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Personality and demographic correlates of political ideology.

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Abstract

This paper was concerned with “bright” and “dark-side” personality trait correlates of political beliefs. In a series of three studies, we asked people to rate their political beliefs on a simple, single left-right, liberalism-conservatism dimension. Our major focus was on how much incremental variance can be accounted for by trait, and other ideologically associated variables. In the first study we found three personality traits, particularly Conscientiousness was related to political beliefs and that personality accounted for around eight per cent incremental variance over demographic and other belief variables. In the second study we found fewer significant correlations between personality and political beliefs, but that the Militant Extremist Mindset factors were related to political beliefs. In the third study we found evidence that three “dark-side” factors namely Narcissism, Psychopathy and Sadism accounted for around five percent of incremental variance over demographic and belief variables. The implications and limitations of the results are discussed.

Word Count: 8155

Key Words: Personality; demography; militant extremist mindset; dark- and bright-side traits; incremental variance

Introduction

Differential psychologists have, over the years, examined personality correlates of everything from job and mate choice, to health and job satisfaction as well as leisure and longevity. They have also looked at the relationship of personality to various ideological variables and attitudes to political institutions (Aichholzer & Rammstedt, 2020; Joly et al., 2018). In this study we are concerned with personality correlates of political opinions, an area of research which has developed significantly over the last twenty years

There is an extensive and growing literature in psychology, political science and sociology on personality and demographic differences in ideology, and specifically political beliefs and behaviour (Blais & St-Vincent, 2011; Deary et al., 2008; Eysenck & Wilson, 1978; Furnham & Fenton-O’Creevy, 2018; Hart 2020; Hatemi & Verhulst, 2015; Mondak & Halperin, 2008; Moss & O’Connor, 2020; Scott & Medeiros, 2020; Wang, 2014; Weinschenk & Panagopoulos, 2014). Studies have been done all over the world with a variety of political belief and behaviour variables (Ackermann, 2016). Often “one-off” studies have been difficult to compare because they use different measures of both personality and politics and use very different samples in terms of size and demographics.

However, it might be concluded that some traits are more frequently significantly associated with political beliefs and behaviours but that the effect sizes are often very low. For example, in an important review with meta-analyses Cichocka, and Dhont, (2018) showed Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience are consistently related to differences in left-wing (liberal) and right-wing (conservative) beliefs *“Strong preferences for order, discipline, and organization (i.e., high Conscientiousness) matches conservatives’ preferences for social stability and maintaining the status quo, which offers structure and reassurance. Being open-minded, valuing creativity, and seeking novel experiences would go against conservative values that emphasize opposition to change, and rather resonates with the profile of liberals who*

embrace social change, rebelliousness, and cultural diversity. Theoretically, people should be more attracted by political ideologies, parties, and candidates that convey messages and values congruent with their own personality traits” (327-328).

Yet others like Verhulst et al (2012) argue that personality traits do not cause people to develop political attitudes; rather, the correlation between the two is a function of an innate common underlying genetic factor. Indeed in a study of personality and the sense of civic duty Weinschenk and Dawes (2017ab) were able to show that genetic factors accounted for between 70% and 87% of the correlation between personality and civic duty.

The literature in this area is often hampered by methodological problems such as the use of relatively small student populations (Jonason, 2014). Others have concentrated on particular ideologies like Right Wing Authoritarianism (Leone et al., 2012) rather than general political beliefs.. Some have been interested in very particular behaviours like how personality mediates the impact of political attitudes with actual voter participation (Schoen & Steinbrecher, 2013). Others have been very inventive such a study by Johann et al. (2020) who used German survey questions enquiring on political activities to identify three political participant types (inactives, voting specialists, and complete activists). Looking at the relationship between the Big Five and these types, they found that Conscientious people were more likely to affiliate with the voting specialists and Extraverts with the more active participant types.

In this paper we are primarily concerned with the personality trait predictors of political beliefs. It aims to replicate, but also extend work in the area. The major focus is on which traits account for most of the variance and also look at the extent to which personality traits have *incremental validity* over gender, social class, education and other belief factors such as religion, in accounting for political beliefs.

Review of the literature

Studies have demonstrated that personality traits are conceptually and empirically associated with different political issues like voting, party membership, general interest, taking part in demonstrations and discussions (Gerber et al., 2011). Whilst it has been found that identical traits are related somewhat differently related to particular political outcome variables, the pattern is similar with some traits (e.g. Open-to-Experience) often being related to belief/cognitive variables and Extraversion and Conscientiousness related to political behavioural variables. However, it should be noted that whilst not all studies report effect sizes, where they do, they tend to be small, often very small. That is, that while personality traits are theoretically and empirically related to political beliefs the relationship is weak and accounts for relatively little of the variance suggesting that other factors are more important (Weinschenk, 2017). A central issue then is how much variance do personality traits account for, with some studies indicating as much as a third (Brandstätter & Opp, 2014), but most well under a tenth. Of equal interest is what other psychological or sociological variables account for more of the variance in explaining political beliefs.

