, 2003; Newton & Zmerli, 2011; Algan, 2018). Here, it is about if people in general can be trusted, without having the knowledge or experience with what it would become a personal decision rather than an abstract attitude (Misztal, 1996). The WVS (2020) - which is widely used across the literature - describes it best asking the question: "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?" General social trust is about trusting the unknown other.

2.2.1.Political trust

To begin with, it is necessary to say that throughout the different time and space of research with political trust, there has been a diverse set of terminology, with alternative concepts. Those alternative, but very closely related concepts, are, among others, *confidence in political institutions* (Brinkerhoff et al., 2016), *institutional trust* (OECD, 2017; Algan,

2018), *political support* (Easton, 1965), or *system trust* (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). But as Zmerli and van der Meer (2017) note, these concepts "are hardly separable as indicated by strong correlates and the high similarities of trends" (ibid.: 4).

The importance of trust in a political system is undebated. Zmerli and van der Meer (2017) even reuse the above-mentioned glue metaphor: "Political trust thus functions as the glue that keeps the system together and as the oil that lubricates the policy machine" (ibid: 1). The existence of political trust legitimises the nation-state, it´s agencies with their daily businesses, the trust in sanctions when breaking the law, elections, and consequently the pure heart and soul of a democratic society (Hooghe & Zmerli, 2011).

Nonetheless, "the concept of trust in institutions is at an earlier stage of both theoretical and empirical development than that of inter-personal trust" (Algan, 2018: 291). Sonja Zmerli, which occurred to have a high and influential output about political trust, defines it as such:

> Political trust refers to citizens' assessments of the core institutions of the polity and entails a positive evaluation of the most relevant attributes that make each political institution trustworthy, such as credibility, fairness, competence, transparency in its policy-making, and openness to competing views. Zmerli, 2014: 4887

On a micro-perspective, political trust forms through either particular or diffuse reasons (Easton, 1965). Particular is the focus on something in particular as incumbent officeholders, but also general attitudes towards elites and authorities. The *diffuse political trust* is more abstract towards the legitimacy of the state and its agencies, including core values and principles (Easton, 1965; Norris, 2017). While *particular political trust* is evaluated throughout the different events and experiences, the diffuse political trust is more stable (Easton, 1975). Particular political trust describes trust in the daily business of a political system. Diffuse trust is based on identity, national pride, values, and principles (Zmerli & Newton, 2011; Norris, 2017; Lipps & Schraff, 2021).

For the macro perspective, there are two main approaches that being used to explain the formation of political trust (Zmerli, 2014). One is a top-down approach, where the performance of the government is responsible for the amount of political trust within the society. When the political system provides a social, political, and economic environment that sows political rights, equality, economic prosperity, transparency, and so forth, it will reap citizens trusting in the political system. The second approach is the bottom-up approach, where social capital is responsible for the formation of political trust. Here, a general atmosphere of cohesion, cooperation, and solidarity produces an environment where citizens actively engage in politics and "consequently, become supportive of the political system as a whole" (Zmerli, 2014: 4888). While the first approach is performance-oriented and leaves the responsibility for the government, the second approach sees the formation of political trust as a result from a society with a culture of social cohesion, cooperation, and social ties. When acknowledging both approaches for looking at how political trust is formed, it is not just the performance of the government, but also the amount of social capital within one society that lays the foundation of political trust (Figure 1).

On the macro level, the amount of political trust within one society is an interplay of how much people generally trust each other or the government (available social capital) and on how much the government provides an environment in which it can be trusted (performance of the government). On the micro level, it is an interplay of judging the governments performance (Particular trust) and a general attitude towards the nation (Diffuse trust) (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Formation of political trust

Particular reasoning for trusting

| The performance of the government | | Particular trust |

Diffuse reasoning for trusting

Level of political trust

Micro reasoning for trusting

| Available Social Capital | | Diffuse trust |

Macro reasoning for trusting
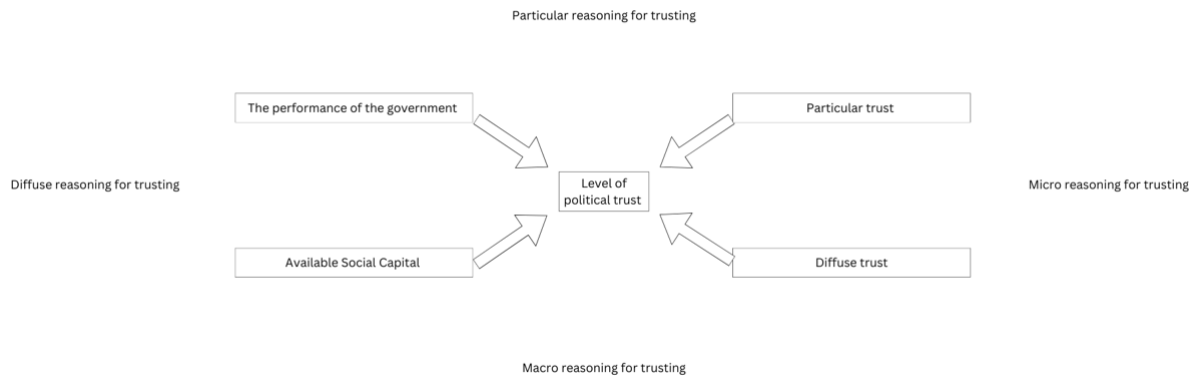
Notes. Illustration by the author using Zmerli´s (2014) two approaches to the formation of political trust.

2.3. Research from the global north

After reconceptualizing social capital from a geographic point of view and defining the reasoning for the formation of political trust, the following chapter dives into the empirical state of the art and how the above-mentioned concepts are implemented. First, the research of the OECD is presented, which is a functionalist take on the debate around measuring well-being in light of economic activity and trust and therefore relevant when evaluating on the factors that correlate with the formation of political trust. Afterwards, research within the concept of geography of discontent is evaluated because it lays the bridge towards the correlation between political trust and access to public services. The findings of the OECD and the findings of the geography of discontent help to show concepts which might be applicable for the global north but are to be tested for this case in Ethiopia. With a brief introduction into SSA context, this chapter moves towards presenting Ethiopia, its rural-urban dynamics, and the two locations of research, rural Koyo and urban Addis Abeba. Furthermore,

this chapter evaluates on the second variable, access to services, and why it is important to compare different socio-spatial conditions for access to services and what it means for the formation of political trust. To move towards the hypothesis of the thesis, two studies researching about the relationship of the two variables in SSA and the outcomes of the WVS for Ethiopia are presented, which show that the relationship between political trust and access to public services underlies place-based differences. The chapter is finalized by the hypotheses based on this argumentation.

2.3.1. Relevant OECD studies

Yann Algan, who publishes within the book of the OECD: *"For good measure: advancing research on well-being metrics beyond GDP"* from 2018, follows Putnam´s argumentation saying that civic cooperations between citizens are crucial for their well-being. Comparing the outcomes of the WVS about not just political, but also inter-personal trust with the country´s GDP, he concludes that trust is crucial to economic activity and GDP growth (Algan & Cahuc, 2010; Algan, 2018;). Further, Algan and Cahuc (2010) conclude in their study about inherited trust, which is the trusting nature that children inherit from their parents, that Africa´s GDP would be 546% higher than it is in time of research, if they would have the level of trust like the country of Sweden.

Further, the researchers see political trust as the basis for inter-personal trust. If people trust in the institutional sanctioning of cheating and mistreatment, they tend to trust others more (Algan, 2018). Accordingly, subjective well-being like life satisfaction is correlated to trust as well. Helliwell and Wang (2011) see a higher level of trust correlated with the better coping of negative shocks and even lower suicide rates. Testing the expectations of getting one´s lost wallet returned, they conclude that living in Norway (with the highest return-expectation) is as beneficial as a 40% income increase when comparing to living in Tanzania (with the lowest return-expectations). Further, Helliwell et al. (2009) say the more trust people have in their

boss, the more they subjectively feel well. Also, trust seems strongly correlated with physical health (Boreham et al., 2002; Lochner et al., 2003; Arber & Ginn, 2004) and mental health (Hamano et al., 2010). When comparing European data, the OECD (2018) finds positive correlation between life satisfaction and trust in the judicial system and the government. As an overall conclusion, the researchers presented by the OECD see economic activities such as the GDP but also innovation, investment, a functioning labour market, the financial system, reduced transaction costs and the resilience for crisis contingent on trust (Algan & Cahuc, 2009; 2010; 2014). Additionally, well-being and life satisfaction as well as physical and mental health is shown to be correlated too.

2.3.2. Geography of discontent

Researchers in the field of geography of discontent try to find the connection of feeling "left behind" and political trust (Rodriguez-Pose et al., 2023). It is argued that people living in disadvantaged regions with a lack of access to resources feel left behind and ignored by, among others, globalization, the political elites, or the economic development (Cramer, 2016; Stroppe, 2023). The field becomes a lot of attention in the last decade, considering that a lot of right-wing voting behaviour in the western hemisphere is assumed to be based on the feeling of being left behind (Hyland & Mascherini, 2023). Many studies confirm that rural, peripheric regions in the EU show less political trust than their urban counterparts (Christensen & Laegreid, 2005; Luehiste, 2006; Criado & Herreros, 2007; van der Meer & Dekker, 2011; Zmerli, 2013; McKay, 2019; Harteveld et al., 2021; McKay et al., 2021).

On the contrary to Algan´s conclusion, Stroppe (2023) sees economic factors not impacting the level of trust in Germany, while the proximities to train stations and hospitals matter most. Further, Stein et al. (2019), see less trust in the Norwegian periphery, but don´t experience economic effects. Jennings et al. (2016) see people from the so-called backwaters in the UK being more Eurosceptic and generally more complaining, but they not necessarily

have a lower level of political trust or confidence in democracy. Van de Meer and Hakhverdian (2017), who studied political trust as the evaluation of institutional performance in 42 European countries, conclude that, once corruption is controlled, macro-economic factors do not impact political trust.

To summarize, scholars of the geography of discontent see location factors as the main reasons for people either trusting politically or not. In some studies, economic reasoning plays a part, in some it doesn´t. But generally speaking, the feeling of being left-behind results in political distrust.

2.4. Sub-Sahara Africa & Ethiopia

While citizens in "economically advanced countries (…) focus on issues like procedural fairness" (Hutchinson & Johnson, 2017: 461), regions such as SSA have "the expectations center on more rudimentary functions of the state, namely institutional capacity and external security" (ibid.). The role of the state and institutions differ compared to other regions in the world. The reasons are historical. Through slave trade, colonialism, and Neo-Patrimonialism, there is a "large subset of the population that is excluded from benefits, opportunity, and/or influence over the political system" (ibid: 466). Foreign development assistance didn´t help the equalization of the political, economic, and social order as well, but fed the inequalities (Herbst, 2000). Institutions and political systems in SSA are built on a more forced and less organically grown way, as compared to Europe for example. Throughout the years, the unequal structure of the world led former colonized nations such as the ones in SSA being heavily relying on debts. Those debts ensure that, despite the lack of domestic investments into infrastructural projects, a lot of the tax revenue is needed to bailout (Hutchinson & Johnson, 2017). This explanation is very simplified but shall show why the political systems and the institutions in SSA are facing major challenges, without even looking at internal reasons. As a result, Hutchinson and Johnson (2017) conclude that the citizens of SSA nations tend to have a lower

level of political trust compared to other parts of the world. This mainly sits at the reasoning of institutional performance, as Bratton (2007; 2012) argues too: Only one third of the asked Africans say their leaders listen to the people´s concerns regularly, while another third says that they never listen at all (Bratton, 2012). While topics such as unwillingness or corruption play a big part as well, in "resource-poor rural areas or overpopulated urban centers, however, public institutions often lack the material and organizational means to govern effectively" (ibid.: 517). When discussing the social sector, the Afrobarometer data indicates that two third of the asked Africans see their governments doing well with handling educational and health issues (Bratton, 2007). With crime and water infrastructure, it is only around 50%. With issues relating the economic sector, those numbers are even lower (ibid.).

As the second-most populated country in Africa, Ethiopia shows a great possibility to be exemplified as a nation that shows different socio-spatial conditions compared to the global north. The East-African Nation with around 123 million people is estimated to reach a population of 214 million by 2050 (Urmersbach, 2024). Ethiopia, with its rich and long-lasting history, is a multi-ethnic state with around 100 languages and distinct ethnic groups (Hammarström et al., 2024). Politically, Ethiopia is home to several ethno-national conflicts. While many regional and ethnical based groups challenge the notion of the nation-state as well as the legitimization of the government, the government, in turn, uses "repressive measures and human rights abuses" (Woldesenbet et al., 2022: 1) to stay in control.

The economy slowly but steadily shifts from an agrarian-based to a more diversified, urban-centric growth model (Dula et al., 2023). The agricultural sector employs 73% of the working-force, whereas the service sector employs 20%, and the industry sector 7% (OECD, 2020). Agriculture has a share of 37% of the national GDP and 84% of the national export (Tigabu et al., 2023). Both are one of the highest shares in SSA. Ethiopia has an GDP growth rate per capita of around 7,4%, which is higher than most SSA countries, but the actual GDP is

still underneath average (ibid.). The OECD (2020) sees very positive trends for the country, with a growth in the HDI (from 0.35 in 2000 to 0.46 in 2013), a decreasing poverty headcount ratio (from 44% in 2000 to 24% in 2017) and a poverty gap index, which describes the severity of the poverty (from 12% in 2000 to 7% in 2016).

