

**THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JUSTICE AND LEGALITY AS A FACTOR OF SOCIAL TRUST****Yarbaev Hasan**

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**Abstract:** This article explores the interrelationship between justice and legality as a significant factor in the formation of social trust. Social trust is viewed as an important socio-political value that contributes to social stability and development. The study argues that legality ensures order and legal certainty, while justice provides fairness, impartiality, and respect for human dignity. It is emphasized that trust in public institutions depends not only on the existence of laws but also on their fair implementation in practice. The findings show that equality before the law, judicial independence, transparency, and accountability are essential for strengthening social trust. The article concludes that the harmony between justice and legality is a necessary condition for the development of legal culture, social stability, and a strong civil society.

**Keywords:** justice, legality, social trust, rule of law, legal culture, social stability, public institutions, accountability, transparency, judicial independence

**INTRODUCTION**

In the development of modern society, social trust emerges as an important form of socio-political capital. Citizens' trust in state institutions, laws, the judicial system, and the fair regulation of social relations is regarded as one of the key indicators determining the level of stability, solidarity, and development within society. In the formation and strengthening of social trust, the principles of justice and legality occupy a special place.

Although the concepts of justice and legality are closely related, they represent substantively different socio-legal phenomena. Legality refers to the strict observance of existing legal norms in social life, whereas justice reflects the conformity of those norms to the principles of fairness, equality, impartiality, and respect for human dignity. Therefore, the separate existence of legality and justice is not sufficient; rather, their mutual harmony constitutes the genuine foundation of social trust.

The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that, in the context of globalization, institutional reforms, and the development of civil society, the nature of relations between the state and society is undergoing profound transformation. Citizens today demand not only the existence of laws, but also their fair implementation in practice. Under such conditions, a scholarly analysis of the interrelationship between justice and legality acquires significant theoretical and practical importance.

The purpose of this article is to elucidate the interrelationship between justice and legality, to analyze their role in the formation of social trust, and to provide a scholarly account of the impact of this harmony on social stability and the development of legal culture.

The objectives of the study are to explain the theoretical essence of the concepts of justice and legality and to identify their interconnection, to clarify the content of the concept of social trust, to analyze the significance of the harmony between justice and legality in shaping social trust, and to assess the social consequences that arise when these principles are violated.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The issue of the interrelationship between justice and legality occupies a central place in contemporary theories of the rule-of-law state, civil society, and institutional trust. Existing scholarly and institutional literature emphasizes that social trust is determined not merely by the existence of state institutions, but by their fair, impartial, transparent, and accountable

functioning. In particular, the OECD's 2024 study demonstrates that citizens' trust in public institutions is shaped by such factors as reliability, responsiveness, openness, integrity, and fairness [1].

The first major group of studies regards the rule of law as the legal foundation of social trust. According to the materials of the World Justice Project, the rule of law is assessed through such dimensions as the limitation of government powers by law, the absence of corruption, open government, the protection of fundamental rights, order and security, regulatory enforcement, and the effectiveness of civil and criminal justice [2].

The second line of literature examines the relationship between the judiciary and public trust. In Roussey's study, citizens' trust in the judicial system is shown to be associated with judicial resources and the effective functioning of institutions [3]. According to this approach, citizens perceive the judiciary not merely as a legal mechanism, but also as an institution that ensures fair treatment and the protection of rights. Therefore, perceptions of judicial independence, the soundness of judicial decisions, and the fair functioning of courts play an important role in the formation of social trust [3].

The third group of sources highlights the relationship between the quality of public governance and trust. According to OECD data, for citizens to place greater trust in public institutions, decisions must be made fairly, public authorities must be capable of responding to societal needs, and they must act impartially toward the public [1]. From this perspective, justice and legality also emerge as important criteria of state legitimacy. In the eyes of citizens, the mere existence of laws is not sufficient; what matters is their fair implementation in practice and their ability to produce tangible results [1].

The materials of the United Nations Development Programme, in turn, emphasize the interconnection between the rule of law, human rights, and social stability. In UNDP's 2024 report, strengthening the rule of law, human rights, justice, and security is identified as a key programmatic direction for achieving sustainable peace and development [6]. This approach demonstrates that justice and legality should be viewed not merely as internal matters of public administration, but also as factors that ensure human dignity and the long-term stability of society [6]. The third group of sources highlights the relationship between the quality of public governance and trust. According to OECD data, for citizens to place greater trust in public institutions, decisions must be made fairly, public authorities must be capable of responding to societal needs, and they must act impartially toward the public [1]. From this perspective, justice and legality also emerge as important criteria of state legitimacy. In the eyes of citizens, the mere existence of laws is not sufficient; what matters is their fair implementation in practice and their ability to produce tangible results [1].