Some have suggested that the relationship is indirect, and moderated by other variables (Wang, 2016). For instance, studies have suggested various demographic and life history factors that mediate or interact with personality factors to influence political ideology, choice and behaviour (Capstarara et al., 2006; De Neve, 2015).

Over a decade ago Mondak and Halperin (2008) reviewed how each of the Big Five traits related to political variables. Also, using three American data sets they analysed the relationship of traits to the approval of presidential candidates to trust in politicians, turnout in elections and participation in political campaigns, meeting and voluntary work. The results indicated that Openness and Conscientiousness were consistently related to many political variables as noted by Cichocka, and Dhont, (2018).

Brandstätter and Opp (2014) reviewed eleven studies on personality and politics. They also tested 438 Germans and found that Openness was positively, and Agreeableness negatively, correlated with political protesting. Also, Neuroticism was negatively associated with political activity, though Extraversion was not significantly associated with their political measures. They concluded that: *“Personality comes into play (1) by choosing friends who share one’s political preferences or by joining protest-encouraging groups, (2) by convincing friends and colleagues to become critical of the new political situation and to join protest activities, (3) by assuming that significant others, friends, or colleagues share one’s attitudes toward political protest even if this assumed similarity is only partially true”* (p 531).

Fatke (2017) reviewed the association between personality and political ideology in 21 countries and found considerable variability suggesting the results may not be replicable (Ludeke & Larsen, 2017), though it is not clear to what extent this is due to methodological, cultural or historical factors associated with a country’s political processes and structure. It is therefore important to try to replicate the personality-politics relationship across populations and countries with different political systems.

There have been various attempts to get cross-cultural evidence of the reliability of the association between traits and political beliefs and participation. Thus a *Korean* study showed Openness positively correlated with protest participation, rally attendance, internet activity and financial contributions; Agreeableness negatively associated with different forms of participation; and Conscientiousness associated positively with some activities (contacting officials, donations) but negatively with others (rally participation) (Ha et al., 2013). Leone et al. (2012) testing 344 *Italian* citizens found only Extraversion ($r=.16$) and Openness ($r=.27$) related to an interest in politics. The only common factor that these and other studies is the predominant role of trait Openness in both an interest, and taking part, in political issues and

events. Some studies have examined personality and politics among specific groups like American State legislators (Dietrich et al., 2012).

Two recent studies are of note. Furnham and Fenton-O’Creevy (2018) examined the incremental validity of the Big-Five personality traits over primarily demographic factors in predicting Left-Right political orientation in a British adult sample of 3854 participants. Personality traits doubled the variance account (4% to 9%) indicating that Open, more Agreeable people were more Left-Wing and Introverted, more Conscientious people more Right-Wing. Agreeableness and Neuroticism showed an interaction with social class, such that for high social class, Left-Wing orientation increased with Agreeableness (but not for low social class); and for high social class, Left-Wing orientation increased with Neuroticism, whilst for low social class, Right-Wing orientation increased with Neuroticism.

Furnham and Cheng (2019) examined the associations between socio-demographic variables, the Big Five personality traits, and the extent of political interest as well as voting behavior, in a large, British sample of 7,135 adults. They found that sex, education, occupation, and four of the five personality traits were significantly associated with political interest in adulthood. Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Openness were significantly and positively associated with political interest, whereas Conscientiousness was negatively associated with voting. Parental social class, education and occupation, and traits Emotional Stability and Openness were all significantly and positively associated with voting behaviour.

Another study of note, relevant to this, was that of Chen et al. (2020) who looked at dark-, rather than bright-side trait correlates of politics. They examined Dark Triad correlates of political interest and knowledge in Canadian adults and found that Psychopathy and Narcissism were positively associated with political interest, while Narcissism was negatively associated with political knowledge. Both Psychopathy and Narcissism had a direct, positive influence on political participation, but Narcissism was associated with being less knowledgeable but more

interested in politics and participating when possible. Interestingly using the same data in another study Pruyers et al. (2019) found a positive relationship between the endorsement of good citizenship and Narcissism, and a negative relationship for Psychopathy.

These Studies

This paper reports on three studies. In each, participants rated themselves in a simple Conservative-Liberal dimension with respect to political beliefs, as the criterion variable. In this, and previous studies, we have noted that this variable is easily understood by a range of participants, normally distributed, reliable over time and related to a range of other political behaviours. In each study this was the dependent variable.

Also, in each study we assessed the personality traits. In the first and second study we looked at the bright-side Big Five, whereas in the third we used the dark-side, Dark Tetrad, an area relatively unexplored (Furnham & Horne, 2021). In each study we were interested in incremental validity of traits over other demographic and ideological variables. like religious beliefs and the Militarist Extremist Mindset.