2.4.1. Rural / urban definitions & dynamics in Ethiopia

One of the current issues the country is facing is the rural-urban transformation process, with the share of people living in the urban growing at around 5% annually for the past two decades. This is, according to the World Bank (2022), the 6th highest growth rate in the world. Till 2035, it is expected to see twice as many Ethiopians living in urban environments than 2020, which means around 29 million more people (OECD, 2020). Nonetheless, the current urbanization rate is still low, with 23% of the people living in the urban.

This means, by implication, that the vast majority is rural. But what does this even mean? The definitions of rural and urban are heavily debated up to date. Within the heart and soul of Human Geographic debate, the definition of rural and urban are yet to be universally recognized. It is important to see them not as particular, fixed and dichotomous places, but rather as ends of a continuum which is constantly moving and transitioning (Weeks, 2010).

When looking at the rural as a concept, it is associated with an economic activity that is primary, meaning it extracts resources as e.g. agriculture (Newby, 1986; MacTavish, 2009). Rural communities can be characterized by a shared history, language, religion, morals, values, and their way of life (Newby, 1986). This homogeneity is met with a remoteness to administrative areas and core regions and lacks behind in most common indicators of well-being. The rural community stands in most cultures for stability and national identity, expressing the national values in a globalized world (MacTavish, 2009). Rural settlements tend to have clear internal boundaries with a low population density. Social organization is

associated with a high level of communication, cooperation, and interdependence (Newby, 1986; MacTavish, 2009).

Urban, on the other hand, is described as dense, highly populated, and heterogenous. Different lifestyles, identities, languages, morals and values foster tolerance, but the population size and density also create impersonality, lower social cohesion and community participation (Wirth, 1938; Putnam, 1993). The urban stands in most cultures for the capitalistic urbanization, which shows the uneven development and the social inequalities (Harvey, 1973). Economic activity is diverse and everything but agricultural (Weeks, 2010).

When distinguishing between urban and rural practically, there are various thresholds with various characteristics, and every country is handling its categorization individually. Most distinguishments are done according to population size, land size, population density, or economic and social organization (Weeks, 2010).

For Ethiopia, the national Central Statistical Agency (2014) defines urban as following (rural areas are those which are not classified as urban):

    I.   2000 or more inhabitants
   II. Or regardless of the population:
        a.   Administrative capitals at any level
        b.   Municipal towns
        c.   All localities that are not administrative nor municipal, but have a higher population than 1000 with the inhabitants mostly being engaged in non-agricultural activities
  III. 100 000 or more inhabitants or regional capitals are major urban centres

When comparing the rural and the urban environments in Ethiopia with the help of economic and social indexes, the growing gap between the two is evident. For example, the difference in the poverty headcount ratio between urban and rural was 4% in 2005, but 11% in 2016. The difference in the poverty gap index was less than 1% in 2005, while in 2016 it was

4% (OECD, 2020). This indicates that while the country as a whole performs better in those indexes, the gap between rural and urban still rises. Also, the Gini coefficient is rising too: From 0.35 in 1996 to 0.33 in 2015, indicating that the inequality within the country is growing. The poverty reduction is concentrated on urban environments, while it is generally weak in the rural (Mekonnen et al., 2020). The poorest 10% have not seen an income increase between 2005 and 2016 and are partially even poorer (Tigabu et al., 2023). The average income per capita is 797$ for urban households. For the rural, it is merely 291$ (Dula et al., 2023). For the HDI, the country´s average of 0.46 in 2016 was topped by the urban with 0.58, while the rural is struck off with only 0.29 (ibid.).

The indicators presented here are mostly monetary based. In the rural, income is not purely measured monetarily, since social cohesion and cooperation is an essential part of the daily life. In the urban, a big share of economic activity happens informally. However, the disparities go beyond the economy and get even stronger when it comes to the access of basic services, which perpetuates the cycle of poverty and inequality (ibid.; Mekonnen et al., 2020; OECD, 2020; Tigabu et al., 2023). The Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MDI), which includes not just education and health indicators, but also life standard indicators such as access to sanitation, drinking water, and electricity, shows that 92% of the rural population is considered multi-dimensional poor, while it is only 16% from the urban (Alkire et al., 2019). The severity of the multi-dimensional poverty is according to this index also way higher in the rural compared to the urban. Additionally, the reduction of multi-dimensional poverty goes faster in urban areas: 7% (urban) and 2% (rural) annual differences (ibid.). To summarize, the geographical location (being urban or rural) is one if not the biggest driver of welfare inequality in Ethiopia, since it implies differences in educational and health possibilities, recourse and service accessibilities, and employment prospects (Gashaw et al., 2020; Dula et al., 2023).

2.5. Public Services

After demonstrating the rural-urban dynamics of Ethiopia according to globally used indexes, it is important for the understanding why this thesis is focusing on public services as an indicator of development and well-being. Amartya Sen (1999) proposes in his book "Development as freedom" that development should not be measured in pure economic turns, but also in a broader perspective, taking capabilities and freedom into account. It therefore shifts the focus from income and wealth as a global measurement towards a more human-centred approach, namely capabilities and opportunities. Access to public services such as education and health is seen as a driver for opportunities that enhance people's capabilities, resulting in a more dignified life (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993). As an alternative to the utilitarian approach of measuring development and well-being through GDP and economic activity, this "capability-approach" is describing the "substantive freedom" of individuals, which can, through the access to services, have the ability to be nourished, educated, or healthy. With expanding people´s capabilities, they have more choice to live the life they value instead of being limited through the lack of recourses (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993; Sen, 1999). The consideration of access to services such as education and health are also taken into account by the global indexes such as the before-mentioned MDI and HDI, after being proposed by Amartya Sen and his colleagues (Anand & Sen, 1994; 1997).

2.5.1. Public Services in rural and urban Ethiopia

Table 1 shows the differences of rural and urban, but also Addis Abeba and rural Oromia (where the village of Koyo is located) in level of education and access to services, but also poverty headcount ratio and Gini coefficient, whereas urban performs clearly above the national average in education but also access to public services and poverty ratio, the rural underperforms these averages. In turn, Addis Abeba outperforms the urban averages and Rural Oromia shows lower access to public services but higher level of education than the rural

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average (World Bank, 2016). Except education, the order of the table shows a decline in values from the left to the right, from Addis Abeba to Rural Oromia. The Gini coefficient shows that the inequality is higher in the urban environment than in the rural, with Addis Abeba and rural Oromia outperforming both averages in each of the directions.

Table 1

Differences in access to education, food, and services between rural and urban in Ethiopia

	Addis Abeba	Urban Average	National Average	Rural Average	Rural Oromia
% of adults with completed primary	9,8	8,8	5,2	4,1	3,8
% of adults with more than completed primary	54,9	46,3	16,2	7,1	8,1
% of adults with no education	11,5	19,1	46,5	54,8	50,3
Adult literacy rate	89,4	80,5	50,5	41,4	44,9
% of household with food shortage	1	4,4	10,2	11,6	11,4
% of population using electricity for cooking	69,3	23,8	4,6	0,1	0
% of population with access to electricity	98,9	90,1	23,1	7,4	6,9
% with improved sanitation	56,8	24,2	6,1	1,8	0,6
% with improved water	100	96,8	61,4	53,1	49,7
National poverty headcount ratio	16,8	14,8	23,5	25,6	25,3
Gini coefficient	35,7	38	32,2	28,4	27

Notes. Source: World Bank (2016)

2.6. Addis Abeba

Addis Abeba, the capital city of Ethiopia, has been chosen to be exemplified for the urban within this thesis. It is by far the most urbanised region in the country with a share of 25% of the urban population (3,7% of the whole population, respectively), being 8 to 10 times bigger in population size than the second biggest city (Figure 2). It represents the political and economic centre of the country, with several headquarters of national and international

institutions such as the African Union and international embassies. Additionally, it provides the country with the only International Airport next to Dire Dawa (which only hosts one flight to Djibouti). For Ethiopia, Addis Abeba represents the capitalistic urbanization and international connectivity, let it be economic, political, or cultural (Berhe et al., 2017; OECD, 2020). Economically, it generates around one quarter of the national GDP with an average growth rate of around 9%, shared by the service sector (75%) and the industry (24,3%) (ibid.). It hosts several headquarters of national and international cooperations, banks, and businesses, with many high-rise buildings, international luxury hotels, and also the biggest open-air market in Africa (Berhe et al., 2017).

Addis Abeba is said to host around 5 million people (ibid.)[3]. The population growth rate is around 3%, whereas nearly the half of it comes from rural-to-urban migration. The population density is around 5000 people per square kilometre and most of the land use is sealed and urbanized (Azagew & Worku, 2020). While many regions in Ethiopia have experienced ethnic conflicts in recent years, Addis Abeba is being considered safe, with all ethnicities of Ethiopia and internationals living together peacefully (BAMF, 2024). Next to the oldest and biggest university of the country, cultural hubs such as theatres, cinemas, and parks, Addis Abeba is home to several museums with monuments that represent the national identity, such as the skeleton of Lucy, one of the oldest skeletons ever found (Britannica, 2024a). Like no other place in Ethiopia, the city provides a cosmopolitan, urban lifestyle with a big variety of restaurants, hotels, malls, and so forth. The official and by far most spoken language in Addis Abeba is Amharic, which is also the official language of Ethiopia.

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[3] The demographic numbers vary, since the last official census was in 2007 and the data are therefore estimates.

Figure 2

Population density map of Ethiopia including major towns

Town Name	Population Size
Addis Abeba	2 084 588
Dire Dawa	164 851
Nazret	127 845
Gonder	112 249
Dese	97 314
Mekele	96 938
Bahr Dar	96 140
Jimma	88 867
Welkite	76 988
Harer	76 378
Debre Zeyt	73 372
Awassa	69 169
Jijiga	65 795
Shashemene	52 080

Source: ICPAC (2017); Humanitarian data exchange (2020)   Cartography: Johannes Trost (2024)
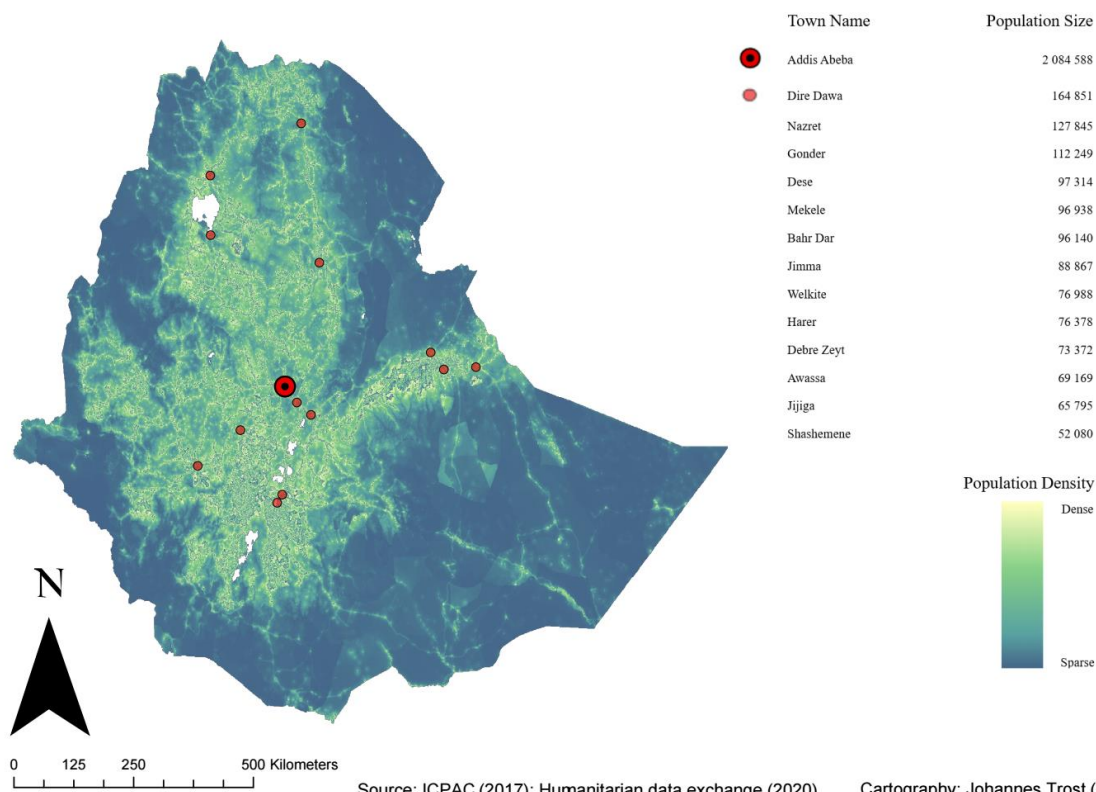
Notes. ICPAC (2017) works with a different source for population sizes. Source: ICPAC (2017); Humanitarian data exchange (2020). ArcGIS Output.

2.7. Koyo

Within this thesis, the rural is exemplified by the village of Koyo. It is located in the state of Oromia, around 200 kilometres south-west of Addis Abeba (Figure 3). There is no official data about the village itself and the data used for this section is derived from official data of the district and calculated with the help of the district's administrative workers. According to this calculation, Koyo is set together by 120 household that add up to a population of around 1440 people. The big majority of economic activity is based on small-scale, subsistence farming, focusing on crops and livestock. Around 50 people have a non-farming activity, mainly within the education or transportation sector. The properties stretch throughout the neighbouring crops and therefore population density is low, with around 100 people per

square kilometre. Ethnically, the people are Oromos, speaking the local language, Affan Oromo, and share a Christian background, with around 70% being Protestant and 30% Orthodox. Within economic production, but also in the way of living, the region is homogenous. Houses, clothes, practices and lifestyles are according to local customs and traditional knowledge (Yuya & Daba, 2018). Communal organization is based on cooperation and social cohesion (ibid.). Administratively, the village is part of a district with its officials based in the administrative capital of the district. Internal affairs are organized within the *Gada-System*, the "indigenous democratic socio-political system of the Oromo" (UNESCO, 2024). It manages political, social, economic, and religious affairs within the community, led by leaders elected every 8 years. The communal system, which is declared as a "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" by the UNESCO, "serves as a mechanism for enforcing moral conduct, building social cohesion, and expressing forms of community culture" (ibid.).

