



Suderburg

Faculty Trade and Social Sciences

Research and Development

Prof. Dr. Markus Launer

Digital Trust at the Workplace

EU-funded EFRE-Research Project “Digital Trust & Teamwork”

Request for review of the Research Design by the Ethics Committee

at Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences

University Braunschweig/Wolfenbüttel

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Salzgitter

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Abstract

This ethical statement deals with the planning and implementation of an international empirical study on “digital trust in the workplace” of companies and organizations. It is a study in the area of Business Administration and Information Technology. The purpose of this ethic statement is to protect the participants and give guidelines for all participating researchers. The project is independent, self-financed without co-financing of any project partners.

The survey is carried out using a standardized, pseudonymous electronic questionnaire. The participation in the study is voluntarily. There is no disadvantage in not participating in this questionnaire. The participants are friends and their friends (snowball effect) of the participating researcher. All personal data is pseudonymous and will be anonymized best as possible before using. Voluntarily provided personal information will be collected and stored strictly separately from the data. The software used for the analysis is provided by SoSci Survey GmbH in Munich, Germany (SoSci). SoSci is fully compliant with the German Data Protection Law (DSGVO). The research data will be stored on the secured PowerFolder of the Ostfalia University. All analysis should be handled and stored with this PowerFolder and/or special secured computer devices.

For this study, an own theoretical model has been developed based on widely accepted theories in academia (see Annex). The data set to be developed will be analyzed statistically and used for publications in scientific magazines. In addition, so-called papers are to be written for participation in academic conferences.

The project is led by Prof. Dr. Markus Launer from Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences at the Suderburg Campus, Germany. Friends from national and foreign Universities support the collection, analysis and publication of the pseudonymous data.

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1 Contact Data Project Leader and Cover Letter

Contact Data of Applicant

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Cover Letter

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Ethics Committee,

As project leader, I kindly request the review of the research design of our study by the Ethics Committee of the Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences. The project is led by myself, Prof. Dr. Markus Launer. This is an independent study without cooperation partners or sponsors. This research project is part of the EU-funded EFRE research project „Digital Trust & Teamwork, Study 1: Digital Trust within Companies, project number ZW6-85007939. Please see project website <https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/pws/launer/Forschung/digitales-vertrauen/>.

The study is based on an electronic questionnaire based on widely accepted theories in academia. The questionnaire software is provided by SoSci Survey and is fully compliant with common ethics rules and German and European Data Protection law (FDPA, GDPR). The collected personal data is pseudonymous and will be anonymized before using. No personal data will be asked, stored or transferred. Voluntarily given personal information such as an email address will be stored strictly separately from the data.

The project is self-funded and independent. There is no co-financing by project partners. The study is supported by friends from national and foreign Universities personally known by Ostfalia University.

Kindest regards

Prof. Dr. Markus Launer
Ostfalia University

2 General Ethical Commitment

The purpose of this document is to clarify the obligations of ethics for the international research project “Digital Trust at the Workplace”. The participating researchers are employees of Ostfalia University as well as friends from national and foreign Universities (Digital Trust Team).

We, the Digital Trust Team, undertake research activity according to the ethical statement of the Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences (Ostfalia University), Wolfenbüttel, Germany (<https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/en/>). Detailed guidance is available in the University’s research ethics and governance website <https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/forschung/kommission-fuer-forschungsethik/index.html> (in German only). Therefore, we follow the WMA Declaration of Helsinki – Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (please see <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving-human-subjects/>). We also follow the ethical principles of the Senate of the Ostfalia University from July 9, 2016 (Ordnung der Senatskommission für Forschungsethik, please see https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/forschung/galleries/Kommission-fuer-Forschungsethik/Ordnung_Senatskommission_Forschungsethik.pdf, in German only)

Personal Data is Pseudonymous

The personal data collected by the Digital Trust Team is pseudonymous data by voluntary participants. All pseudonymous data will be anonymized best as possible before using. Please see therefore document according to Art 13 German data protection law (DSGVO)

Data Protection Commitment

This Privacy Statement describes how the personal data in this study is processed, i.e. how this data is collected, used and how it is shared with third parties. It also describes what measures are being taken to protect the privacy of all participants. Please also see our statement regarding Art. 13 DSGVO (German Data Protection law).

Ethical Principles

The policy is built upon publicly available ethical and good practice guidelines issued by research councils, professional bodies, subject associations and external ethics committees.