However, we also probed other, little explored beliefs and behaviours which have shown to be related to ideology. For instance, it has been shown that attitudes to alternative medicine are related to political beliefs and conspiracy theories (Galliford, & Furnham, 2018). The same is true of dietary habits where researchers have demonstrated a relationship between vegetarianism and political beliefs (Micheletti & Stolle, 2012). In two studies we explored self-rated Optimism as a factor that may be related to ideology as we know self-beliefs are predictable and significant correlates of ideological variables (Furnham, 2021)

All studies were run online and similar procedures were used in cleansing the data which resulted in a small percentage of participants being dropped because of missing data or erratic or extreme responses

Study 1

In this study we concentrated on the extent to which the Big Five traits added incremental variance over religious beliefs and two other variables. Numerous studies have shown food preferences (i.e. vegetarianism) is an index of both personality and ideology (Sariyska et al., 2019). Equally, belief in the efficacy of alternative medicine is related to a range of beliefs from trust in science to political attitudes (Furnham, 2007). This study is concerned with the extent to which the Big Five traits account for variance in political beliefs over and above religious beliefs, dietary habits and beliefs in alternative medicine.

Method

Participants

In all, 500 participants, 250 men and women, completed the survey. All participants were both current residents of the United Kingdom, that had also been born there. The average age of participants was 37years (SD= 12.29). The sample was secular, rating themselves an average of 1.53 on a 1 Not at all to 9 Very Religiousness scale; well educated, with an average 5.26 years spent in higher education (SD= 4.25); and politically moderate, rating themselves an average of 5.66 (SD= 1.83) on a 1-9 scale from highly Conservative to highly Liberal. In all

37.5 % said they did (and 62.5%) said they did not Believe in Life after Death. Further 12% (60 participants in total) said they were vegetarians. They also indicated the extent to which they Believed in Alternative Medicine (1=Not at all, 9=Very) (M=3.97; SD= 2.17) and whether or not they were vegetarians (12% Yes).

Measures.

Ten Item Personality Measure (TIPI; Gosling et al., 2003). This measures five personality traits, Emotional Stability, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness using 2 items each. This measure was designed to maximise content validity and efficiency, but as a result, has a poor factor structure and reliability. Items were measured on a 7-point scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Procedure

Ethics permission was sought and received (CEHP/514/2017). Participants were recruited through Prolific.ac, an online participant database. Prolific was chosen over alternative online recruitment websites, due to its greater diversity of participants (Palan & Schitter, 2018; Peer et al., 2017). Participants below the age of 21 were excluded from recruitment, in addition to those who had been who have been long-term unemployed. The survey took an average of 11 minutes to complete and participants were paid £1.02 after completing the survey.

Results

Insert Table 1 and 2

Table 1 shows the correlation matrix. Eight of the variables were related to the political variable which showed: younger people with degree status were more liberal; religious people were more conservative; more liberal people did not believe in alternative medicine, or life after death, but were more likely to be vegetarians. Three personality traits were significantly associated with political beliefs: Conscientiousness and Neuroticism was associated with Conservatism, and Openness with liberalism.

Table 2 shows the results of a hierarchal regression. The three demographic factors accounted for around 2% of the variance but when the three belief variables were added 6% of the variance was accounted for. In the final step the Big Five added 8% of the variance to achieve a total of 14%. The results suggested that degree-educated, Open, Agreeable, low

Conscientious people who were vegetarians/vegans and did not believe in Life after Death were, in their own rating, more liberal. This accounted for just under 1/6 of the total variance.

Study 2

This study was part replicative and part new. The dependent variable was the same, notably self-rated political views, and many of the predictor variables were the same however we added self-rated optimism as this has been shown to be related to a number of social beliefs and values (Furnham & Grover, 2020)

The concept of the Militant Extremist Mindset (MEMS), has attracted recent research (Furnham et al., 2020). Stankov et al., (2010) developed a 24-item, three-dimensional test of MEMs. Factor1: *Proviolence* which indicates the acceptance of, justification, and even advocacy of the use of violence in certain circumstances like revenge or to gain redemption. Factor 2: *Vile World*. which indicates that there is something importantly wrong with the world we live in. Factor 3: *Divine Power* makes reference to a divine power, heaven and God, the role of martyrdom and pleasures that will be bestowed on a person in the afterlife. Recent research has partly confirmed the factor structure of this measure (Stankov et al., 2019).

There is a growing literature on this topic which is self-evidently about religious and political ideology. Clearly, many MEM views are related to socio-political ideologies, though this has not been previously explored.

Međedović and Knežević (2019) investigated whether the MEMS could be explained by Psychopathy, Sadism, and Disintegration as subclinical manifestations of amoral, antisocial, and psychotic-like traits. They showed that Sadistic and Psychopathic tendencies were related to Proviolence (advocating violence as a means for achieving a goal); Psychopathic and disintegrative tendencies were associated to the Vile World (belief in a world as a corrupted

and vile place), while Disintegration was the best predictor of Divine Power (relying on supernatural forces as a rationale for extremist acts)., Vile World was found to be associated with stronger negative emotions as a response to violence.

In this study we examined the role of ideological beliefs, the Big Five and the MEM in predicting political beliefs. We were particularly interested in the incremental validity of the MEM over the Big Five (and vice versa) in predicting political views.