The geography is defined through long-stretched hills that lead to the higher mountains in the north, with steep valleys in between, where small rivers run down from the mountains into the plains. The next semi-urban agglomeration is about 2 hours travel time away. This travel time is done mostly by food to the next village (7km), from where unregular buses depart. This village also provides a big market twice a week, a health centre, and several shops.

Oromia is home to a conflict between the Oromia Liberation Front, which seeks independence or a stronger representation in federal offices, and the National Army of Ethiopia (BAMF, 2024). Koyo itself also experienced several clashes between the two parties of the armed conflict in the past months, also during this research.

Figure 3

Section of settlement map including Addis Abeba and Koyo
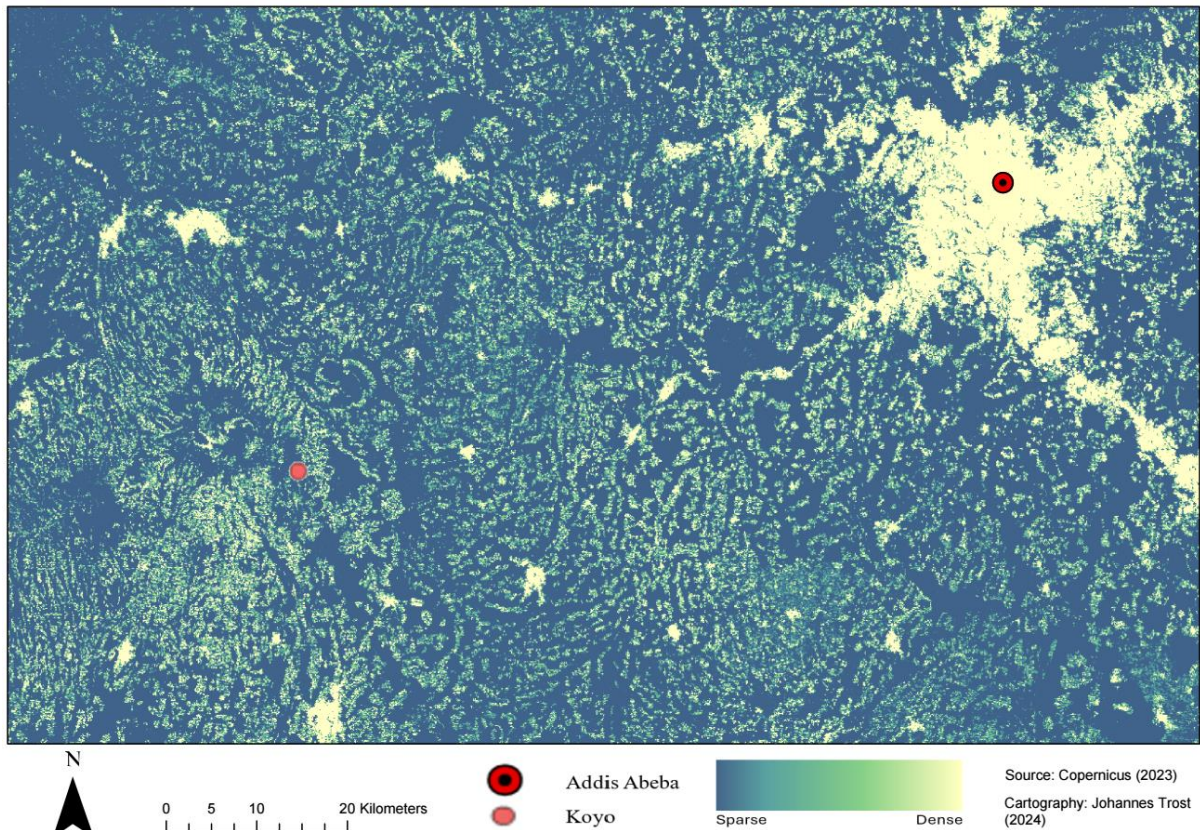
Notes. Source: Copernicus (2023). ArcGIS Output.

2.8. Trust in rural and urban Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, the level of trust in selected institutions is varying strongly. When looking at the outcomes of the WVS from 2020 (Table 2 – for readability in the attachment), Ethiopians trust churches and banks the most (*a great deal* with 70% and 61%). The armed forces are trusted a lot too, with 75% of *a great deal* and *quite a lot* combined. The lowest trust – or most distrust – show Ethiopians towards the parliament, with 20% saying they don´t have any trust at all, followed by the press and the elections (both 17%), the police (16%), the government (14%) and the justice system (12%).

Comparing political trust behaviours of Ethiopians from urban and rural environments, it is contradictory to the above-mentioned arguments by the geography of discontent scholars.

When grouping the responses *A great deal* and *Quite a lot* as trust and *Not very much* and *None at all* as distrust, it is only the press where urban Ethiopians tend to have more trust than rural ones. Trust levels in police, justice system, government, parliament, elections, and churches are all higher in rural Ethiopia. Rural and Urban Ethiopians trust banks, armed forces, and charitable and humanitarian organizations on the more or less same level, at least with no significant differences.

For the geography of discontent, accessibility to public recourses seems most important for the formation of political trust. As already showed in when discussing rural-urban dynamics, rural environments in Ethiopia have less access to public services, lower economic activity, and perform worse in indicators that claim well-being and life satisfaction. Nonetheless, the rural has a higher level of political trust than the urban.

McKay, Jennings & Stoker (2023), who compared political trust levels between rural and urban environments for Europe and SSA, come to the same conclusion. In Europe, people from the rural trust their governments less while people from the rural in SSA trust their governments more than their urban counterparts. Especially when controlling for the country´s HDI, the effect becomes higher, the lower the HDI is. As a possible explanation, the researchers bring up the factor that people from the rural do have "less exposure" (ibid.: 8) to governmental failures such as corruption and that the "critical news information" (ibid.) is on a lower standard.

Brinkerhoff, Wetterberg & Wibbels (2016) discussed the correlation between access to public services and confidence in governmental institutions. They compared 17 countries in SSA and concluded that the asked rural citizens trust their government more than the urban ones. Although people from the rural show less access to services and have also less satisfaction with those services, they tend to not connect the service provision with their attitude towards

the governmental institutions. For the urban, the dissatisfaction of the access to services is directly translated to discontent towards the government. For the researchers, there is one main explanation:

> It may be that citizens' assessments of government trustworthiness are decoupled from (or weakly coupled with) their experiences with service delivery. Where citizens have no or limited experience with the government as a service provider, they might evaluate public officials (and government more generally) on other dimensions. In this case, service quality is unlikely to serve as an engine for government accountability, since citizens simply do not expect services from government.
> Brinkerhoff, Wetterberg & Wibbels, 2016: 106

If there is no to little state presence, the expectations sink according to it. If people from the rural have no experiences with the government as a service provider, they don´t expect them to do it.

2.9. Hypotheses

While the OECD argue that political trust is connected to economic growth, scholars from the geography of discontent see the reasons for a higher level of political trust in the unequal distribution of resources. The geographical focus of both lies in the global north. The geographic point of view on trust as a social capital, as presented in the theoretical background, sees trust as a spatial, placed-based phenomenon where the appearance can differ between different places in the world. The social settings in SSA are hardly comparable with the ones in Europe and while rural Europe is understood to trust their government less, in SSA it seems the other way around. Although the outcomes of McKay et al. (2023) and Brinkerhoff et al. (2016) describe the whole of SSA, which is usually impossible to generalize, the WVS (2020) shows the same empirical results for Ethiopia too. The outcomes do not just contradict with the findings of the OECD research, where the rural Ethiopia (with the lower GDP) should have a lower level of trust, but also with the argumentation of the geography of discontent, where rural Ethiopia (with less access to public services) supposed to have a lower level of trust as well.

The first hypotheses of this thesis, which builds upon the opposing literature just presented, is that rural Ethiopia is trusting their government and the asked institutions more than the urban, although having less access to public services. While the research of the OECD and the literature of geography of discontent expect a significant lower level of access to public services in Koyo and consequently a lower level of political trust as well, the latter presented literature and survey data expect a higher level of trust in Koyo compared to Addis Abeba.

H_1: *In Koyo, where access to public services is lower, the level of political trust is higher compared to Addis Abeba.*

H_0: *In Koyo, where access to public services is lower, the level of political trust is not higher compared to Addis Abeba.*

The second hypothesis builds upon the arguments of the formation of the first hypothesis and generalizes them. When Koyo has less access but more political trust, access to public services and political trust are not correlated for the whole sample as well. While the OECD and the geography of discontent conclude with a correlation for the global north, McKay et. al (2023), Brinkerhoff et al. (2016) and the outcomes of the WVS (2020) conclude that for Sub-Saharan Africa and Ethiopia, the correlation is not given.

H_2: *There is no correlation between access to public services and political trust.*

H_0: *There is a significant correlation between access to public services and political trust.*

The research objectives are the level of political trust as the dependent variable (DV) and the level of access to public services as the independent variable (IV). Before moving to the statistical analysis, the following chapter presents the analytical framework with this thesis´ methodological approach.

3. Framework for analysis

This study should contribute to the understanding of the relationship between access to public services and political trust in Ethiopia, in respect to the rural-urban dynamics. With deducting the hypothesis contrary to conceptual conclusions of the global north and exemplifying the comparison with two particular locations representing the rural and the urban in Ethiopia, this thesis sheds light to the conceptual conflict when comparing socio-geographic conditions. To compare rural and urban settings, the survey conduction with 100 participants (N=100) was done in the village Koyo and the city Addis Abeba. For the control variable, which have been hold constant throughout the analysis, I collected socio-demographic information of the participants. The information and the survey itself did not have any personal information that could be attributable to the participants identity.

As a research philosophy, this research follows the paradigm of critical realism according to Guba and Lincoln (1994). Using a quantitative approach does not necessarily need positivist motivation, especially when it is testing theories and concepts for its universality (Martynovich, 2016). This thesis follows the ontological belief that there might be an objective reality, but through our subjective perception it becomes conditional. Researchers are influenced socially and through the theory in-use, while the researched phenomenon exist independent of the researcher´s investigation. Social phenomena such as the correlation between access to public services and political trust are results of socio-spatial conditions and change not just throughout time and space, but also between individual actors (Ibid.).

This section discusses the research design, type, and strategy, as well as the time horizon, the sample strategy, the data collection method and the analytical technique. Before finishing up with a brief summary, the ethical considerations are evaluated as well.

3.2. Research type & design

Considering the fact that the research tests the hypotheses of the provided literature review with its own data collection and statistical analysis, it´s deductive and confirmatory and works with a bottom-up approach.

The WVS (2020) and the Afrobarometer (2024) as cross-national survey conductors widely used across the literature, as well as the OECD Survey advises (2017), collect their data about trust in institutions quantitively in the Likert-Scale format. Since the majority of literature refers to this data, the research was done accordingly in order to create a comparable outcome. Further, a self-administrated survey with the Likert-Scale format minimizes the risk for a response bias, since questioning the participants about political trust can pressure the response to be socially desirable (ibid.: 18). Contrary to the (cross-) national survey conductors mentioned above, this research aimed to focus on two specific locations in order to exemplify the rural-urban dynamics in Ethiopia.

With using a quantitative survey design, I tried to reduce biases due to, for example, cultural differences or personal views, which are given here, considering the researcher being from Germany and the participants being Ethiopians. With this decision, the results became measurable evidence and the subjective (mis-) interpretation is reduced. The data is categorized through the Likert-Scale and controlled through socio-demographic, groupable information, resulting in reliable, generalizable, comparable, and measurable outcomes. Through a predesigned survey with closed questions, it was possible, according to the capacity of this thesis, to reach a bigger sample size which resulted in more significant findings.

Due to the capacity of the research and the anonymity of the participants, the survey conduction has been done once, hence the time horizon was cross-sectional. Therefore, I have also chosen to analyse the results for correlational and comparative purposes only and kept the

causality for a funded team of researchers. With this decision, I followed the preliminary studies of this topic, which analysed the relationship of access to public services and political trust on a correlational, as well as a comparative dimension. Consequently, the research strategy was a correlational and a comparative research design.

3.1. Sampling strategy

The targeted sample size of this research was *N*=100. To ensure the statistical power of the analysis, the sampling was done through *stratified random sampling*, which divides the population of interest into sub-groups, co-called *Stratas*. The Stratas share similar characteristics and ensure that every group, according to the chosen characteristics, is represented in relation to the share in the population of interest. Within the Stratas, sampling is done randomly (University of Arizona, 2024).

The chosen Stratas, age and gender[4], were distributed along the samples according to the national averages (Table 3). Following the OECD guidelines (2017) which states that the targeted population when surveying trust should start with the age of 15 as well as the fact that children underneath the age of 15 might not be able to cover a full understanding of either trust or access gave reasons to redistribute the age groups proportionally, although they distribute more than one fourth of the whole population. The initial, targeted sample size was the proportional redistribution of the age groups according to the national averages, divided by two equal halves for the equal distribution of gender in Ethiopia, which is male=50,2% and female=49,2% (Statista, 2024).