Ethical Dilemmas

It is not possible to define absolutely all boundaries of ethical principles, practice, and problems. What is advocated is a fundamental engagement with the ethical principles and dilemmas detailed below as an essential part of the research process in whatever discipline. Regardless of the nature of their work, staff and cooperation partners who undertake research activity in this project are obliged to take into account the wider direct and anticipated indirect consequences of their work.

Respect for the Rights of Others

Ethical conduct in research demands respect for the rights of others who are directly or indirectly affected by the work. In relation to human participants, both their physical and personal autonomy are respected. Their

participation in the research is by fully informed consent, and their right to confidentiality, according to prevailing standards, should be guaranteed. The respect for rights to confidentiality is essential irrespective of any characteristic of the research environment or participants and at all stages of the research process. Further guidance is available in the University's Research Ethics and Governance Guidelines at the Ostfalia University (please see <https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/forschung/kommission-fuer-forschungsethik/>). Respect for equality and diversity in the management, design, and conduct of research activity is essential to maintaining the good academic practice.

Justice

Justice is the ethical principle of fair treatment of others, which requires researchers to weigh up and make judgments about competing claims and interests of those directly or indirectly involved in the research, regardless of the vested interests of researchers. Researchers should address competing interests at every stage of the research, including the decision of whether it should be carried out in the first place. Researchers should consider the moral justification for the differential treatment of research subjects, including non-human entities. For example, potential risks to the future should be weighed against technological progress in the present.

Balance Qualitatively different Values

Ethical principles will inevitably conflict, resulting in the requirement on the researchers to balance qualitatively different values. In such cases, researchers are obliged to make difficult judgments that cannot be derived from first principles and should be prepared to draw upon disinterested advice. Where such a conflict cannot be resolved at the subject level or by advice to an external ethics committee or professional bodies' guidelines, the matter should be referred to the Research Ethics Committee of the Ostfalia University. In all instances, Ostfalia University strives to promote a high standard of professional conduct amongst staff and students.

3 Detailed Description of the Research Project

3.1 Title of the Study

Digital Trust at the Workplace

3.2 Description of the Study

3.2.1 Target of the Study

The aim is to carry out an international empirical study on the research of digital trust in the workplace of companies and organizations. The survey is carried out using a standardized, pseudonymous electronic questionnaire. For this purpose, a separate theoretical model has been developed (see Annex). The data set to be developed is to be analyzed statistically and publications in scientific magazines are developed from it.

Target of the study

The target of the study is to research digital trust at the workplace. It will lead to suggestions and action how to create a trustful environment and culture within modern companies. Several publications are planned, workshops and conference to communicate the results. The purpose of the theoretical article therefore is to understand better the underlying principles and theoretical underpinnings of the research "Digital Trust in the Workplace." Specifically, this article presents the framework employed in the study. Likewise, it describes each theory and principles and their relationship to each other.

Theory, Pre-Test, Test-re-test and HCI-test conducted

The Digital Trust Team performed already

- Theory: an own theory has been developed based on widely accepted theories in academia (see annex). Publication of the theory in an academic journal was in December 2019.
- Pre-test: A test-retest and pre-test was conducted from February to November 2019. The analysis of the pre-test was performed in December 2019. In addition, an HCI test was performed in 2019. Publication of the pre-test results in an academic journal is expected in 2020.

Main study started and further Publications planned

The next step is to collect, analyze and publish data on an aggregated pseudonymous level.

- Main-study: The main-study will be performed beginning of January 2020 until July 2020. The analysis afterwards will be ongoing throughout 2020 and 2021.
- Publication of the results is expected from August 2020 to 2022.
- Workshops and Conferences will be attended during 2020-2023.

3.2.2 Research Hypotheses

An own conceptual framework has been developed for the study. As seen in the framework (see annex), six interrelated variables were hypothesized as factors that may affect the digital trust level. These are demographic profiles, technologic profiles, employment background, technology integration, decision-making skills, and personality type of respondents.

On the other hand, the level of digital trust will be measured in terms of the three components of the information systems workplace. These are people, technology, and process, and each of these categories has specific variables. For technology, the level of digital trust will be measured in terms of the electronic devices, hardware and software systems, and information systems used in the workplace. For process, the level of digital trust will be determined in terms of the information systems operations, data privacy and protection practices, and the use of the internet and social media. The level of digital trust in terms of people component will be measured in terms of the management and other internal entities of the organization, IT and data support, and external entities that has direct bearing to the operation of the organization.