Method

Participants

In all there were 506 adults of which 291 were male and 215 females. They were on average 20.34 years old (SD=3.57), and many were in higher education. Just over a fifth (21.5%) had a high school certificate as their highest qualification, nearly a half (46.4%) an undergraduate degree and just over a quarter (28.3%) had a post-graduate degree. In all 58% were single, 19.6% married and 19.8% co-habiting. Overall, 78% were child-free; 11% had 1 child and 7.1% 2 children. Just under a quarter (24%) were monolingual; 41.4% bi-lingual and 18.2% trilingual. On a scale of 0 (Not at all) to 9 (Very) they rated their religiousness as 2.22 (SD=2.74) and 61.64% noted they did not Believe in Life-after-Death, while 37.8% did. They also indicated the extent to which they Believed in Alternative Medicine (1=Not at all, 9=Very) (3.89; SD= 2.33). They also rated themselves on a 9 point (1=Very Conservative; 9=Very Liberal) political beliefs scale where the mean was 6.10 (SD= 1.71). In all 26.5% gave the mid-point scale of 5, but 20.6% gave the score of 7 indicating that the leaned toward to liberal, left-wing end of the scale.

Questionnaires

1. *Militant Extremist Mindset Questionnaire* (MEMS; Stankov et al., 2010). The Proviolence scale has 10 items (Alpha .80), the Vile World scale has six items (Alpha .85) and the Divine Power

scale has eight items (Alpha .78). All of the scales included in the research use a standard 7-point Likert response scale.

2. *Ten Item Personality Inventory* (Gosling et al., 2003). As above

3. *Belief items*. As above.

Procedure

Ethics committee (CEHP/514/2017) permission was sought and received. Participants were recruited online using the Prolific platform. They were told their anonymous results would be used for analysis and paid £1.00 for their participation. The test took on average 8 minutes to complete. A small number of participants (around 3%) had incomplete cases were excluded from further analysis,

Results

Insert Tables 3 and 4 here

Table 3 shows the correlational analysis. It shows that six variables were correlated with the Conservatism-Liberalism scale. It showed Open females, who were less religious but tended to believe in Alternative Medicine and who did not believe in Proviolence and Divine Power were more liberal in their political beliefs.

Table 4 shows the results of the step-wise regressions. It showed the demographic and ideological variables accounted for 11% of the variance, the Big Five a further 3% and the MEM a further 2%. The final step confirmed the correlational results indicating that only Openness of the Big Five was related to political beliefs. However, what was most interesting was that while self-rated political liberalism was negatively associated with Proviolence it was positively associated with the Vile World

The regression was repeated but in the second step the three MEM variables were entered and in the third step the Big Five: effectively changing the order. The results were essentially the same in terms of the variance accounted for.

Study 3

In the third study we increased the questions on political interests. As well as the measure that we used in previous studies we asked participants to rate their beliefs on their view of economics from Capitalist to Socialist, their overall interest in politics; whether they belonged to a political party and whether they voted in the last election. We were interested in the correlation between these different measures and the extent to which they had different correlates.

Further, in this study, rather than look at “bright-side” personality trait correlates of political views we were particularly interested the “dark-side” personality disorder correlates. For this we used three measures: a very short measure that gave an overall reading of the disorders, the four dimensional Dark Tetrad model, and the full 14 dimensional model. We hoped for a comprehensive approach to dark-side measures. Interest in the dark-side has grown exponentially since the beginning of the millennium (Furnham et al, 2013, 2014). Our central concern is whether dark-side traits account for more of the variance than bright-side traits and which is most closely associated with political views.

Various studies have examined the relationship between the dark triad and politics. Duspara, and Greitemeyer (2017) tested 674 Austrians, contacted through social media, and found Narcissism, Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, and everyday Sadism were associated with right-wing political orientation, whereas Narcissism and Psychopathy were associated with political extremism. Blais et al., (2019) was interesting in bright- and dark-side trait correlates of people who chose to run for political office. They found considerable support for the predictive power of personality, especially the traits of honesty-humility, extraversion and narcissism.

In a more recent study Chen et al., (2020) found that Psychopathy and Narcissism were positively associated with political interest, and Narcissism was negatively associated with

political knowledge. Both Psychopathy and Narcissism exerted a direct, positive influence on political participation. Narcissists were less knowledgeable, but also more interested in politics, and more likely to participate.

In many ways this was an exploratory study however we attempted to replicate the finding of Duspara and Greitmeyer (2017).

Participants

In all there were 223 adults of which 116 were male and 107 females. They were on average 21.01 years old (SD=12.31), (range 18-71 years) and many were in higher education. Over a fifth (27.5%) had a high school certificate as their highest qualification, just under half (48.4%) an undergraduate degree. On a scale of 0 (Not at all) to 9 (Very) they rated their religiousness as 2.05 (SD=1.53), their extent of their optimism 4.53 (SD=1.57), and whether they believed in Alternative Medicine 3.62 (SD=1.82) They also rated themselves on a 9 point (1=Very Conservative; 9= Very Liberal) political beliefs scale where the mean was 5.86 (SD= 1.11). In all 85.7% said they voted in the last election, but 94.6% did not belong to a political party. They rated their view on economics (Capitalist=1; Socialist=9) with a mean of 5.72 (SD=1.66) and their interest in politics (Not at all=1; Very=9).