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[4] During the sampling and the test runs, I didn´t come across non-binary or transgender individuals which added to the fact that there is no data of non-binary or transgender individuals in Ethiopia. Therefore, I kept the binary distinguishment of gender, while being aware that there are individuals that don´t identify themselves in such categories.

Covering different age groups within the sample gives a significance due to the fact that age impacts personal perceptions about either the access or the trust. The curriculum, for example, keeps being subject of change throughout history as soon as new governments - with new ideologies and methods - are formed (Dakamo, 2023). The different form of education can have an impact on people's life experiences and opinions.

Table 3

Age groups, targeted sample size and Stratas

Age Groups	National Average			Rural Stratas			Urban Stratas		
	%	% redistributed	N	N_{rural}	Female	Male	N_{urban}	Female	Male
0-14	26,1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-24	20,7	28,1	28	14	7	7	14	7	7
25-34	15,7	21,3	21	10	5	5	10	5	5
35-44	10,3	14,0	14	8	4	4	8	4	4
45-54	6,6	9,0	12	6	3	3	6	3	3
55-64	15,3	20,7	21	10	5	5	10	5	5
65+	4,9	6,9	4	2	1	1	2	1	1
	100	100	100	50	25	25	50	25	25

Notes. Source: Statista (2024).

Gender, on the other hand, covers opposing perceptions and life experiences as well. For example, in the countryside, getting water from the spring is a job done mostly by female community members. Consequently, the personal experience about access to clean drinking water can vary.

When comparing the actual samples of Table 4 and the targeted samples from Table 3, it shows that the distribution of rural and urban as well as male and female is equal. For the age groups, group *23-34* and *35-44* are overrepresented, while *15-24*, *55-64*, and *65+* are underrepresented. Consequently, the targeted Stratas were followed for gender, but not fully for age. Nonetheless, all age groups are represented. Considering the presented average

contribution for religious affiliation from chapter 3.2.2., Muslims are underrepresented and "Others" are overrepresented. Reasoning for this is mostly the fact that the averages are nationwide, while in Addis Abeba and Koyo, Muslims are not as represented as in other regions of Ethiopia. For "Others", the overrepresentation can be explained that there might be a higher percentage of people in Koyo following traditional beliefs. For the education level, the different groups are represented surprisingly well, when comparing to national data for 2018 (EPDC, 2018).

Table 4

Absolute and relational frequencies of the sample size

		N	%
	N=	100	100
Rural/Urban	Rural	51	51
	Urban	49	49
Male/Female	Male	48	48
	Female	52	52
Age Group	15-24	21	21
	25-34	30	30
	35-44	30	30
	45-54	11	11
	55-64	7	7
	65+	1	1
Highest achieved degree	<primary	10	10
	Primary	26	26
	Secondary	36	36
	Tertiary	26	26
	>Tertiary	2	2
Religion	Orthodox	48	48
	Muslim	9	9
	Protestant	36	36
	Others	7	7

Note: SPSS Output.

3.2. Data collection method

The dependent variable (DV) was political trust, the independent variable (IV) was access to public services, and the controlling variable (CV) was sociodemographic, personal information. To test these variables, I created an anonymous survey (Figure 9).

3.2.1. Practical Justification for Location selection

Through a long-term engagement in an NGO[5] working in Ethiopia and a big interest of the diverse set of affairs in the country, Ethiopia as the field of study has been chosen for analysing the research problem.

For the urban, the choice was rather easy: Addis Abeba. As already described before, it is by far the biggest metropolitan area in Ethiopia and its geographical location - right in the centre of the country - is basically symbolic for its political and economic position. During my engagement, the city functioned as a hub for purchases, meetings, arrivals and departures, leisure time, etc., which resulted in me not just getting to know the city and its diverse conditions, but also building personal relationships.

For the rural, the choice was made rather easy as well. The before-mentioned NGO works exclusively in the village of Koyo. Here, I am involved for my whole engagement in Ethiopia and stayed many weeks or even months. My interest into the life of the people in Koyo made me want to examine the village not just on a development work aspect, but also on a human geographical.

3.2.2. Design of survey

Originally, I created the survey in English (Figure 9). For the rural participants in Koyo, the survey was translated into Affan Oromo. For the urban participants in Addis Abeba, it was

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[5] A German non-governmental organisation specified on cooperations for rural development in Ethiopia.

translated into Amharic. Both translations have been done by a governmental recognized translation agency in Ethiopia. As advised in the OECD guidelines (2017), this agency was informed about the context and the target population of this survey to minimize translation errors. Instead of making one survey with three languages, I designed separate surveys for each language. Hence, the participants weren´t occupied with finding their language, which would have been a potential reason for a non-respondent error or a withdrawal. The rural population speaks a different language than the urban, which simplified the differentiation of which participant gets which translation. Considering the technical implementation as well as the trustworthiness of the participants towards the survey, the use of computer-assisted survey modes was unsuitable and consequently, the survey was done in a printed version on paper.

Unlike the typical format used by surveys such as Afrobarometer (2024), where socio-demographic questions appear at the end, this survey introduced them at the beginning for a more efficient assessment. This inversion facilitated early participant screening while maintaining a concise set of questions.

To create a short survey duration, only categorizable data that was important for the later analysis was collected. For the questions about age, the age groups used in the sampling strategy were used. The categories of level of education and religion were oriented on the Ethiopian-wide distributions[6].

Following the OECD guidelines, "the best questions to precede trust questions are demographic questions" (OECD, 2017: 21). To reduce a bias due to context effects, it was

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[6] For 2012, it is stated that there are three major religions prevalent in Ethiopia: Orthodox Christians (41,5%), Muslims (34,1%), and Protestants (19,4%). They are completed by traditional beliefs and Roman Catholics and further, so-called "Others", with each around 1% (Britannica, 2024b). The school system is divided in primary (8 years), secondary (4 years), and tertiary (Bachelor 3-4 years, Master (1-3 years), and Doctoral (3-7 years) (Scholaro, 2024). Regardless the enrolment statistics, the survey asked the participants about their "highest achieved degree" and categorized in "lower than primary", "primary", "secondary", "tertiary (Bachelor)", and "higher than Tertiary (Bachelor)".

adequate to first ask the questions about trust, since the questions about access to public services could have triggered emotions towards the institutions (ibid.). Both set of questions were separated in two pages and both had their own introductory sentences, as described below.

All of the three above mentioned, global surveys use introductory sentences in order to only list the institution-in-question below. In following this tradition, the survey was as precise as possible and language was held simple, consequently, the reliability and validity was given. The introductory sentence prepared the participant that there will be a list of institutions and that he or she should cross out how much trust he or she has towards them. This format was copied for the questions about access to public services.

The single items for the variables have been chosen according to the literature, where either access to public services or political trust in specific institutions has been analysed. The chosen institutions for the trust questions are according to the ones used in the WVS (2020) shown in Table 2 and Table 9 in the attachment, respectively. For the public services, the chosen items are oriented towards the World Bank (2016) data (Table 1), as well as added by further services such as public transportation, financial and governmental services, that seemed relevant for forming a holistic approach covering multiple services (cf. Table 8 in the attachment).

The question format was in a 5-point Likert scale reaching from *Very little* to *Very much* in the trust questions, while the third and centred check box was *Neutral / Don´t know enough*. Within the access questions, the possible answers reached from *Very poor* to *Very good*, while the third, centred check box was also *Neutral / Don´t know enough*. Providing the option to scale this personal view in various ways made the Likert format fitting best. With categorizing the responses in the five mentioned categories, the responses could be adequately coded.

The design and wording of the questionnaire was kept simple to create an environment in which the participant can, as long he or she is literate, fill out the survey self-administrated. The ambition behind the general design, structure, mode, and wording was to reduce the bias that gets created during the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee.

3.2.3. Survey conduction

The survey has been done in a test-tun first. Three months prior to the main data collection, 20 participants (10 in rural; 10 in urban) have been handed the survey and were asked to fill it. Here, the focus laid on the experience of the participant as well as the accessibility of the targeted, stratified sample. For the experience, the gatekeepers and me set attention to which questions or definitions needed explanations and which socio-demographic information was hesitated on. For the accessibility of the sample size, we did not just check if some groups are harder to find than others, but also how it is best to approach them. While this approach is described in the following sections, it can be said that the experiences made by the test runs helped in a big share of decisions that had to be made in order to create a reliable and valid survey within the given condition.

3.2.4. Gatekeepers

As already mentioned, the research was done by a white foreigner with limited language skills of either Amharic or Afan Oromo. While the language barrier was one of the obstacles, cultural differences was another. Hence, the chances of having biases were very acute and diverse. To make sure that the findings are as reliable as possible, there needed to be precautions taken in not just the sampling strategy and the survey design, but also in the approach of the participants and the survey conduction itself.

The aim was to minimize the impact of me as a white male in Ethiopia as much as possible. Although it was mentioned that it was me doing the research, my presence could have influenced the data collection in a way that would lead to an interviewer bias.

Two trustworthy friends of mine supported me as gatekeepers for the survey conduction. Both were born and raised in either Addis Abeba or Koyo, knowing the location and knowing where to find the target group with its Stratas. Both speak good English and there was no question if there could be a misunderstanding language-wise. The advantage of using (separate) local gatekeepers was that they understood the target population language-wise and culturally. Being local and knowing the cultural etiquette and language helped for increasing the participant´s willingness to engage in the survey through credibility and trust.

The gatekeepers have been informed about the aims and purposes of the study and in which manner the survey should be conducted. For not just the illiterate that have been part of the survey, but also sometimes else, an explanation on how the survey is being done needed to be evaluated, since a big share of the participants have never been part of any survey before. Part of the teach-in for the gatekeepers from my side was also, that they should always be around if there are questions or ambiguities. Another big part was that it was important to create a trustworthy but also anonymous environment for conducting the survey, including the emphasis on the ethical standards when conducting a survey.

The recruitment of the participants worked differently depending on the environment. In the village of Koyo, the gatekeeper visited the participants in their homes and asked on the doorstep if they wish to participate. This wasn´t problematic since most people know each other in the village and invited him in. Also, the advantage of conducting the survey at the participant´s home is that people are more focused and feel more comfortable. In Addis Abeba the approaching was in public. Here, it was important to emphasize the fact that some people

don´t have much time and that the approach should be concentrated on people sitting in a comfortable manner. In both environments, the ethical considerations in form of the invitation letter were read out loud, in order to create a trustworthy environment. When handing the survey, the gatekeepers were told to point out that the ethical considerations are written on the first page.

3.2.5. Ethical considerations

The aim of this research was to evaluate on the relationship of access to public services and political trust in Ethiopia. With conducting surveys in a rural village and the capital city, the rural / urban dynamics could be analysed on a geographical dimension. The survey asked the participants about personal views and opinions. Nonetheless, it was not necessary to collect personal data. According to Lund University Faculty Board (2023) and their guidelines for the processing of personal data in degree projects, personal data means "information through which it is possible to identify the person directly or indirectly", for instance names, addresses, contact details, etc. Although the survey asked for personal information such as gender, age, religious background, and level of education, it was not possible to trace back the participant´s identity. Aware that the trust questions counted as sensitive since it revealed someone´s personal view about (governmental) institutions, the fact that it stayed anonymous solved the issue about ethical considerations towards personal data.

However, there were more ethical considerations to reflect on. When doing the survey, the cover page was the invitation letter (Figure 9). This paragraph informed the participants about me and my personal role in this survey, as well as the aims, purposes, and context of this research. It emphasized the fact that this research was independent, non-governmental, and non-commercial. Furthermore, it highlighted the participant´s right to withdraw at any given point and that the participation was voluntary. Additionally, it was stated that the survey was anonymous and that the data was handled confidentially, meaning it would not be given to a

third party and deleted after finishing this thesis. Lastly, the invitation letter mentioned that the survey was conducted through the gatekeeper (mentioned by name) and that email-addresses can be collected anonymously, in order to share the results of the research. To keep the non-response and withdraw bias to a minimum, the invitation letter was structured in a bullet-point format. I refrained from letting participants sign to confirm their consent, since a signature would be critical when it comes to classification as personal data as well as the fact that people hesitate to sign things, especially if illiterate, which could be a big burden for participation. Instead, the last sentence of the invitation letter worked as a disclaimer, stating that, when continuing, it can be assumed that consent is given.

The formulation and the content of the invitation letter as a product of the whole thesis design that involves not just the survey conduction but also the preparation, data handling, result analysis, conclusion, and publication makes me confident in following the guidelines of "The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity" published by the All European Academies' (ALLEA). This code of conduct states Reliability, Honesty, Respect, and Accountability as the four main principles to follow when doing ethical research (Swedish Research Council, 2023).