Further, the study hopes to determine the levels of trust in particular with the priorities, experience, and attitude among the respondents. In the long term, the study will look at the impacts of digital trust in the workplace. Please also see the theoretical article attached (see annex)

3.2.3 Scientific Relevance of the Study

This study has the potential to support companies in establishing a more trustful digital culture in their organization. It also helps governments to create a save data and security culture in their respective country. According to epistemology, David Truncellito of Yale University, this study performs three kinds of knowledge: procedural (competence or know-how), acquaintance (familiarity), and propositional (description of "a fact or a state of affairs"). The results of this study will perform:

- A tool for building knowledge and for facilitating Digital Trust
- Means to understand various issues and increase public awareness
- An aid to business success
- Means to find, gauge, and seize opportunities
- A seed to love reading, writing, analyzing, and sharing valuable information
- Nourishment and exercise for the mind

3.2.4 Expected Results

The Output of Study

The output of this study is a landscape of digital trust in terms of technology, people, and process in the workplace. The level of confidence in people, technology, and process in building a secure digital world will be mapped out. Drivers that will affect digital trust among employees and his or her perspective about his or her own experience as a worker will be identified. Likewise, drivers that will affect an employee's attitude toward the employing organization will be identified. Further, drivers that will affect digital trust among employee's behavior in society as a whole will be enumerated.

Likewise, a global description, correlational, and comparative analyses are expected at the end of the study. Specifically, a descriptive analysis about the demographic, employment and technologic profiles, technology integration, decision-making skills, and personality type of the employees will be presented. Likewise, a detailed discussion of the level of confidence to technology will be presented in terms of a) electronic devices provided by the company, b) hardware and software systems installed, c) information systems that are implemented in the company. It will also provide the level of confidence to people who have direct or indirect access to any digital technology such as the management, IT and data support, and external entities. Also, a detailed analysis of the level of confidence in the digital process in the workplace will be presented. The study

will also present the practices of the employees regarding data protection and privacy as well as their behaviors in the online world.

A correlative analysis of the factors that affect digital trust will be presented at the end of the study. Specifically, this study will provide evidence whether nationality, age, gender, civil status, and educational attainment affects digital trust in the workplace. It will also show the technologic profile factors that can affect digital trust in the workplace. Also, an analysis will be presented if the type of the company, size of the company, years working, business nature, roles, job position, and means of communication are correlated with digital trust in the workplace. This study will also provide evidence on whether digital tools used, frequency of use, and duration could affect digital trust.

This study will provide evidence on the differences in the level of confidence to the digital technology among the employees in terms of their demographic, technologic, employment, technology use, decision-making, and personality type. Most importantly, a business model and strategy will be designed at the end of the study that will emphasize the improvement of digital trust in the workplace. The model may include innovative strategies that will lead to digital leadership and transformation in the workplace.

3.2.5 Theoretical Basis

The theoretical basis is based on widely accepted theories in academia. Theories and principles included in this study are Forrester Social Technologic Ladder, Decision-making models, Technology Adoption Theory, Management Theory, Software Quality Model, General Data Protection Regulation Principles, Digital Citizenship Principles, and Caldicott Principles. For more information please see annex.

3.3 Description of Methods and Study Design

3.3.1 Empirical Analysis with a standardized electronic Questionnaire

This is an empirical study based on a standardized questionnaire. It is considered a quantitative research based on widely accepted theories in academia. Quantitative analysis is used to understand digital behavior of employees in companies by using mathematical and statistical modeling, measurement, and research. Quantitative analysts aim to represent a given reality in terms of a numerical value.

The collection of the data is performed with the electronic questionnaire. The participation is voluntarily. The software for the data collection is provided by SoSci Survey. This survey research involves a large audience to collect a large amount of data (approx. 1000 respondents). Therefore, this quantitative method has a predetermined set of closed questions which are pretty easy to answer (please see <https://www.soscisurvey.de>). The data will be stored on a secured PowerFolder of the Ostfalia University protected by its IT department. The analysis will be done by the statistical program SPSS.

3.3.2 Description of the Course of the Study

The course of the study follows a standardized design. In brief it will be performed:

1. Theory and Questionnaire:

Formulation of the research objective & survey questionnaire: The research objective and questionnaire were formulated with appropriate citations, adaptations and free from copyrights.