Measures

1. *The Short Dark Tetrad* (Paulhus et al., 2020). This is a 28 item measures that assesses Narcissism, Machiavellianism, Psychopathy and Sadism. Paulhus et al., did a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of items which showed acceptable fit for a four-factor solution. Also, the subscales each showed coherent links with the Big Five and adjustment. Further, the four factor structure replicated across student and community samples and the four subscales show distinctive correlates.

2. *Coolidge Axis-II Inventory – Short Form (SCATI)* (Coolidge, 2001). The 70-item self-report measure assesses 14 personality disorders, 10 from *DSM-V*, 2 from Cluster B of the *DSM-IV-TR* (Depressive and Passive Aggressive) and 2 from *DSM-III-R* (Sadistic and Self-Defeating). The SCATI has good internal scale and test-retest reliability (Sinha & Watson, 2007). It has been used to predict PDs in subclinical (Coolidge et al., 2010) and clinical (Watson & Sinha, 1996) populations. The reliability of this measure in this study is as followed: Antisocial (.69), Avoidant (.79), Borderline (.72), Dependent (.75), Depressive (.81), Histrionic (.68), Narcissistic (.74), Obsessive-Compulsive (.61), Paranoid (.80), Passive-Aggressive (.75), Sadistic (.79), Self-defeating (.68), Schizotypal (.74), and Schizoid (.73). The scale can be used to derive the three clusters of the personality disorders specified in various version of the APA. The ten DSM-IV PDs are grouped into three clusters: ‘A’ – odd, ‘B’ – dramatic/emotional and ‘C’ – anxious. Note that there were no fundamental changes in the new DSM-V regarding the classification of the PDs.

3. *Structured Assessment of Personality Abbreviated Scale (SAPAS)*; Lange et al, 2012). is a twelve-item screening measure for personality disorder. It has recently seen use on normal populations . Items were measured on a 9-point scale from Disagree to Agree ($\alpha = .70$).

Procedure

Ethics committee (CEHP/514/2017) permission was sought and received. Participants were recruited online using the Prolific platform. They were told their anonymous results would be used for analysis and paid £1.50 for their participation. The test took on average 12 minutes to complete. A small number of participants (around 7%) had incomplete cases were excluded from further analysis.

Results

First, the correlations between the various political measures was calculated: Political beliefs and Economic beliefs $r=.74$; Political beliefs and Interest in Politics $r=.20$; Economic beliefs and Interest in politics $r=.14$.

Insert Table 5 here

Table 5 shows the correlations between some of the measures. They showed that political beliefs only correlated significantly with Narcissism indicating that they were more conservative in their beliefs. Three correlations were significant with economic views: Machiavellians, Narcissists and Sadists were more in favour of capitalism than socialism. Finally, with regard to interest in politics it was those in Cluster A (Odd) and B (Dramatic and Emotional) who were less interested in politics.

Insert Table 6 and 7 here

Table 6 shows the hierarchical regression onto political views. The first step showed that only age was significant: older people were more conservative. None of the belief variables was significant in the second step. The third step showed that three of the four Dark Tetrad factors was significant: Narcissists and Sadists favoured more conservative politics but Psychopaths more liberal politics. This accounted for 9% of the variance.

Table 7 shows a similar hierarchical regression but this time onto economic beliefs. The results were very similar except this time age just missed being significant.

We also did regressions using the full 14PDs. We calculated three regressions with sex, age, education and the 14 SCATI measures. When the criterion variable was *Political Beliefs* the regression was significant: $F(17,205)=2.37$, $p<.01$, $R^2=.10$. Three of the predictor variables was significant: Obsessive Compulsive: Beta $-.19$, $t=2.28$, $p<.05$; Paranoid: Beta $-.22$, $t=2.15$, $p<.05$; Passive Aggressive: Beta $.30$, $t=2.92$, $p<.01$.

When the criterion variable was *Economic Beliefs* the regression was significant: $F(17,205)=2.03$, $p<.01$, $R^2=.08$. Three of the predictor variables was significant: Sex: Beta $-.15$, $t=2.07$, $p<.05$; Paranoid: Beta $-.29$, $t=2.68$ $p<.01$; Passive Aggressive: Beta $=.26$, $t=2.48$, $p<.01$. When the criterion variable was *Interest in Politics* the regression was significant: $F(17,205)=2.04$, $p<.01$, $R^2=.07$. Only one of the predictor variables was significant: Sex: Beta $-.23$, $t=3.19$, $p<.01$.