3.3. Data Analysis

For H_1, an *independent t-test analysis* was used to test the means, standard deviations, effect size, and confidence intervals of the responses to access to public services and political trust. The two groups (rural and urban) were analysed separately, with one variable of interest, either DV or IV, in order to compare the outcomes. The hypothesis stated that Koyo has a higher level of political trust, although having less access to public services:

H_1: $\mu_{rural\ trust} \neq \mu_{urban\ trust}$

$\mu_{rural\ access} \neq \mu_{urban\ access}$

H_0: $\mu_{\text{rural trust}} = \mu_{\text{urban trust}}$

$\mu_{\text{rural access}} = \mu_{\text{urban access}}$

For H_2 it is a correlation analysis using *Spearman's rho correlation coefficient* testing access to public services and political trust for correlation. The data of the IV in the subgroup rural is not normally distributed (evaluated in results chapter), consequently Spearman's rho was the test to perform. The hypothesis states that there is no correlation between the DV and the IV:

H_2: $\rho \neq 0$
H_0: $\rho = 0$

Since both Hypotheses didn't show restrictions on the direction of the deviation, both tests were two-sided. Resulting from the Likert-scale in the survey design, the coded responses were in a 1-5 format, where 1 is *Very little / Very poor* and 5 is *Very much / Very good*, while 3 is *Neutral/ Don´t know enough*. The statistical analysis was done with SPSS. The numeric, coded data was also tested for a normal distribution. When searching for potential outliers in the data, the Box Plot for the IV identified one sample with a strong derivation from the means of its group (urban) and being far outside the Whiskers and consequently removed from the samples (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Box-Plot of the IV in the subgroup rural
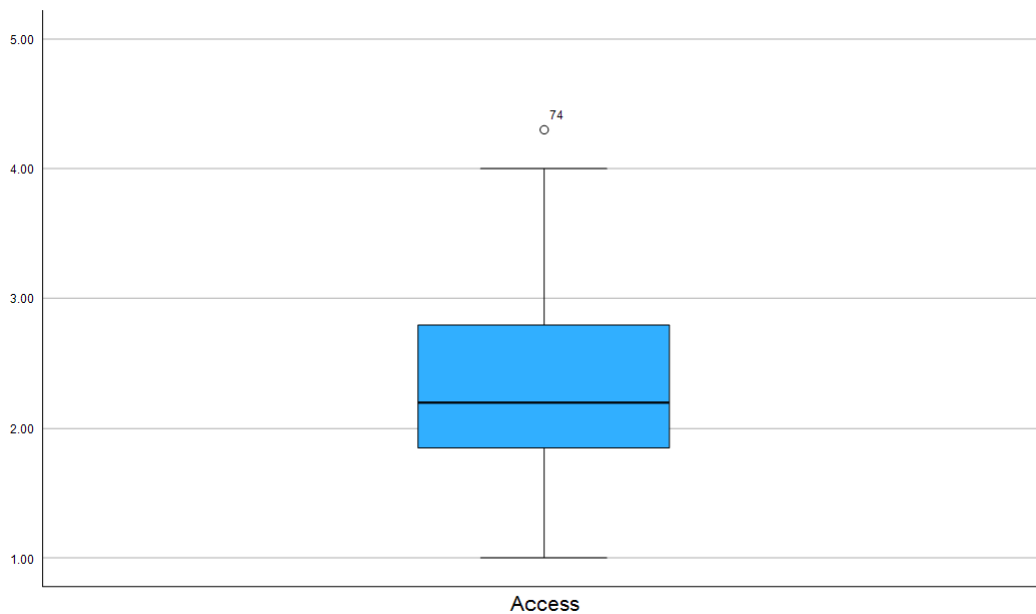
Notes. Outsider 74 has been removed. SPSS Output.

4. Results

Before describing the data according to its means and standard deviations, number of responses as well as means for each group (rural/urban) and each item (access/trust), the data has been evaluated for its distribution and reliability. The results of these pre-tests are only explained briefly, to not shift the focus too far towards quantitative approaches. Furthermore, this chapter ends up with showing the results of the analysis for answering the hypotheses. Following Brinkerhoff et al. (2016), McKay et al. (2023) and the scientific standard, the significance level was set to $\alpha=0.05$, which resulted in a 95% confidence interval.

The distribution of the variables has been tested. For the dependent variable, the histogram in Figure 5 shows the distribution aligns well with the normal curve, supporting the

results of the *Shapiro-Wilk*[7] test result (*p*=.235) (Table 5). For the independent variable, the histogram in Figure 6 shows that the data is not normally distributed, which aligns with the test results of p=.007. When having a closer look at the groups of urban and rural, it shows that for urban, both variables are distributed normally (with the significance value being *p*=.265 for DV and *p*=.513 for IV). For rural, the data is distributed normally for the DV (*p*=.257), but not for the IV (*p*=.001). Further, the data was tested for its reliability with the index *Cronbach's alpha*[8]. The dataset of the thesis has a reliability coefficient of α=.839 for the IV and α=.841 for the DV, which are both above the academic threshold and therefore the data is reliable (Table 5).

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[7] The threshold was set at .05 (α=0.05). If results of the *Shapiro-Wilk* tests for the variables (*p*) is above this threshold, the data of the variable is normally distributed.
The data of access to public services (IV) for the rural population is therefore not distributed normally and hence, when testing for the correlation between the two variables for the whole population (and within the rural population), the chosen test is Spearman´s *rho*. For the urban population, the correlation test used is Pearson´s, since it is normally distributed (Kent State University Libraries, 2021b). While Spearman´s test ranks the variables to describe a monotonic relationship, Pearson´s test measures linear relationships between continuous variables (ibid.). The difference in contribution and the resulting test in use leads to the fact that comparing the correlations of rural and urban cannot be done appropriately, but the outcomes of the test are still significant to see if there are correlations or not. For H1, the analysis focuses on the t-test and comparing the means of the variables, which is still applicable, since the normal distribution needs to be given for only the DV (ibid., 2021a).

[8] Reaching from α=0 to α=1, high numbers indicate that the data of the different variables cover a common domain (Wells & Wollack, 2003). As a threshold, the scientific standard is α=.7 (ibid.).

Figure 5

Distribution of the dependent variable political trust
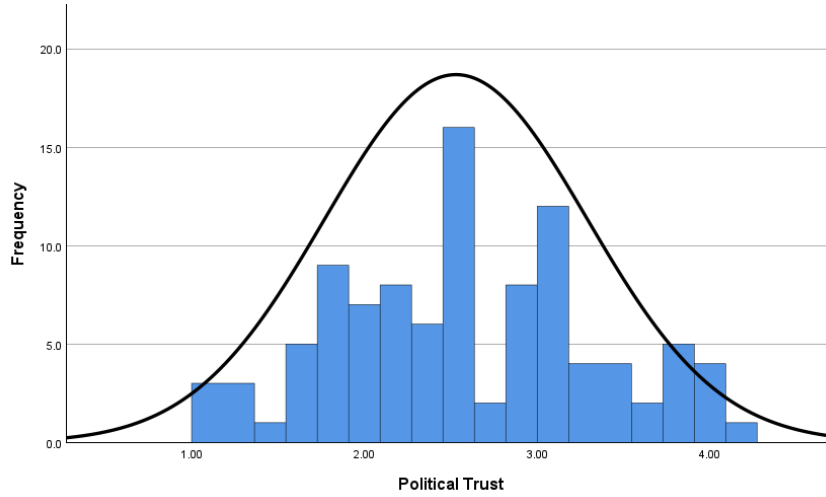
Notes. Level of trust: 1=*very little*, 5= *very much*. Normal curve for orientation. SPSS Output.

Figure 6

Distribution of the independent variable access to public services
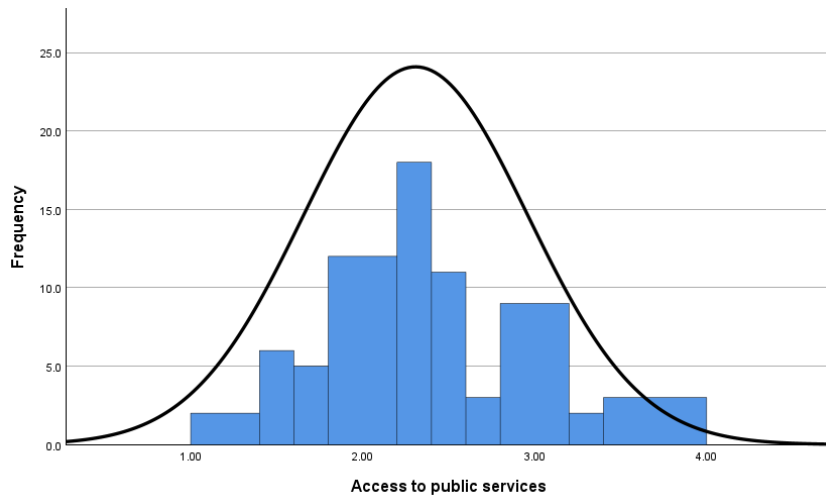
Notes. Level of access to public services: 1=*very poor*, 5=*very good*. Normal curve for orientation. SPSS Output.

Table 5

Test of normality, test of reliability, Descriptives of data

		Test of normality					Reliability	Descriptives		
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk			Cronbach´s alpha	N	Mean	St.deviation
		Statistic	Df.	Sig.	Statistic	Df.	Sig.				
Total											
	Political Trust	.060	100	.200	.983	100	.235	.841	99	2.52	0.76072
	Access services	.149	100	<,001	.963	100	.007	.839	99	2.33	.67878
Urban											
	Political Trust	.102	48	.200	.971	48	.265		48	2.41	.10786
	Access services	.109	48	.200	.978	48	5.13		48	2.64	.69921
Rural											
	Political Trust	.076	51	.200	.972	51	.257		51	2.63	.77031
	Access services	.147	51	.008	.916	51	.001			2.03	.51145

Notes. SPSS Output

4.1. Descriptives

For testing the two hypotheses, the Likert-Scale questions from the survey were grouped into the two variables. With the coded answers of the Likert-Scale, I created the means and standard deviations for both variables. The dependent variable, political trust, has a mean of $M=2.5298$ and a standard deviation of $SD=.76072$. The independent variable, access to public services, has a mean of $M=2.3312$ and a standard deviation of $SD=.67878$ (Table 5). When dividing the variables into the groups of rural and urban, it shows that rural has a slightly higher political trust value ($M=2.6399$) compared to the urban ($M=2.4129$). The means of access to public services (IV) were $M=2.0373$ for rural and $M=2.6437$ for urban, indicating the rural having less access to public services than the urban (Table 5). The final sample size was $N=99$.

When having a closer look at the grouped responses (Table 8 & 9), where the single items of either access or trust are documented in an absolute and distributive frequency table, it shows that the variations between urban and rural are going into the same direction and opposing differences are not shown on first sight. Nonetheless, an obvious feature is that the neutral answers for the trust questions have been significantly more in average than within the access questions. This trend is carried through the responses of the urban, which has a higher frequency for neutral answers in the big majority of trust questions.

When comparing the means of the single items between rural and urban (Figure 7 & 8), the responses proof the normality of internal consistency. Both groups follow the same trends and the differences in the responses are not very distinct. Outliers here are the religious institutions, where the urban ($M=3,6$) trust significantly more than the rural ($M=2,61$) as well as banks (mean difference (MD)=0,52). The remaining institutions are trusted more by the rural population than by the urban. The biggest difference is the federal government, with a mean

difference of *MD*=0,94, followed by courts (*MD*=0,58) and Charitable / Humanitarian Organisations (*MD*=0,49), as well as International Organisations (*MD*=0,42).

Figure 7

Levels of political trust in Koyo and Addis Abeba

Trust in Institutions
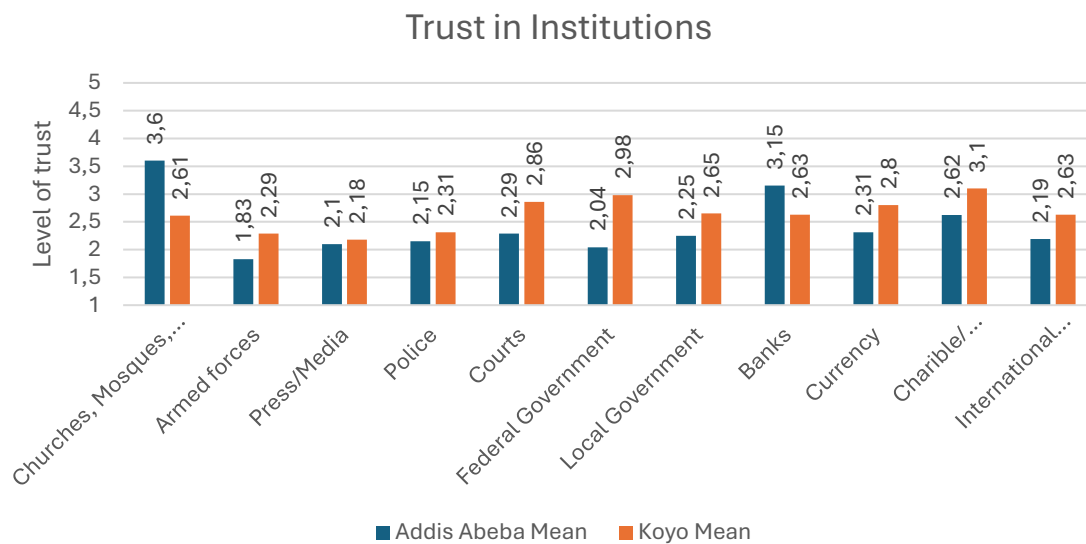
Notes. Level of trust: 1=*very little*, 5= *very much*.

