

Survey measures of social capital: how well do self-reported indicators measure social capital?

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Despite the importance and wide application of social capital in social sciences, the reliability of its measures hinges on experimental and anecdotal evidence, and on correlations among survey variables. We perform a large scale test of the reliability of survey measures of social capital, and in particular of trust in others, by comparing survey and objective measures across countries, regions and over time. Our evidence suggests that survey measures reliably reflect objective measures of social capital.