Discussion

These studies explored individual correlates of political beliefs. The extant literature is difficult to summarise for four reasons: First, studies differ considerably in what measure of political beliefs and behaviours are assessed. Second, a very wide range of individual correlates have been examined often where measures of the same type of variable (i.e. personality) differ between studies, and are thus not strictly comparable. Third, very different populations have been sampled in terms of size, country, and background. Fourth, studies differ in level of sophistication in analysis where some studies control for certain factors (i.e. demography) while others do not, some use mediation and moderation analysis and others are simply interested in incremental validity. Some factors seem more implicated in the development and expression of political beliefs such as education and values. Nevertheless reviewers in this area do suggest that we have reasonable agreement on what personality traits are related to political ideology and why (Cichocka,& Dhont, 2018).

The data with respect to personality correlates may be summarised thus: The size of correlations and the amount of variance accounted for is very small (around 5%). Rarely do either demographic or psychological variables account for more than ten percent of the variance. All of the Big Five personality variables have proved significant correlates with some predicted relationships: i.e. Extraversion is often associated with political activities (meetings)

while Openness and Conscientiousness is more associated with beliefs and values (Eysenck, 1954).

Overall, there was little replication of results in the three studies. Where they were significant in either correlational or regression analysis the demographic relationships with political beliefs made sense. In study 1 educated people were more liberal; in study 2 females were more liberal; and in study 3 older people were more conservative. This could be partly due to our multinational sample in studies 1 and 2 compared to our more homogeneous British sample in study 3. The one-item measurement of political orientation could also be responsible, with people's political alignment answers likely being compared to their current social and political environment, rather than their agreement with particular policies.

The "belief" variables chosen in this study showed an interesting pattern. As has been found before, more religious people tended to be more conservative, though we did not enquire as to what religion they espoused, though given the population it would most likely be Christianity. In the first study being vegan or vegetarian and believing in life after death was related to political beliefs, while in the second study believing in the efficacy of alternative medicine was related to liberal beliefs. From a psychological perspective political beliefs are "ideological" variables which would be related to other such variables such as beliefs about religion, science, health and justice. However, once again these correlations were small and not always replicable. In these studies, we included these as exploratory variables as in previous research it has been shown that they are related to ideology.

While belief in alternative medicine was positively related to conservatism, a vegetarian/vegan lifestyle was not. Both are relatively modern lifestyle-related topics which may relate to Openness to Experience and so negatively predict conservatism. Previous studies have related alternative medicine to a belief/faith system, working similarly to religion, this may explain the differences. Further, vegetarian and veganism may be more readily adopted by liberal people

as, feeling more negative emotion, they are more sensitive to climate, health, and animal treatment issues. An alternative explanation for these differences is that people across the political spectrum have similar beliefs about vegetarianism and veganism but liberal people may be more willing to actively change their lifestyles and adopt a new diet. This question is also limited in that it only measures people who have strict diets, and not people's meat consumption specifically. For example, someone who eats meat for one meal a week would have the answer as someone who lives on a purely carnivorous diet.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of this paper was to examine two hitherto neglected correlates of political beliefs. It is perhaps no surprise that the Militant Extremist Mindset proved to be closely linked to political beliefs as the mindset is a "heady mix" of eschatological and politically activist beliefs. Predictably, political liberals were very anti-violent, but interesting that those with a conservative political outlook endorsed "vile world" beliefs that suggest our current world is corrupt, immoral and broken. This may reflect an anti-change, reject of modernism and a view that the past was much better than a present or future they cannot influence.

The third study added to the growing literature on dark-side personality correlates of beliefs and behaviours. The data showed that Narcissism and Sadism was more closely associated with politically conservative views and Psychopathy with liberal views. Narcissism was the only dark triad trait that correlated with political orientation, positively predicting conservatism. More Narcissistic people may be more likely to believe they will benefit from conservative policies and are more comfortable with paying for their own private services, such as healthcare or education. However, after controlling for demographics and personality to an extent through optimism (which has been linked to Extraversion and Agreeableness; Furnham et al., 2020), Sadism also predicted conservatism, while Psychopathy predicted liberalism. Sadism's prediction logically follows as more sadistic people would be more supportive of

policies that cause other people to have less resources while benefitting themselves. The positive relationship between psychopathy and liberalism could be related to and possibly mediated by the Openness to experience/ creativity personality trait, which is not accounted for by the other regression variables. All these speculations merit further investigation.

Political interest's positive correlation with liberalism is also interesting and suggests that more conservative voters are more apathetic towards current events and potentially less bothered by public, media-based political commentary and scandal. Alternatively, this could suggest that those who feel misrepresented or alienated from the political system tend to vote more conservative than liberal.

Limitations

All studies have limitations often to do with the size and representativeness of convenience or unusual samples, too heavy reliance on self-report measures, and the psychometric properties of those measures. Participants in all three studies were young and we know that while personality does not change much over time, political beliefs do. More importantly they are often cross-section with correlational data which gives little insight into causality. This study was no exception. Whilst there was consistency across all studies in the major criterion variables (a rating of conservatism-liberalism) it is clear that it would have been better to explore in much more detail a participant's political beliefs; knowledge and past political behaviour, like voting, party membership and active participation in campaigns. Also, in studies 1 and 2 we used the TIPI which is a very short measure of personality and the SAPAS in study 3 equally a short measure. It would always be desirable to use longer measures and more importantly explore the facets of all these factors.