Figure 8

Level of access to public services in Koyo and Addis Abeba

Access of public services
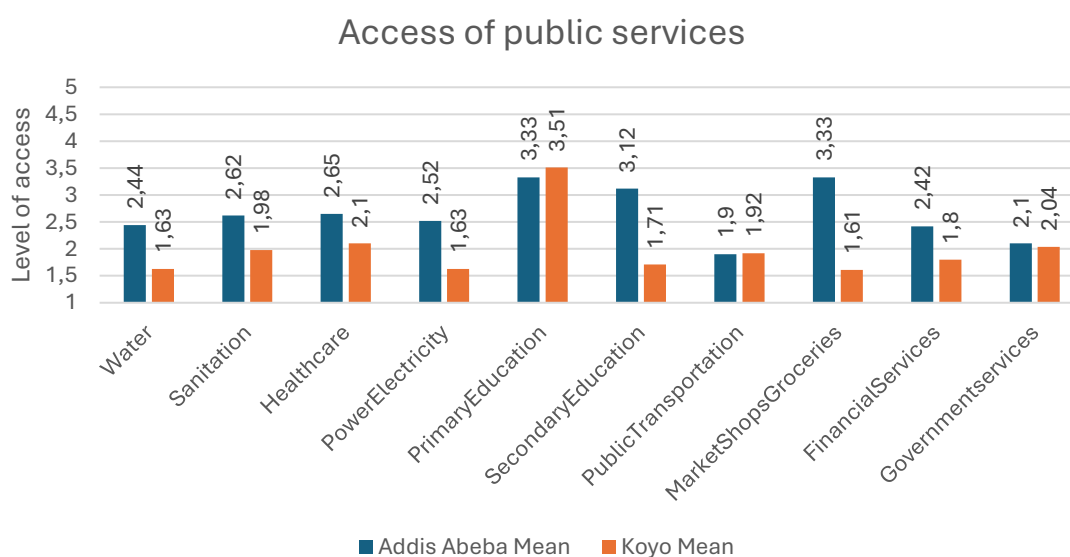
Notes. Level of access to public services: 1=*very poor*, 5=*very good*.

For the access to public services, the means show that Primary Education is the only service where the rural (*M*=3,51) shows more access than the urban (*M*=3,33), although both values are high. Public Transportation and Governmental Services are equally accessible. The other services are more accessible in Addis Abeba than in Koyo. The biggest difference in mean show Market / Shops / Groceries (*MD*=1,72) and Secondary Education (*MD*=1,41).

The standard deviations for political trust were similarly spread and comparable in both groups (*SD*=.77031 for rural & *SD*=.74044 for urban), indicating a variability in the whole sample for the dependent variable (Table 5). For access to public services, the responses of the rural group deviated around *SD*=.51145, which is less than the *SD*=.69921 for the urban population. This indicates a lower variability for the perception of access to public services in the rural population, while the urban population has a wider range of responses.

4.2. t-test for Hypothesis 1

For testing H_1, which states that Koyo has lower access to public services but more political trust, an independent, two-tailed t-test was used. The means of the variables political trust (DV) and access to public services (IV) were compared between the groups of rural and urban. For political trust (DV), the t-test showed no significant difference between rural and urban, $t(97) = 1.493$, $p = .139$, confirmed by the small effect size of Cohen´s $d= 0.300$ with a 95% Confidence Interval crossing 0 [-0.097, 0.696]. For access to public services (IV) there was a significant difference reported, $t(97) = -4.947$, $p = <,001$, with a Cohen´s $d= -0.995$, 95% *CI* [-1.411, -0.574] (Table 6). These results indicate that Koyo has significantly less access to public services than Addis Abeba, but no significant differences in political trust. Thus, the results reject the null-hypothesis for access to public services but fail to reject the null-hypothesis for political trust and therefor fails to reject the Null-hypothesis as a whole.

Table 6

Independent t-test and samples effect size

	t- test for equality of Means*				Independent samples effect size		
						95% confidence interval	
	t	df	p**	Mean difference	Cohen´s d***	Lower	Upper
Political Trust (DV)	1.493	97	.139	.22705	.75598	-.097	.696
Access to public services (IV)	-4.947	97	<,001	-.60650	.60969	-1.411	-.574

Notes. SPSS Output.
*equal variances assumed.
**Significance, Two-Sided.
*** Cohen´s d uses the pooled standard deviation.

4.3. Correlation analysis for Hypothesis 2

The H_2 stated that for the whole sample, there is no correlation between access to public services and political trust. Since the data of access to public services is not normally distributed, the correlation analysis has been done with a Spearman´s rho test. For the whole sample, there was a significant, moderate correlation, $\rho = 0.331$, $n = 99$, $p = < 0.001$. This indicates that for the whole sample, there is a correlation between access to public services and political trust (Table 7). These outcomes therefore do not reject the Null-Hypothesis.

For setting a better foundation for the analysis, the correlations have been tested for the rural and the urban as well. For the rural, there was a strong significant correlation, $\rho = 0.691$, $n = 51$, $p = < 0.001$, indicating that, in the rural, access to public services is correlated with political trust (Table 7). For the urban, the correlation was tested with Pearson´s coefficient since the data was normally distributed. The outcomes, $r = 0.26$, $n = 48$, $p=0.074$, indicate that there is a weak positive correlation that is not significant (Table 7). This correlation outcomes, although not comparable, show that there is a significant correlation between access to public

services and political trust in Koyo as well as the whole sample. While there is weak correlation in Addis Abeba as well, it is not significant and therefore not evident.

Table 7

Correlation analysis of IV & DV

	N	Pearson Correlation		Spearman rho	
		r	p	ρ	p
Total	99			.331[**]	<,001
Urban	48	.260	.074		
Rural	51			.691[**]	<,001

Notes. SPSS output
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5. Discussion

This thesis´ preceding research problem was rooted in the contradiction in literature. For the global north, the research of the OECD and the literature of geography of discontent both conclude that having less access to public services correlates with a lower level of political trust. Brinkerhoff et al. (2016), McKay et al. (2023) and the data outcomes for Ethiopia in the WVS (2020) contradict with this conclusion, saying that in SSA and Ethiopia, the rural - with less access - has a higher level of political trust than their urban counterparts, which have more access to public services. The aim was therefore to test the concepts and findings from the global north in Ethiopia, exemplified with the urban city Addis Abeba and the rural village Koyo. The thesis asked how the relationship of access to public services and political trust in Koyo and Addis Abeba differ and how these findings could be evaluated in light of the concept of geography of discontent and the established methodology of relevant OECD studies. With the two hypotheses that Koyo has less access but more political trust than Addis Abeba (*H1)*

and that, for the whole sample, access to public services and political trust are not correlated (H_2), this research conducted a survey and analysed the data quantitatively.

5.1. Key findings: Challenging the existing literature

For H_1, the data shows that while Koyo has significantly less access to public services than Addis Abeba, there is no significant difference in the levels of political trust for the two locations. Consequently, the hypothesis that Koyo has more political trust although having less access to public services is rejected. For H_2, the analysis could not find the expected results as well. There is a moderate positive correlation between access to public services and political trust in Ethiopia, exemplified with the village of Koyo and the city Addis Abeba.

Answering the research question with evaluating the t-test results, the data suggests a significant difference in the relationship between access to public services and political trust when comparing Addis Abeba and Koyo. Koyo has less access to public services but the level of political trust is equal to the one in Addis Abeba. The higher level of access in Addis Abeba does not translate into more political trust.

Examining the results of the correlation analysis, the level of access correlates with the level of political trust in Koyo while in Addis, this impact is non-significant. For the whole sample, the correlation is positive. In other words, people from Koyo trust the asked institutions more when having a higher level of access to public services. For Addis Abeba, this is not the case. Since the correlation in Koyo is strong, the whole sample still has a positive relationship, although Addis Abeba does not.

For this thesis, the expected outcome of the geography of discontent is that Addis Abeba has more trust because of more access. The data analysed with the t-test is contradicting this conclusion, because Koyo has the same level of political trust, despite having less access to public services. For the correlation analysis, the data supports the geography of discontent

partly, since the whole sample as well as Koyo have a positive correlation between the two variables. It is only Addis Abeba that does not have a significant correlation.

According to the conclusion of the OECD research, Addis Abeba, with a higher GDP, has more trust than Koyo. The data of this thesis suggest differently, since the trust level is equal in both locations.

For Brinkerhoff et al. (2016), McKay et al. (2023) and the data outcomes for Ethiopia in the WVS (2020), the t-test results support the expected outcomes, although not as strongly as it might be expected. While these scholars expect a higher level of political trust and a lower level of access in Koyo, the data reveals that there is the same level of political trust, despite less access to public services. The data also suggests that there is a strong correlation between the two variables in Koyo, which was, according to Brinkerhoff et al. (2016), McKay et al. (2023), not expected.

Therefore, the data challenges the research of the OECD as well as the geography of discontent and supports the findings of Brinkerhoff et al. (2016), McKay et al. (2023) and the data outcomes for Ethiopia in the WVS (2020) (even if not that strongly), when comparing the levels of political trust and access to public services in Koyo and Addis Abeba. When analysing for the correlation of the two variables, the painted picture is different. The positive correlation of the two variables supports the argumentation of the geography of discontent while contradicting the expected outcomes of Brinkerhoff et al. (2016) and McKay et al. (2023).

5.2. Socio-spatial contexts and political trust

Robert Putnam´s idea of social capital is that it fosters economic activity and a functioning welfare state. He ignores socio-spatial conditions for the formation as well as the importance of social capital and trust. Koyo should have less political trust since they have not just less access, but also less economic activity and a lower performance in well-being indexes

like the HDI and the MPI. For this thesis, this is not the case. In Koyo, political trust seems resilient despite lower access, indicating that socio-spatial conditions play a significant role in forming political trust. Hence, the difference in relationship between access to public services and political trust in Koyo and Addis Abeba may be due to differences in the perception of the performance of the government and the meaning of providing public services, as well as how much the performance impacts the accommodated trust.

The rural lifestyle in Koyo is defined through a culture of cooperation, social cohesion, and internal organization such as the Gada-System. This communal way of living fosters an environment with a high level of trust, where interpersonal and political trust is interwoven with each other. Social cohesion and cooperation as well as the Gada-System builds upon a high level of interpersonal trust (especially particular social trust) which is interdependent with political trust. Therefore, Koyo has just as much political trust as Addis Abeba, although this trust is correlated with access to public services, which is less than in the urban. The higher level of trust in Koyo outbalances the effect of the lack of access to public services.

It is this impact of cultural practices on social capital that Bourdieu means when describing the interdependency of cultural capital and social capital. The cultural practices in rural Koyo differ to the ones in urban Addis Abeba, hence the form of social capital differs too. This results, in turn, in different formations of trust. Therefore, the interdependency of the individual's behaviour and its environment -habitus and habitat- creates different forms of capitals which come to light when analysing how, why, and when people trust. As the reconceptualization of social capital in this thesis states, social capital (and therefore how, why, and when people trust) is "a set of relations, processes, practices and subjectivities that affect, and are affected by, the contexts and spaces in which they operate" (Naughton, 2013: 13). The outcome of this analysis validates the reconceptualization since, on the one hand, Koyo has the same level of political trust despite lower access but, on the other, still shows a correlation of

the two variables while Addis Abeba doesn´t. This reveals the difficulties in comparing two socio-spatial conditions for human behaviours. The reasons why people trust are different and therefore very difficult to compare. As Lyon et al. (2012) wrote, it is "one of the most elusive and challenging concepts one could study".

Nevertheless, this thesis can shed some light into the formation of political trust. The amount of political trust within one society is an interplay of how much people generally trust each other or the government (available social capital) and on how much the government provides an environment in which it can be trusted (performance of the government) (Figure 1). This interplay seems to be different in Koyo than in Addis Abeba. While rural Koyo has a higher level of social capital due to the culture of cooperation and internal organization, it has less performance of the government than Addis Abeba, where access to public services is higher. The formation of political trust on the macro level, which has been tested through comparing the means of the two variables with the t-test, indicates that while the two reasons for the formation of political trust within one society can vary, these deviations can meet for an equal level of political trust for two different locations. While Koyo seems to form its political trust mostly through the available social capital and less through the performance of the government, Addis Abeba seems to have more impact of the performance of the government. This impact may not be purely measured through the provision of public services. Hutchinson and Johnson (2017) write that while "economically advanced countries (…) focus on issues like procedural fairness" regions such as SSA have "the expectations center on more rudimentary functions of the state" (ibid.: 461). A possible explanation for the strong correlation between the access to public services and political trust in Koyo but not in Addis Abeba could be that the citizens of Addis Abeba might focus on topics such as procedural fairness, while the citizens of Koyo build their trust through more rudimentary functions of the state, such as provision of public services. Although the scholars compare "economically

advanced countries" and "regions such as SSA", the explanation might functions in other relations too, with Addis Abeba being economically advanced and Koyo being the peripherical. Brinkerhoff et al. (2016) and McKay et al. (2023) assume that the high level of political trust in rural SSA comes from lower expectations to the state or less exposure to governmental failures or critical news. The fact that Addis Abeba may have more exposure to governmental failures or critical news might fosters the focus away from provision of services when judging governmental performance, which then results in a non-significant correlation between access to public services and political trust. The argumentation that the rural is not connecting the service provision with governmental performance cannot be supported with this data since access to public services and political trust is strongly correlated in Koyo. Nonetheless, communal organization and, according to Brinkerhoff et al. (2016), the low state presence in the rural may lower the expectations, which would explain the high level of political trust despite lower access to services.

On the micro level, the formation of political trust is an interplay of judging the government´s performance (Particular trust) and a general attitude towards the nation (Diffuse trust) (Figure 1). The micro level has been tested through the correlation analyses. The strong correlation between access to public services and political trust in Koyo indicates that when individuals in rural areas perceive better access to services in particular, their political trust increases. The lack of correlation in Addis Abeba indicates that urban citizens base their political trust on other factors such as procedural fairness (cf. Hutchinson and Johnson, 2017) or due to the exposure to critical media (cf. Brinkerhoff et al., 2016; McKay et al., 2023). Therefore, on the micro level, the interplay for the formation of political trust differs between Koyo and Addis Abeba as well. Koyo has a high level of political trust, which results from the high diffuse trust that is formed through the culture of cooperation or the Gada-System. High diffuse trust in Koyo suggests a deep-seated belief in the legitimacy and general functionality

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of the political system. This trust is maintained by cultural practices and social norms, reinforcing the community's overall trust in the system. The deeply rooted cultural practices and communal solidarity in Koyo forms diffuse trust, creating a general trust in the political system that withstands deficiencies in service provision. Residents in Koyo may have lower expectations from specific government services but may still trust local officials or community leaders due to positive personal interactions and experiences. But when the citizens in Koyo get increased access to public services, the particular trust increases directly as well. Trust in specific government officials or entities may be closely tied to the quality of services they provide. When residents perceive that their local officials are effectively delivering services, their particular trust in these officials increases. Residents in Koyo may have lower expectations from specific government services but may still trust local officials or community leaders due to positive personal interactions and experiences.