2. Validity and Reliability Analysis of the Questionnaire:

- a. Test-re-Test: a test-re-test method was performed with students by Prof. Launer at Ostfalia University (Germany) and Prof. Marcial at Silliman University (Philippines) from January and February 2019. At Ostfalia University, 51 students, at Silliman University 32 students participated. For the identification of the answers, anonymous order numbers were used. In case someone mentioned his/her email address by chance, it was converted into anonymous order number by Ostfalia staff. Therefore, no personal data was stored or transferred. The method was critically discussed with the faculty's dean of Ostfalia University, Faculty H, and was in accordance with all common rules and regulations.
- b. Pre-test (internal consistency): The pre-test of the research study was performed friends from the following countries: Russia, Paraguay, Brazil, USA, UK, Germany, the Philippines, Thailand, China, Japan and Korea. The administration of the pre-testing was handled by Ostfalia staff only via the electronic questionnaire. No cooperation partner received the data except Prof. Dave Marcial, visiting professor to Ostfalia University. The data was stored on the Ostfalia PowerFolder only and completely anonymous. The pre-test started in March 2019 and ended in November 2019. In total 376 answers were received and analyzed.
- c. Human Computer Interaction-test: a HCI test was performed at the Silliman University according to all rules and regulations. Qualified experts and professionals were invited to evaluate the interactiveness and usability of the questionnaire. Revisions were made based on the comments and suggestions of the expert to ensure comfortability among the respondents.
- d. The results of the testings will be published in an academic journal in December 2019 or later, depending on the accessibility of the journal. The article will be peer reviewed and all methodical steps critically analyzed. See sample articles in the annexes.

3. Administration of the Survey Questionnaire (Main Study)

- a. The actual survey will be performed beginning of January 2020 until July 2020. It will be facilitated by the Digital Trust Team worldwide.
- b. The collected data with the electronic questionnaire will be handled by the Digital Trust Team only. It will be sampled with SoSci Survey and stored on the Ostfalia Folder only.
- c. A mixed method will be employed. First, a quota sample of at least 1000 responses will be determined based on coincidence of the research team. Secondly, a snow-ball sampling will be used for those who are identified by coincidence. Friends of the Digital Trust Team will support the data sampling.
- d. The collected personal data is pseudonymous and stored on the Ostfalia server (Folder).
- e. The personal data is pseudonymous and will be tested and anonymized best as possible. The Digital Trust Team will take every effort to avoid the identification of individuals.

4. Analysis of Results

- a. The statistical analysis of the results will be performed by the Digital Trust Team in 2020 and 2021.
- b. To participate in the analysis of the data, each participants has to accept an agreement. Data will be stored on the Ostfalia Folder and local computer with special security measures only. A special procedure is in process for handling the data according to Art 13 German data protection law (DSGVO)
- c. The personal data used is pseudonymous but best possible anonymized.
- d. The results of the testings will be discussed by the Digital Trust Team via email, video conferencing and personal meetings.

5. Publication and Sharing

- a. The writing of reports and publishable articles will commence immediately after the statistical analysis.
- b. No specific respondent will be mentioned in the publication. All respondents will be collectively called as "employees".
- c. At least 7 publishable articles should be written. Prof. Launer and Ostfalia University will be the author or co-author of all published articles.
- d. A conference will be scheduled once reports and articles are drafted.

6. Conferences and Workshops

- a. It is planned to discuss the results anonymously on an aggregated basis on workshops.
- b. The final results of the pre-test and main study will be presented in self-organized conferences (Service Management Congress in Suderburg)
- c. The results and publications will be submitted to academic conferences as a so called paper for academic conferences.

7. Data Archival and Disposal

- a. The data will be used approx. for two (2) years for active analysis
- b. The data will afterwards be archived for a maximum of 10 years at Ostfalia Folder.

3.3.3 Description of the Selection of Study Participants with Justification

The participation in this study is solely by free will. There is no disadvantage by not participating in the questionnaire. Participants are friends of the Digital Trust team and their friends (snow ball effect). No unknown data or data from third parties will be used. The selection of the participants will be carefully observed.

- a. A quantitative method will be employed. First, a quota sample of at least 1000 responses will be determined based on coincidence of the Digital Trust Team. Secondly, a snow-ball sampling will be used for those who are identified by coincidence.
- b. Respondent must be an employee (full-time or part-time, regular or probationary) and must not be currently fulltime undergraduate (Bachelor) students.