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Table 1: Correlations between the variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Sex	1.50	.500												
2. Birth Year	1983.00	12.29	.060											
3. Degree	1.42	.494	-.117**	-.199**										
4. Religiousness	1.53	2.30	.118**	-.087	-.032									
5. Politics (Liberal)	5.66	1.83	.009	.104*	-.132**	-.102*								
6. Alt. Medicine	3.97	2.17	.239**	-.147**	.070	.249**	-.088*							
7. Vegan/Vegetarian	1.88	.325	-.122**	-.126**	.165**	.082	-.213**	.003						
8. Life After Death	.38	.486	.158**	.018	.043	.515**	-.149**	.327**	.137**					
9. Extraversion	3.36	1.46	.117**	.028	.008	.131**	-.030	.107*	.019	.132**				
10. Agreeableness	4.90	1.20	.162**	-.132**	.058	.069	.060	.081	-.019	.056	-.006			
11. Conscientiousness	5.05	1.30	.038	-.144**	-.063	.060	-.228**	.102*	.004	.042	-.026	.193**		
12. Emotional Stabil.	4.12	1.45	-.168**	-.182**	-.040	.024	-.111*	-.005	.004	-.086	.123**	.172**	.347**	
13. Openness	4.78	1.19	.079	.073	-.055	.085	.124**	.138**	-.033	.093*	.388**	.094*	.067	.095*

*p<.05, **p<.01

Table 2: Results of the hierarchical regressions with political orientation (high liberalism) as the outcome

	Model 1				Model 2				Model 3			
	B	SE	Beta	t	B	SE	Beta	t	B	SE	Beta	t
Sex	-.030	.164	-.008	-0.181	-.019	.164	-.005	-0.113	-.120	.164	-.033	-0.733
Birth Year	.012	.007	.079	1.747	.009	.007	.063	1.398	.003	.007	.020	0.458
Degree	-.424	.170	-.114	-2.501*	-.315	.168	-.085	-1.872	-.418	.162	-.113	-2.576*
Religiousness					-.023	.041	-.029	-0.566	-.020	.039	-.026	-0.520
Vegan/ Vegetarian					-.980	.254	-.174	-3.865**	-.945	.243	-.168	-3.895**
Life After Death					-.401	.196	-.106	-2.049*	-.425	.189	-.113	-2.249*
Extraversion									-.079	.058	-.063	-1.350
Agreeableness									.185	.067	.121	2.756**
Conscientiousness									-.329	.064	-.234	-5.143**
Emotional Stability									-.093	.060	-.073	-1.554
Openness									.245	.070	.160	3.495**
Adjusted R^2			.017				.062				.143	
F			3.811				6.424				8.491	
p			.010				.000				.000	

*p<.05, **p<.01

Table 3: Correlational results

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Sex	1.50	.500																
2. Birth	1986.25	87.53	.026															
3. Marital Status	2.06	1.56	.077	-.104*														
4. Religiousness	2.22	2.74	.025	.023	-.081													
5. Politics (Liberalism)	6.10	1.77	.104*	-.068	-.004	-.327**												
6. Optimism	5.73	2.04	-.033	-.057	.042	.156**	.000											
7. Alternative Medicine	3.89	2.33	.165**	.041	.006	.345**	-.166**	.276**										
8. Spend/Save	5.52	2.13	-.073	-.026	.020	.049	.007	-.012	-.022									
9. Openness	8.08	2.26	.003	-.038	.007	-.008	.177**	.192**	.097*	-.036								
10. Neuroticism	5.482	2.82	.173**	.033	-.038	-.092*	.046	-.386**	-.072	-.123**	-.169**							
11. Conscientiousness	7.92	2.47	.134**	-.088*	.089*	-.018	.004	.077	.014	.249**	.088*	-.257**						
12. Agreeableness	7.37	2.23	.180**	.119**	-.046	.081	.045	.202**	.098*	-.030	.059	-.133**	.202**					
13. Extraversion	5.07	2.97	.049	.022	.057	.118**	-.049	.367**	.220**	-.145**	.284**	-.237**	.063	.036				
14. Proviolence	11.60	9.37	-.177**	-.003	-.044	.126**	-.203**	-.067	.052	.037	-.200**	.049	-.208**	-.222**	-.021			
15. Vile World	20.19	7.77	.056	.115*	-.020	.035	.062	-.286**	.049	.039	-.026	.187**	-.073	-.109*	-.100*	.059		
16. Divine Power	17.33	9.16	.046	.062	-.105*	.718**	-.262**	.146**	.378**	.035	-.040	-.071	-.059	.103*	.115*	.201**	.104*	
17. Networking Ability	22.10	6.52	.042	.034	.024	.087	-.006	.348**	.227**	-.042	.235**	-.319**	.216**	.204**	.549**	-.154**	-.063	.123**

