OUTLIARS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND DISHONESTY

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Politics and Character

- Perceptions of character have a significant effect on political elections (Bishin, Stevens, & Wilson, 2006)

- Next question:
  - Do different political ideologies value character differently?
Those with left-party views are more likely to tolerate unethical behavior (Van Kenhove, Vermeir, & Verniers, 2011; Hirsh, deYoung, Xu, & Peterson, 2010).

Problems?
Expectations of Dishonesty

- Social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954)
  - We form opinions by comparing ourselves to others
  - False consensus effect (Ross, Greene, & House, 1977)
The Study

- **Purpose:** Examine whether a correlation exists between political ideology and dishonesty when participants are given the opportunity to lie for a higher monetary reward.

- **Questions for investigation:**
  - Will those of a certain political ideology be more likely to be dishonest?
  - Will those of a certain political ideology be more likely to expect others to be dishonest?
Hypotheses

\textbf{H1:} Participants who report themselves as politically liberal will be more likely to be dishonest than those who report themselves as politically conservative (Van Kenhove et. al, 2001; Hirsh et. al, 2010)

\textbf{H2:} Participants who report themselves as politically liberal will be less likely to predict others to be dishonest than those who report themselves as politically conservative (Festinger, 1954; Ross et. al, 1977)
Method

- Participants
  - A sample of 274 Midwestern undergraduates students (91 males, 183 females)
  - Mean age = 19.09 (SD = 2.05)
  - Political ideology
    - Kurtosis = -.310
Method

- **Materials**
  - Computer questionnaire on Creighton University student costs
  - Demographic survey

- **Conditions**
  - $1 incentive ($N = 205$)
  - $2$ incentive ($N = 33$)
  - Control: $0$ incentive ($N = 36$)

- **Stacks of cash**
Method

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Example Question

5. There are several requirements students must fulfill to remain eligible for Federal Student Aid. Which of these is NOT a requirement?

- Maintain a QPA of 2.5
- Be enrolled each term on at least a half-time basis
- Be enrolled in a program of study leading to a certificate or degree
- Not be in default on any federal loan or owe a repayment on any federal grant

Next

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Thank you for completing this survey.

Your score is: 2
You have earned: $2.00

Please press "Next" to submit your results.

**Answer Key**

1. The approximate projected cost of tuition, room, and board for a full-time Creighton University freshman during the 2011-2012 school year is $45,000.

2. The approximate monthly room rate of the average freshman hall (Deglman, Kiewit, & Gallagher) is $650.

3. The initial late payment fee for students who have failed to make a tuition payment by the university deadline is $145.

4. Creighton University requires students to submit the FAFSA by April 1st to receive priority consideration for financial aid.

5. Students must maintain a QPA of 2.0 to remain eligible for Federal Student Aid.

6. A Federal Stafford Student Unsubsidized loan has a fixed interest rate of 6.8%.

7. **Federal Unsubsidized** loans do not charge any interest until after graduation, while **Federal Subsidized** loans charge interest from the time the loan is made.

8. Federal Stafford student loans have a grace period of 6 months in which no repayment is required and no interest is accrued.

9. Creighton University can accept payments paid by the federal government.
Error

A Runtime Error has occurred. Do you wish to continue?

Line: 23
Error: Path/File access error

Yes

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Post Hoc Survey

- Surveyed 210 of original 274 participants
- Manipulation check
- Participant perception of the study
Results

- No correlations existed between political ideology and dishonesty in any condition
  - \(H1: \text{Unsupported}\)

- No significant correlations or main effects found between political ideology and predicted dishonesty in any condition
  - \(H2: \text{Unsupported}\)
Results (Continued)

- Control: $0 incentive condition ($N = 36$)
  - All 5 liars came from the moderate range
  - No liars among extreme political ideologies

- $1$ incentive condition ($N = 205$)
  - Extreme liberals and extreme conservatives significantly more likely to lie about their score by a higher margin
  - $F(4, 175) = 4.25, p = .013$

- $2$ incentive condition ($N = 33$)
  - No liars at all
Results (Continued)

One-Way Between-Subjects ANOVA for Political Ideology and Reporting Discrepancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Ideology</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$0 Mean</th>
<th>$1 Mean</th>
<th>$2 Mean</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Very Conservative</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>* .546</td>
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<td>.050</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td>.051</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td>* .714</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>.267</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $F(4, 175) = 4.29, p = .002$. Some participants (38) removed after manipulation check.
Discussion

- Persons with extreme political views tend to also have an extreme view of the world (Baray, Postmes, & Jetten, 2009)
  - have a higher sense of personal identity
  - may perceive themselves as more honest

- Theory of self-concept maintenance
  - “honest” may cheat or lie by a small amount to achieve benefit while not compromising their self-concept (Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2008)
Limitations

- Only a small proportion of participants lied (5%)
- Participants forgetting survey results
  - 5 participants (2% under-reported their scores)
- Compensation
  - Participants already compensated in form of research credits
  - Small incentive
For Future Study

- Differing effects among other populations
- Impact of personality
- Differences between social and fiscal political ideology
Questions?


Thank you.