- c. Cooperation partners such as German Foreign Chamber of Commerce and IT Associations will be asked to distribute the questionnaire among their members.

3.3.4 Description of the Benefits and potential Risks for the Participant-Respondents and Team Members

The benefit for the participants is to receive or read published results and information about digital trust at the workplace. There is no risk known for the participants.

- a. The study is beneficial to the participant-respondents as they would be able to measure their trust level that will help them improve and contribute in the digital transformation in their workplace.
- b. The study is also beneficial to the research team as it provides opportunity to advance their research capacity, professional development, and academic integrity.
- c. There are no prior potential risks identified for the participant-respondents. Participation in the survey is voluntary. Respondents are free to withdraw consent at any time and withdraw any unprocessed data you have previously supplied. Anonymity and the confidentiality of responses to the fullest possible extent will be exercised.
- d. For the research team members, health and travel insurances are assumed to be covered by the participating cooperation and universities.

Burden and risks for the participants and measures to prevent any harm

The analysis will be performed pseudonymously via a standardized questionnaire. It is not expected to cause any risk and burden to the participant. Every member of the Digital Trust Team is responsible to prevent any harm or burden to any participant in the study.

3.4 Information on Data Protection and Confidentiality

3.4.1 Personal Data is Pseudonymes

According to the GDPR, data are personal if they are clearly assigned to a particular natural person or if this assignment can be made at least indirect. In this study, personal data is pseudonymously collected and processed. The data will be anonymized best as possible before further processing. This means, with special effort and analysis it might be possible, to identify a single person. The Digital Trust Team will take all possible actions to prevent this. The data will be tested before using, if there is a possibility of deanonymization. There will be no IP addresses transferred from SoSci Survey to the Digital Trust Team. Only pseudonymous data will be used for analysis and storage.

In the European Union, anyone who processes personal data as a controller must inform the data subjects of certain aspects of data processing in accordance with Articles 13 of the GDPR. Each electronic questionnaire will fully inform the participants on this issue. Please see separate statement accordingly.

3.4.2 Confidentiality assured

Pseudonymous Data Collection and Anonymization

The questionnaire collects pseudonymous data (e.g. demographic questions). There is no way to identify any person based on his answer without special effort or analysis. Service Provider SoSci will transfer no IP

addresses from the respondents. The Digital Trust Team will be testing the data set before using, if there is any chance of deanonymization. Only anonymous data will be further used.

Voluntarily provided E-Mail Addresses are stored separately from Data

At the end of the questionnaire is the possibility to state voluntarily the email address of the participant. These data will be stored separately for information purposes only. This is a standard feature by SoSci Survey. There is no chance to connect the collected data with the personal information. The results of this study will be send to the participants after completion of the study. This is secured by the service provider SoSci Survey.

3.5 Description of the Procedure of Consent of the Study Participants

The participation on the questionnaire is by free will. There is no disadvantage of not participating in this questionnaire.

Regulations to fully inform participants on the targets and milestone plan of the research project

The questionnaire contains an introduction statement informing the participant on the target and milestone plan of the research (see annex). It is described how the research will be performed, where the data is stored and analyzed. This statement will also be published on the project website of Prof. Markus Launer (team leader) at <https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/en/pws/launer/research-and-development/>. Changes to the research plan will be published on this website as well.

Regulations for participation in the study

- a. The pre-test was performed with friends and family of the Digital Trust Team by free will.
- b. The main study will be conducted with staff of Ostfalia and friends from national and foreign Universities (Digital Trust Team). The Digital Trust Team will make sure, that only members participate in the study that expressed their free will to participate.

Regulations of non-participation

The participants can stop the questionnaire whenever they want. Only the answers given so far will be stored in the system. If the participant does not answer all questions, they will be excluded from the research before the statistical analysis starts.

Free will of participants

All participants must be at least 18 years old (in the USA older than 21 years). He/She must be an employee of any type of company or organization. The participant him/herself expresses his/her free will to participate by answering the questions of the questionnaire.

3.6 Data Security Measures

3.6.1 Description of the Procedure for Confidentiality

The duty of confidentiality in the strict sense serves directly to protect the personal sphere of life and secrecy (privacy) of a person who entrusts himself to certain professional groups or certain public or private institutions. Accordingly, the obligation of confidentiality protects the right to informational self-determination,

which has constitutional status in Germany. Since pseudonymous data is collected only, the Digital Trust Team sees no problem with confidentiality. The collected data with the electronic questionnaire will be handled by the Digital Trust Team staff only. It will be sampled with SoSci Survey and stored on the Ostfalia Folder only. Friends of national and foreign University analyzing the data must strictly work according to this ethical statement and data protection plan.