With Koyo having a higher level of political trust due to a higher level of social capital and Addis Abeba has no correlation between access to public services and political trust, the argumentation of Hutchinson and Johnson (2017), Brinkerhoff et al. (2016) and McKay et al. (2023) seem valid as an explanation for the outcomes of this data analysis. This also supports the strong correlation in Koyo, where the governmental judgement is focused on rudimentary functions such as the provision of public services. Koyo has the same amount of political trust despite less access, maybe because of the high amount of social capital existing due to a culture of cooperation, social cohesion, and communal organisation through the Gada System. Addis Abeba has no correlation between public services and political trust maybe because the focus for the judgement of governmental performance lies less in the rudimentary provision of services, but more procedural fairness or equality. Also, in Addis Abeba, there might be more influences for the judgement of the performance due to the exposure of critical news and governmental failures.

For the results of the independent variable access to public services, the data confirms the conclusion of the literature as well as the World Bank (2016) data, showing a significant difference between the value in Koyo and in Addis Abeba. The rural in Ethiopia, exemplified with Koyo, has less access to public services than the urban, exemplified with Addis Abeba.

Further interesting findings is that the federal government and the courts are the institutions with the biggest trust differences between rural and urban. Because of the war between the Oromia Liberation Front and the federal government that builds mostly upon the fact that the Oromos feel neglected and oppressed throughout the history of the state Ethiopia[9], a conclusion would have been that people in Koyo are generally less trusting towards the federal institutions. Surprisingly, the difference in trust for those institutions between Koyo and Addis Abeba is the biggest. As a possible explanation, the (non-)exposure of critical news and governmental failures might impact the trust levels for those institutions. The high number of neutral answers for the federal government in Addis Abeba also undermines this explanation, since the exposure to critical media impacts the awareness of political persecution.

The data contribute a clearer understanding in the importance of socio-spatial settings that influence political trust. The diverse relationship described through the outcomes of this thesis support the call for analysing social capital and trust with Bourdieu´s terms. The concepts and research outcomes of the global north are not easily applicable to the presented case in Ethiopia, although the results are not as clear as former research for Sub-Sahara African contexts might suggests.

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[9] As BAMF (2024) evaluates in detail, the war between the Oromia Liberation Front and the federal government is a complex historical conflict that involves multiple parties, regions, ethnicities, interests, etc. To form an explanation on the reason behind this war in one sub-clause does not do justice to the complexity. Unfortunately, analysing the impact of the conflict on human behaviour would go beyond the scope of this thesis.

5.3. Limitations

With the sample size of *N*=100, the research does not fully reach the statistical power of an academic standard. While mitigating with the stratified sampling, the thesis increases the representativeness for the population. Nonetheless, the lower sample size indicates a lower chance of a significant outcome that represents the target population.

Since the survey conduction was done cross-sectionally, the results are not to be interpreted for causality. As the OECD (2017) states, the possibility to capture changes or trends over time, would also minimize the effects of personal, political, economic, or social events that might impact the level of political trust within a population but also individually (Brehm & Savel, 2019).

The survey measured the personal perception of the level of access to public services and political trust. This reliance can introduce several biases. Although the survey design and conduction tried to minimize those, it is impossible to erase them. The interviewer bias, where the interviewer impacts the participant, or the desirability bias, where the participant answers the questions as socially desired, are given throughout the whole sample. When taking the high number of neutral answers for the federal government in Addis Abeba into account, the chance that people do answer questions as desired (or at least hesitate) is given.

With the stratified random sampling this research tried to maximize the representativeness of the sample for the population. This sampling method still holds several limitations as well. As the gatekeepers that approached the participants might prefer special locations, social groups, etc. that are not covered through the Stratas, the representation for the whole population decreases. As a city, Addis Abeba is a big destination of domestic rural-urban migration and many citizens have once lived in the rural. The individual perception of access or political trust can have been formed in the rural setting and taken to the city. Although things

might have changed after the migration, the personal perception could be the same. With only choosing age and gender as Stratas for the sampling, the representativeness for the whole population is limited, since not just ethnicity, but also religion, economic status, education, occupation or household size impacts the outcomes as well. Especially for economic status, the analysis lacks information for answering the research question when trying to evaluate the findings with the research of the OECD, which is mostly build upon economic measures. Individual economic status would have made it possible to analyse the impact of income on political trust as well.

The chance that participants of this survey never had a survey in their hands is given and consequently, a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the survey questions may occur. Although this is possible for every survey, the reports of the gatekeepers confirm a high number of questions about what is needed to be done in order to fill out the survey. As access to services as well as political trust can be understood, defined, or interpreted differently, the variation of answers can imply that participants might have, for example, objectively the same level of access to one service, but interpret the quality or accessibility differently. When conducting the survey through gatekeepers, a further limitation is the possibility that the gatekeepers are not able or willing to create an anonymous or comfortable environment, as well as not clarify the rights the participants have or the context in which this survey is conducted.

Due to the capacity, the analysis has focused on the relationship between the variables in respect of Koyo and Addis Abeba. The collected data has further prospects, especially when comparing to the WVS (2020) data, not for correlational reasons, but for comparativeness to other survey conductors and results. This could give valuable insights for not just Koyo and Addis Abeba, but also the methodology and survey conduction within this thesis.

Also, Ethiopia is a country with various ethnical conflicts (BAMF, 2014). Although in Addis Abeba people live peacefully together, the impact one´s ethnical background has on the trust in governmental institutions couldn´t be measured with this survey. This limitation only counts for the heterogenous environment of Addis Abeba, since Koyo only consists of people with the same ethnical background. The surprising findings of the especially big difference in trust towards federal institutions in Koyo compared to Addis Abeba (considering the ethno-national conflict) adds to the fact that further investigation on the influence of ethnicity would be gainfully for the understanding of political trust.

As a result of the unnormal distribution of the responses for the independent variable in the subgroup rural, the correlation analysis had to be done with different coefficients. This in fact led to the limitation that the correlation of the subgroup urban was not statistically comparable with the rural through a statistical test, but only through eyesight.

The survey was originally created in English and then translated into Affan Oromo and Amharic through an official translation agency. Here, potential translation errors or misinterpretation of the survey questions might have occurred.

Throughout the analysis, the control variables have been held constant. Here, further rounds of analytical tests including demographic controls could give interesting insights on different perceptions throughout different age groups, gender, education levels, etc. Also, the analysis did not include testing for single items such as a correlation between one single service or one single institution. While trying to focus on the main hypothesis, the data could give further insights on interesting differences and correlations.

A further limitation of this study is the researchers position as a representative for an NGO that works in the village of Koyo. Although the survey has been conducted by the gatekeeper, the introduction letter pointed out the research context rightfully. Consequently,

this might have influenced the responses towards access to public services, since the NGO works on infrastructural projects in Koyo. Also, the connection between the NGO and the primary school in Koyo is very tight, which may influence the respondents for the access for primary education, which is also the highest achieved mean for services, for not just Koyo but the whole sample. The engagement of the NGO might has influenced the outcomes for trust levels too, especially for humanitarian institutions and international organizations. Here, the value for humanitarian organizations is also the highest achieved value for trust levels in Koyo. Other possible biases may come from the respondents knowing a foreigner is doing the research. While this can also be beneficial since the participants are more trusting when knowing the chances are small for the researcher being involved into the Ethiopian government, it still can cause a bias.

Although the thesis points out the fact that the results are not generalizable for either the whole Ethiopia nor rural or urban settings, it is important to mention it as limitations too. One of the main conclusions of this thesis is that socio-spatial settings matter for the formation of trust and therefore there is no claim for generalizing the results.

The so far biggest limitation is nonetheless the fact that the research has been done quantitatively. While this has benefits such as the possibility for covering a bigger sample size, it lacks insights for understanding why and when trust is formed. The complex nature of trust makes it impossible to further analyse the formation of it and compare it between different localities. The reasons why people trust are different and therefore very difficult to compare. With the design of this research, it is impossible to measure well-being factors. As the OECD, the geography of discontent, as well as Zmerli (2014; 2017) mention rightfully, well-being and trust are not just influential but also interdependent. This also counts for the lack of analysis towards the access to services and what it means for people´s capabilities and sense of freedom (cf. Sen, 1999). Collecting qualitative data could have established a better foundation for

analysing the complex soul of trust and how the different socio-spatial settings are related to the formation of political trust. Possible impacts such as economic stability, social cohesion or historical context could have been included and give a more multifaceted understanding.

6. Conclusion

The research aimed to test the relationship between access to public services and political trust in respect of the rural-urban dynamics in Ethiopia and evaluate if the findings are aligned with the concepts and research conclusions from the global north. Based on the quantitative analysis of the survey responses about the personal perception of access to public services and political trust, it can be concluded that the political trust levels in Koyo and Addis Abeba are equal, despite Koyo having less access to public services. This demonstrates an unequal relationship between the two variables for rural and urban settings, which is confirmed through the differences in correlation between access and trust in Koyo and Addis Abeba.

The results indicate that the socio-spatial differences in the two locations change the incentives of why people trust politically. In Addis Abeba, the higher level of access does not translate into more political trust, which might be because of urban citizens do not purely measure governmental performances through service provision and are exposed to more critical news and political failures. In Koyo, where due to the rural lifestyle trust is generally high, the lower state presence and more communal organization may lead to lower expectation towards the governmental performance. But as soon as provided with services, rural citizens are trusting the governmental institutions increasingly, which indicates the focus of judging governmental performance on rudimentary functions such as the provision of services.

While Koyo and Addis Abeba are examples of the rural and urban in Ethiopia, the scale of locations as well as the sample size limits the generalizability. Nonetheless, the quantitative

analysis with the help of survey questions tests the applicability of concepts and research conclusions from the global north for Ethiopia, exemplified in the case of two particular locations. For this case, the quantitative analysis reaches its limits for explaining the reasons why humans behave differently in different socio-spatial settings. Although this analysis is able to highlight the place-based differences in the incentives on political trust, it is limited in the scale for explaining the phenomenon. When following the calls of human geographers such as Withers (2018) and Naughton (2013) for using Bourdieu´s social capital theory as a foundation for social capital and trust, the emphasis on individual experience can only be justified through qualitative research that is able to highlight the incentives for people trusting politically or not. To further test the contradiction in literature, it is recommended to qualitatively analyse in order to evaluate on the reasons why people could have a different pattern in political trust, not just between urban and rural, but also the global north and the global south. Practically, the results of this thesis undermine the consideration that socio-spatial settings not just differ in absolute terms, but also how they affect patterns of human behaviour differently. It is therefore recommended, to consider place-based needs and necessities for the particular locations when passing policy recommendations. Eurocentric, liberal and urban-bias development plans are not necessarily fitting for the diverse cultures and conditions in the global south.

This research was driven by the question of how the global socio-spatial differences form place-based differences in trust patterns and if concepts and research conclusions of the global north are applicable elsewhere. According to the concept of the geography of discontent and the relevant research conclusions of the OECD, Koyo supposed to have a lower level of political trust due to a lower level of access and a lower GDP. While their geographical focus lies on the global north, Brinkerhoff et al. (2016) and McKay et al. (2023), which researched in SSA, contradict these conclusions and confirm the data of the WVS (2020) saying that the

rural has a higher level of political trust than the urban, despite having less access to public services.

The outcomes of this thesis paint a more complex picture. Since Koyo has a lower level of access to public services but an equal level of political trust when comparing to Addis Abeba, the data challenges the conclusions of the global north, but it also does not fully confirm the SSA research. When only focusing on the correlations, the data confirms the concept of geography of discontent for Koyo, but not for Addis Abeba. This, in turn, challenges the research for SSA, since Koyo has a strong correlation between access to public services and political trust while Addis Abeba doesn´t. Nonetheless, the data highlights the complexity of the nature of political trust. Human behaviour underlies socio-spatial conditions and concepts and research conclusions of the global north are not easily applicable for the global south.