*p<.05, **p<.01. Measure scores have been adjusted so the lowest score= 0

Table 4: Results of the hierachical regressions

	Model 1				Model 2				Model 3			
	B	SE	Beta	t	B	SE	Beta	t	B	SE	Beta	t
Sex	.432	.156	.122	2.763*	.432	.162	.122	2.673*	.357	.162	.101	2.204*
Birth	-.001	.001	-.058	-1.333	-.001	.001	-.059	-1.364	-.001	.001	-.073	-1.678
Religiousness	-.185	.030	-.285	-6.170**	-.177	.030	-.273	-5.972**	-.151	.040	-.232	-3.790**
Optimism	.060	.040	.069	1.513	.054	.044	.062	1.217	.080	.045	.092	1.787
Alternative Medicine	-.084	.037	-.111	-2.297*	-.087	.036	-.115	-2.413*	-.086	.037	-.113	-2.348*
Openness					.160	.035	.204	4.530**	.136	.036	.174	3.808**
Neuroticism					.018	.031	.029	0.584	.010	.030	.016	0.333
Conscientiousness					-.036	.033	-.050	-1.095	-.047	.033	-.066	-1.446
Agreeableness					.033	.036	.042	0.910	.030	.037	.037	0.808
Extraversion					-.045	.028	-.077	-1.598	-.040	.028	-.068	-1.419
Proviolence									-.021	.009	-.110	-2.384**
Vile World									.029	.010	.129	2.837**
Divine Power									-.010	.013	-.050	-0.780
Adjusted R^2			.114				.147				.167	
F			13.074				9.075				8.251	
p			.000				.000				.000	

*p<.05, **p<.01

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Political Views (High Liberal)	5.86	1.63										
2. Economic Views (High Socialist)	5.72	1.67	.738**									
3. Political Interest	5.64	2.39	.198**	.140*								
4. Machiavellianism	41.56	9.42	-.095	-.189**	-.042							
5. Narcissism	28.16	10.41	-.163*	-.232**	-.053	.481**						
6. Psychopathy	19.85	9.97	.044	.013	-.130	.337**	.472**					
7. Sadism	24.39	11.80	-.061	-.153*	-.097	.425**	.360**	.597**				
8. SAPAS	12.42	1.54	-.074	-.036	.080	-.132*	-.012	-.174**	-.127			
9. A	28.45	7.42	-.027	.030	-.159*	.204**	-.001	.355**	.300**	-.443**		
10. B	36.59	8.64	.090	.052	-.134*	.263**	.375**	.505**	.384**	-.394**	.568**	
11. C	30.69	7.08	.038	.112	-.093	.118	-.075	.182**	.115	-.503**	.672**	.542**

*p<.05, **p<.01.

Table 6. Hierarchical regressions of personality onto Political Views (High Liberal)

	Model 1				Model 2				Model 3			
	B	SE	Beta	t	B	SE	Beta	t	B	SE	Beta	t
Sex	.084	.217	.026	0.387	.147	.220	.045	0.671	-.061	.230	-.019	-0.265
Education	.065	.094	.046	0.695	.049	.094	.035	0.526	.070	.092	.050	0.766
Age	-.024	.008	-.194	-2.892**	-.020	.009	-.155	-2.270*	-.026	.009	-.206	-2.912**
Religiousness					-.067	.069	-.066	-0.960	-.075	.070	-.074	-1.075
Optimism					-.049	.072	-.048	-0.683	.009	.077	.009	0.122
Belief in Alt. Medicine					-.103	.068	-.111	-1.517	-.099	.068	-.107	-1.466
Machiavellianism									-.009	.013	-.051	-0.655
Narcissism									-.029	.014	-.189	-2.159*
Psychopathy									.038	.014	.231	2.656**
Sadism									-.026	.013	-.191	-2.062*
Adjusted R^2			.028				.039				.085	
F			3.074				2.505				3.033	
p			.029				.023				.001	

*p<.05, **p<.01.

Table 7. Hierarchical regressions of personality onto Economic Views (High Socialist)

	Model 1				Model 2				Model 3			
	B	SE	Beta	t	B	SE	Beta	t	B	SE	Beta	t
Sex	.028	.225	.128	1.908	.437	.229	.131	1.910	.147	.234	.044	0.628
Education	.056	.097	.038	0.574	.053	.097	.037	0.547	.082	.093	.057	0.883
Age	-.017	.009	-.129	-1.913	-.014	.009	-.108	-1.558	-.023	.009	-.179	-2.568*
Religiousness					-.064	.072	-.062	-0.887	-.074	.071	-.071	-1.049
Optimism					-.075	.076	-.070	-0.989	.001	.079	.001	0.014
Belief in Alt. Medicine					-.010	.071	-.011	-0.145	.000	.069	.000	0.001
Machiavellianism									-.014	.014	-.076	-0.995
Narcissism									-.039	.014	-.242	-2.821**
Psychopathy									.046	.014	.272	3.160**
Sadism									-.035	.013	-.244	-2.674**
Adjusted R^2			.024				.021				.110	
F			2.819				1.796				3.709	
p			.040				.101				.000	

*p<.05, **p<.01.