3.6.2 Procedure for deleting Pseudonymous Data

Personal data is collected pseudonymously by the Digital Trust Team. Only with special effort and analysis someone an individual could be identified. The Digital Trust Team will be testing the data set before using if there is a chance to identify individuals. The data set will be anonymized best as possible. So after giving an answer it is not possible anymore to identify the answer of one single respondent and it cannot be deleted.

3.7 Data Protection Concept of Software Provider SoSci Survey

3.7.1 Electronic Questionnaire

The project makes use of an electronic questionnaire platform that is secure; meets the requirements of German and European Data Protection Law (FDPA and GDPR); transparent for respondents (zero footprint on a respondent computer); respects usability principles; and is open, flexible and scalable from a technical standpoint.

3.7.2 Protection against unauthorized Access

The technical level must ensure that data is not in the wrong hands or is lost due to carelessness or technical defects. SoSci Survey uses, among other things, the following technical measures to protect against unauthorized access:

- End-to-end SSL encryption (HTTPS) protects the data both when filling out the questionnaire and when retrieving the collected data. A secure SSL configuration (Qualys SSL Labs) ensures that the transmission of data is actually secure. A highly compliant configuration and established certification bodies ensure that users of older browsers can access the questionnaire correctly. For particularly high demands, our Pro-Server offers s2survey.net, an SSL certificate with Extended Validation (EV), which most browsers signal (view) by a green address bar.
- A Web server requires a number of software products. SoSci provides the actual survey software "SoSci Survey" with proven components - from the operating system (Ubuntu Linux) to the server application (nginx) to the database (MySQL) and the encryption of backups (GPG). Security updates for these software packages are applied multiple times a day.
- The server itself is located in the certified and secured data center of the provider M-net Telecommunication GmbH. The server is managed by SSH encryption, which is additionally secured against hacker attacks.

3.7.3 Protection against technical Failures

Technical defects can never be completely ruled out. But the risks and possible consequences can be greatly limited by a number of measures:

- The technical operation of the survey server is carried out by PartnerGate GmbH, a member of the InterNetWire Group of Companies, and thus always at the current level.
- The use of virtual machines and current storage technologies allows for a certain degree of independence between technical components and actual operation. As a result, technical defects have no or only short-term effects.
- A daily data backup of the questionnaires and the collected data protects against data loss due to human error and software errors.

3.7.4 State Protection

SoSci Survey GmbH is based in Munich (Germany), as is the data center, which houses the survey servers www.soscisurvey.de and s2survey.net. Germany offers a very high level of data protection in international comparison - both in terms of corporate obligations (FDPA and GDPR) and in terms of state/government access and interference. In addition, the location makes it much easier for German and European companies to collect and process personal data in accordance with the law.

3.7.5 Contractual Arrangements

SoSci Survey's General Terms and Conditions (GTC) explicitly stipulate that the data belongs exclusively to the researchers. SoSci maintains www.soscisurvey.de encrypted backups on the server over a 12-month period. Prof. Dr. Launer from the Ostfalia University has signed a contract with SoSci Survey.

4 No Risks of „dual use“ known

4.1 No identifiable Risks of possible Misuse

In our view, there are no discernible risks of (possible) misuse of the research results or parts thereof. The protection of human dignity, health or life, the environment and similar factors (including by third parties) is given.

4.2 Risk/benefit Assessment and Risk minimization Measures

Balance between risk and benefit of the project

We see no risk for the participant to participate in this research. However, the Digital Trust Team will evaluate every risk occurring in regard to the benefit of the study.

All research is subject to ethical considerations concerning purpose, the source of funding, methods to be deployed and wider value and impact. It is important that risks in carrying out a piece of research are clearly articulated and weighed against the potential value of it so that all those involved proceed with informed consent.

The principles of beneficence and non-maleficence are fundamental to all research activity. Beneficence is the requirement to promote the interests and well-being of others. It is the ethical principle of 'doing good' in the widest sense. Non-maleficence is the principle of 'not doing harm.' Both principles must be applied to all entities directly or indirectly affected by the research. In practice, these principles frequently conflict, for example as in animal versus human welfare.