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Attachment

Table 2

WVS data for trust in selected institutions, subdivided in rural and urban

Institutions	A great deal	Quite a lot	Not very much	None at all	Don´t know	No answer	N
Armed Forces							
Total	34,6% (426)	40,3% (494)	16,6% (204)	5,9% (73)	2,4% (29)	0,1% (1)	1230
Urban	36,5	37,8	16,2	6,8	2,4	0,3	296
Rural	34	41,1	16,7	5,7	2,4	0	934
Churches							
Total	70,9% (872)	21,3% (262)	6,3% (77)	1,5% (18)	0,1% (1)	0	1230
Urban	68,9	19,9	10,1	1	0	0	296
Rural	71,5	21,7	5	1,6	0,1	0	934
The press							
Total	7,6% (94)	27,0% (332)	32,9% (405)	17,7% (218)	14,5% (178)	0,1% (1)	1230
Urban	8,1	29,1	40,9	20,3	1,4	0,3	296
Rural	7,5	26,3	30,4	16,9	18,6	0	934
Police							
Total	18.0% (222)	40.1% (493)	24.1% (296)	16.7% (205)	1.0% (12)	0.1% (1)	1230
Urban	13,5	33,8	28,4	24,3	0	0	296
Rural	19,5	42,1	22,7	14,2	1,3	0,1	934
Justice System							
Total	21.3% (262)	41.5% (511)	23.0% (283)	12.0% (148)	2.1% (26)	0	1230
Urban	16,6	35,8	30,4	15,9	1,4	0	296
Rural	22,8	43,4	20,7	10,8	2,4	0	934
The government							
Total	28.6% (352)	36.8% (453)	18.9% (233)	14.4% (177)	1.1% (13)	0.1% (1)	1230
Urban	18,2	38,9	22,3	19,9	0,7	0	296
Rural	31,9	36,2	17,9	12,6	1,2	0,1	934

The parliament

Institutions	A great deal	Quite a lot	Not very much	None at all	Don´t know	No answer	N
Total	15.0% (184)	31.3% (385)	19.5% (240)	19.6% (241)	14.1% (174)	0.3% (4)	1230
Urban	9,5	30,7	26,7	26,7	6,4	0	296
Rural	16,7	31,5	17,2	17,3	16,6	0,4	934
Elections							
Total	19.0% (234)	36.2% (445)	22.6% (278)	17.6% (216)	4.6% (56)	0.1% (1)	1230
Urban	10,8	29,4	29,4	27	3,4	0	296
Rural	21,6	38,3	20,4	14,6	4,9	0,1	934
Banks							
Total	61.1% (752)	29.8% (367)	5.5% (68)	2.3% (28)	1.2% (15)	0	1230
Urban	64,5	24,3	8,1	2,4	0,7	0	296
Rural	60,1	31,6	4,7	2,2	1,4	0	934
Charitable/humanitarian organizations							
Total	26.3% (323)	41.5% (511)	15.0% (185)	7.9% (97)	9.0% (111)	0.2% (2)	1230
Urban	29,1	39,5	17,9	9,1	4,4	0	269
Rural	25,4	42,2	14,1	7,5	10,5	0,2	934

Notes. Responses in the 7th wave of the WVS for trust in chosen institutions, subdivided in urban and rural. Source: World Value Survey (2020).

Table 8

Frequency tables of responses for IV

Public Services	Level of access					N
	Very poor	poor	Good	Very good	Neutral / No answer	
Water						
Total	33 (33.3%)	49 (49.5%)	12 (12.1%)	3 (3.0%)	2 (2.0%)	99 (100%)
Rural	22 (43.1%)	27 (52.9%)	1 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.0%)	51 (100%)
Urban	11 (22.9%)	22 (45.8%)	11 (22.9%)	3 (6.3%)	1 (2.1%)	48 (100%)
Sanitation						
Total	22 (22.2%)	51 (51.5%)	15 (15.2%)	5 (5.1%)	6 (6.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	11 (21.6%)	34 (66.7%)	2 (3.9%)	1 (2.0%)	3 (5.9%)	51 (100%)
Urban	11 (22.9%)	17 (35.4%)	13 (27.1%)	4 (8.3%)	3 (6.3%)	48 (100%)
Healthcare						
Total	19 (19.2%)	50 (50.5%)	19 (19.2%)	3 (3.0%)	8 (8.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	9 (17.6%)	34 (66.7%)	2 (3.9%)	2 (3.9%)	4 (7.8%)	51 (100%)
Urban	10 (20.8%)	16 (33.3%)	17 (35.4%)	1 (2.1%)	4 (8.3%)	48 (100%)
Power / Electricity						
Total	33 (33.3%)	46 (46.5%)	17 (17.2%)	1 (1.0%)	2 (2.0%)	99 (100%)
Rural	25 (49.0%)	23 (45.1%)	3 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	51 (100%)
Urban	8 (16.7%)	23 (47.9%)	14 (29.2%)	1 (2.1%)	2 (4.2%)	48 (100%)
Primary Education						
Total	4 (4.0%)	26 (26.3%)	50 (50.5%)	13 (13.1%)	6 (6.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	2 (3.9%)	13 (25.5%)	25 (49.0%)	9 (17.6%)	2 (3.9%)	51 (100%)
Urban	2 (4.2%)	13 (27.1%)	25 (52.1%)	4 (8.3%)	4 (8.3%)	48 (100%)
Secondary Education						
Total	25 (25.3%)	39 (39.4%)	27 (27.3%)	1 (1.0%)	7 (7.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	20 (39.2%)	27 (52.9%)	1 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (5.9%)	51 (100%)
Urban	5 (10.4%)	12 (25.0%)	26 (54.2%)	1 (2.1%)	4 (8.3%)	48 (100%)
Public Transportation						
Total	30 (30.3%)	55 (55.6%)	7 (7.1%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (7.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	10 (19.6%)	36 (70.6%)	1 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (7.8%)	51 (100%)
Urban	20 (41.7%)	19 (39.6%)	6 (12.5%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (6.3%)	48 (100%)
Market / Shops / Groceries						
Total	25 (25.3%)	38 (38.4%)	31 (31.3%)	1 (1.0%)	4 (4.0%)	99 (100%)
Rural	23 (45.1%)	26 (51.0%)	1 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.0%)	51 (100%)
Urban	2 (4.2%)	12 (25.0%)	30 (62.5%)	1 (2.1%)	3 (6.3%)	48 (100%)
Financial Services						
Total	27 (27.3%)	47 (47.5%)	10 (10.1%)	1 (1.0%)	14 (14.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	18 (35.3%)	27 (52.9%)	2 (3.9%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (7.8%)	51 (100%)
Urban	9 (18.8%)	20 (41.7%)	8 (16.7%)	1 (2.1%)	10 (20.8%)	48 (100%)
Government Services						
Total	28 (28.3%)	47 (47.5%)	7 (7.1%)	2 (2.0%)	15 (15.2%)	99 (100%)
Rural	11 (21.6%)	28 (54.9%)	1 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)	11 (21.6%)	51 (100%)
Urban	17 (35.4%)	19 (39.6%)	6 (12.5%)	2 (4.2%)	4 (8.3%)	48 (100%)

Notes. SPSS Output.

Table 9

Frequency table of responses for DV

Institutions	Very little	little	Much	Very much	Neutral / No Answer	N
Level of trust						
Churches / Mosques / etc.						
Total	12 (12.1%)	26 (26.3%)	25 (25.3%)	17 (17.2%)	19 (19.2%)	99 (100%)
Rural	9 (17.6%)	20 (39.2%)	8 (15.7%)	5 (9.8%)	9 (17.6%)	51 (100%)
Urban	3 (6.3%)	6 (12.5%)	17 (35.4%)	12 (25.0%)	10 (20.8%)	48 (100%)
Armed forces						
Total	39 (39.4%)	31 (31.3%)	15 (15.2%)	1 (1.0%)	13 (13.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	14 (27.5%)	21 (41.2%)	11 (21.6%)	1 (2.0%)	4 (7.8%)	51 (100%)
Urban	25 (52.1%)	10 (20.8%)	4 (8.3%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (18.8%)	48 (100%)
Press / Media						
Total	25 (25.3%)	51 (51.5%)	4 (4.0%)	6 (6.1%)	13 (13.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	12 (23.5%)	27 (52.9%)	3 (5.9%)	3 (5.9%)	6 (11.8%)	51 (100%)
Urban	13 (27.1%)	24 (50.0%)	1 (2.1%)	3 (6.3%)	7 (14.6%)	48 (100%)
Police						
Total	28 (28.3%)	41 (41.4%)	15 (15.2%)	3 (3.0%)	12 (12.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	11 (21.6%)	25 (49.0%)	10 (19.6%)	1 (2.0%)	4 (7.8%)	51 (100%)
Urban	17 (35.4%)	16 (33.3%)	5 (10.4%)	2 (4.2%)	8 (16.7%)	48 (100%)
Courts						
Total	15 (15.2%)	39 (39.4%)	12 (12.1%)	8 (8.1%)	25 (25.3%)	99 (100%)
Rural	5 (9.8%)	20 (39.2%)	9 (17.6%)	7 (13.7%)	10 (19.6%)	51 (100%)
Urban	10 (20.8%)	19 (39.6%)	3 (6.3%)	1 (2.1%)	15 (31.3%)	48 (100%)
Federal Government						
Total	28 (28.3%)	30 (30.3%)	17 (17.2%)	11 (11.1%)	13 (13.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	10 (19.6%)	12 (23.5%)	13 (25.5%)	9 (17.6%)	7 (13.7%)	51 (100%)
Urban	18 (37.5%)	18 (37.5%)	4 (8.3%)	2 (4.2%)	6 (12.5%)	48 (100%)
Local Government						
Total	26 (26.3%)	36 (36.4%)	16 (16.2%)	9 (9.1%)	12 (12.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	11 (21.6%)	19 (37.3%)	9 (17.6%)	7 (13.7%)	5 (9.8%)	51 (100%)
Urban	15 (31.3%)	17 (35.4%)	7 (14.6%)	2 (4.2%)	7 (14.6%)	48 (100%)
Banks						
Total	13 (13.1%)	37 (37.4%)	27 (27.3%)	12 (12.1%)	10 (10.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	10 (19.6%)	22 (43.1%)	7 (13.7%)	8 (15.7%)	4 (7.8%)	51 (100%)
Urban	3 (6.3%)	15 (31.3%)	20 (41.7%)	4 (8.3%)	6 (12.5%)	48 (100%)
Currency						
Total	26 (26.3%)	34 (34.3%)	19 (19.2%)	12 (12.1%)	8 (8.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	9 (17.6%)	21 (41.2%)	13 (25.5%)	8 (15.7%)	0 (0.0%)	51 (100%)
Urban	17 (35.4%)	13 (27.1%)	6 (12.5%)	4 (8.3%)	8 (16.7%)	48 (100%)
Charitable / Humanitarian Organizations						
Total	17 (17.2%)	28 (28.3%)	33 (33.3%)	8 (8.1%)	13 (13.1%)	99 (100%)
Rural	8 (15.7%)	10 (19.6%)	23 (45.1%)	4 (7.8%)	6 (11.8%)	51 (100%)
Urban	9 (18.8%)	18 (37.5%)	10 (20.8%)	4 (8.3%)	7 (14.6%)	48 (100%)
International Organizations						
Total	23 (23.2%)	36 (36.4%)	20 (20.2%)	2 (2.0%)	18 (18.2%)	99 (100%)
Rural	12 (23.5%)	14 (27.5%)	15 (29.4%)	2 (3.9%)	8 (15.7%)	51 (100%)
Urban	11 (22.9%)	22 (45.8%)	5 (10.4%)	0 (0.0%)	10 (20.8%)	48 (100%)

Notes. SPSS Output.

Figure 9

Survey Design in English

SURVEY MASTER THESIS

Dear Participant,
I am conducting a survey for my Master's thesis on the relationship between public service access and trust in institutions in Ethiopia. Below are key details and your rights as a participant:

- **Purpose:** To study how access to services like clean water and electricity affects trust in institutions such as government bodies and NGOs.
- **Context:** The survey is for academical use only. It's independent, non-governmental, and non-commercial. The survey is implemented by [GATEKEEPER NAME].
- **Voluntary Participation:** Your involvement is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without consequence.
- **Anonymity:** No personal information that can identify you will be collected. All responses are confidential and for academic use only.
- **Duration:** The survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.
- **Contact:** For questions, contact me at jojotrost93@web.de
- **Results:** If interested in the study results, you can request an anonymized summary post-research.

By proceeding with this survey, you agree to participate under these terms.

Thank you for your valuable contribution to this study.

Sincerely,
Johannes Trost
Master Thesis Student in Human Geography
Lund University
Email: jojotrost93@web.de

YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION:

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?	⚪ Rural	⚪ Urban			
GENDER	⚪ Male	⚪ Female			
AGE	⚪ 15-24 ⚪ 25-34 ⚪ 35-44	⚪ 45-54 ⚪ 55-64 ⚪ 65+			

HIGHEST ACHIEVED DEGREE   ⚪ lower than primary ⚪ primary ⚪ secondary
⚪ tertiary (Bachelor) ⚪ higher than tertiary

RELIGION   ⚪ Orthodox   ⚪ Muslim
⚪ Protestant   ⚪ Others

SURVEY MASTER THESIS

TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

I am going to name a number of institutions. For each one, could you tell me how much trust you have in them: 1 is very little, 3 is neutral / don't know enough, 5 is very much

INSTITUTIONS:	LEVEL OF TRUST				
	Very little	little	neutral	much	Very much
The churches / Mosques / etc.	○	○	○	○	○
The armed forces	○	○	○	○	○
Press / Media	○	○	○	○	○
Police	○	○	○	○	○
Courts	○	○	○	○	○
Federal Government	○	○	○	○	○
Local Government	○	○	○	○	○
Banks	○	○	○	○	○
Currency	○	○	○	○	○
Charitable / Humanitarian Organisations	○	○	○	○	○
International Organisations	○	○	○	○	○

SURVEY MASTER THESIS

ACCESS TO SERVICES:

I will list now the following examples of services. Please tell me lhow you perceive your level of access to these services. 1 is very poor, 3 is neutral / Don't know enough, and 5 lis very good

SERVICES:	ACCESS:				
	Very poor	Poor	neutral	Good	Very good
Clean Water (Drinking quality)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Sanitation	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Healthcare	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Power / Electricity	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Primary Education	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Secondary Education	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Public Transportation	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Market / Shops / Grocery stores	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Financial Services	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Governmental / administrative services	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Notes.