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Another important line of inquiry concerns governance indicators and rule-of-law indicators. In the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators system, "Rule of Law" is treated as a distinct dimension of governance and is assessed on the basis of perceptions related to confidence in societal rules, contract enforcement, property rights, the quality of police and courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence [7]. This approach makes it possible to interpret legality more broadly than as a merely formal normative system, that is, in conjunction with citizens' trust in the legal environment.

## RESULTS

The study found that justice and legality constitute two closely interconnected factors in the formation of social trust. The analysis demonstrated that while legality ensures order, stability, and legal certainty in society, justice determines whether this order is substantively fair, impartial, and humane. Therefore, social trust arises precisely from the simultaneous operation of these two criteria. The findings also showed that, when expressing trust in the state, its institutions, and the law, citizens focus not merely on the existence of laws, but primarily on how those laws are implemented in practice. If laws are applied equally to everyone, rights are effectively protected, the guilty do not evade responsibility, and innocent individuals are safeguarded, positive public trust in the state is strengthened[8].

Another important finding of the analysis is that the weakness of either justice or legality reduces the effectiveness of the other. In particular, if legality exists formally but the law does not correspond substantively to justice or is not applied impartially in practice, citizens develop alienation and distrust toward the formal system. Conversely, if the demand for justice exists but is not reinforced by clear legal mechanisms, uncertainty and subjectivity in social relations tend to increase.

Based on the findings, the following were identified as the principal conditions for strengthening social trust: equality before the law, the independence of the judiciary, transparency in the activities of public authorities, accountability of public officials, prevention of corruption, citizens' legal awareness, and the effective protection of human rights.

The study also demonstrated that stable social trust can be formed only when the harmony between justice and legality is manifested not only within the state-legal system, but also in education, labor relations, social protection, and everyday social interactions.

## **DISCUSSION**

The obtained results make it possible to assess more deeply the role of justice and legality in the formation of social trust. First, legality provides the organizational and disciplinary foundation of society. It regulates the activities of citizens and public authorities on the basis of uniform norms. However, legality alone is not sufficient to ensure social trust, since citizens expect not only obedience to the law, but also that the law should be fair and consistent with human interests.

Second, justice constitutes the moral and psychological foundation of social trust. In a society where justice prevails, individuals feel valued, protected, and recognized as equal subjects of rights. This, in turn, strengthens citizens' relationship with the state, enhances legal culture, and encourages the resolution of disputes through lawful means.

Third, the findings of the study demonstrate that when the harmony between justice and legality is disrupted, social trust is the first to suffer. Under such conditions, legal nihilism, indifference, dissatisfaction, and recourse to informal means tend to increase among citizens. This contributes to the growth of corruption, favoritism, and social inequality. As a result, the organic link between society and the state is weakened.

Fourth, this issue is also of considerable practical significance. Ensuring justice and legality in public governance is a necessary condition for the development of civil society, the strengthening of democratic institutions, and the preservation of social stability. From this perspective, improving the judicial and legal system, intensifying anti-corruption efforts, increasing the transparency of public services, and advancing legal education remain among the most pressing tasks.

Fifth, to regard the harmony between justice and legality solely as a legal or political problem would be an overly narrow approach. Above all, it is a social phenomenon that determines the moral health of society, mutual respect among citizens, and confidence in the future. For this reason, the establishment of these principles should involve not only state institutions, but also educational institutions, the family, civil society organizations, and the mass media.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the harmony between justice and legality constitutes one of the most important factors of social trust. While legality brings order and stability to society, justice ensures that this order is substantively fair and humane. Social trust is formed precisely through the mutually reinforcing operation of these two principles. The study has shown that equality before the law, fair adjudication, transparent governance, accountability, and a firm fight against corruption are among the key factors in strengthening social trust. At the same time, the manifestation of justice and legality in everyday social relations further reinforces citizens' positive attitudes toward the state and society. Thus, in building a democratic state governed by the rule of law and a strong civil society, it remains a priority task to ensure justice on a legal basis and legality in the spirit of justice. Only in a society where such harmony exists can stable social trust, peace, and progress be achieved.

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