4.3 Handling the Research Data obtained in the Research Project

The research data will be stored on the secured PowerFolder of the Ostfalia University. All analysis should be handled and stored on this secured PowerFolder.

4.4 Examination of Employees and Cooperation Partners

The employees are existing staff of Ostfalia University who underwent the usual procedures and protocols during the hiring processes. In addition, they underwent rigid training and orientation about the privacy, security and integrity in the conduct of the research.

Friends from national and foreign Universities were identified based on the institutions academic reputation particularly on research and development. Specific persons as partners were selected by the identified partner institutions.

5 Members of the Digital Trust Team

5.1 Ethical Statement valid for all Participants

The policy is intended for all those engaged in this research activity as they may be embodied in different disciplines, countries, and universities. It is designed primarily for academic staff only, including those on research contracts, but not for external degree students, taught postgraduate and undergraduate students engaged in projects or others.

5.2 Project Leader and Key Researchers

Project Leader

The project leader of the Digital Trust Team is Prof. Dr. Markus Launer, Ostfalia University (head and project leader). He is the main person working on this project. The project leader is also in charge of the planning, administration and monitoring of the project.

The Co-head of this project is Prof. Dr. Dave Marcial from the Silliman University in Dumaguete, Philippines, visiting professor to Ostfalia University and Frithiof Svenson, academic researcher, Ostfalia University. Both assist the project leader in the actual operation of the project.

Connection of both Universities

Both Universities are in the process of signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

5.3 Employees of Ostfalia University

It is intended, that employees of Ostfalia University support the work of Prof. Launer on this project temporarily. The participation is by free will and not part of other projects. The project staff assists in the logistical and documentary aspects of the projects. They are in charge of coordination and other secretarial tasks. They provide IT support and oversee the handling of the digital data from the creation of the platform, transmission, retention and archival.

5.4 Research Friends from national and foreign Universities (Digital Trust Team)

As of January 2020, the following friends of national and foreign Universities are interested in supporting the study, data collection, data analyze and publishing:

- Silliman University, Dumaguete, Philippines (Co-Head): Prof. Dr. Dave Marcial
- Beijing Open University, Peking, China: Prof. Dr. Bo Aquila Michael Yang
- Winterthur University, Christian Weber
- Ferris University, Yokohama, Japan: Natsuko Uchida
- National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan: Prof. Dr. Victor Cheng
- Open University of the Philippines, Los Banos: Prof. Dr. Joane Serrano
- Semyung University, Semyung, Korea: Prof. Dr. Kin Gun-do
- Shenzhen Polytechnic University, China: Prof. Dr. Wenming Yang
- Siam University, Bangkok, Thailand: Prof. Dr. Chanita Rukspollmuang, Kavin Katanyutaveetip
- Tallinn University of Applied Sciences, Tallinn, Estonia: Prof. Dr. Harald Kitzmann
- Universidad Católica Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, Paraguay: Prof. Dr. Simon Zalimben
- University Buenos Aires University, Argentina: Prof. Dr. Luis van Morlegan
- University de Chile, Santiago de Chile: Prof. Dr. Eduardo Kohler, Prof. Dr. Erich Spencer
- University of Electro-Communication, Tokyo, Japan: Prof. Dr. Yasushi Kuno
- University of the Philippines, Manila, Cebu, Philippines: Prof. Dr. Eric Capistrano
- Linnaeus University, Sweden, Prof. Dr. Selcen Ozturkcan
- University Jamshedpur, Xavier School of Management, Prof. Dr. Himadri Roy Chaudhuri
- University of Nairobi, Kenia, Dr. George Katete

Future new participating partners will be added and listed on the personal website of Prof. Dr. Markus Launer at the Ostfalia University at <https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/en/pws/launer/research-and-development/>. The research partners are responsible for their own data sampling, analysis but will publish together with Prof. Markus Launer. The local data protection lay may apply.

6 Signed by the Project Leader

This ethical statement was put together with the best of my knowledge and with support by Intersoft Consulting Services AG, Hamburg. All given information is truthful and honest.

Prof. Dr. Markus Launer

7 Appendix

- 7.1 Research Article on the Theoretical Framework of the Study**
- 7.2 The Final Version of the Survey Questionnaire**
- 7.3 Information according to Art 13 DSGVO**
- 7.4 Auftragsverarbeitungsvertrag (AVV) mit SoSci Survey GmbH**
- 7.5 Information of handling the data set internationally on secure computer devices (in progress)**