

Political Ideology and its Relationship with Partisan Agreement

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Background

- The modern political landscape promotes extreme values¹.
- Polarization = political identity + strength of alignment¹
 - Goal: explore how decision making and information processing is impacted

How does implicit bias change the way an individual interacts with a non-partisan statement?

- Political polarization is deep rooted².
- People interpret ambiguous information depending on group identity², such as political identity.
 - Political thought is driven by identity rather than specific issues -motivates political polarization¹.
- Previous speaker manipulations method extended to political ideology³.

Hypothesis:

- Neither participant political ideology or speaker ideology would significantly impact agreement- no main effects
- Higher levels of agreement with speaker who shares political ideology- interaction effect of independent variables

Methods:

2x2 between-subjects design

Quasi-Independent Variable #1

- N=128, convenience sample
- POLITICAL IDEOLOGY measure
 - Pre-survey demographics, measured as a continuous variable



- Measure made into a categorical variable for data analysis
 - Scale items 1-4 categorized as "liberal" and items 5-8 categorized as "conservative"

Independent Variable #2

- SPEAKER IDEOLOGY (**liberal vs. conservative**) randomly assigned to following statement

"At a political rally last month, Steve Williams a candidate running for State Representative on a _____ platform said, 'I will propose a legislation requiring elementary students in Ohio to be proficient in cursive writing in order to advance to intermediate school.'"

Dependent Variable

- AGREEMENT MEASURE, 1-5 Likert scale
 - "How much do you agree with legislation?"
 - "How likely are you to support this legislation?"
 - "How likely are you to sign a petition to support this legislation?"

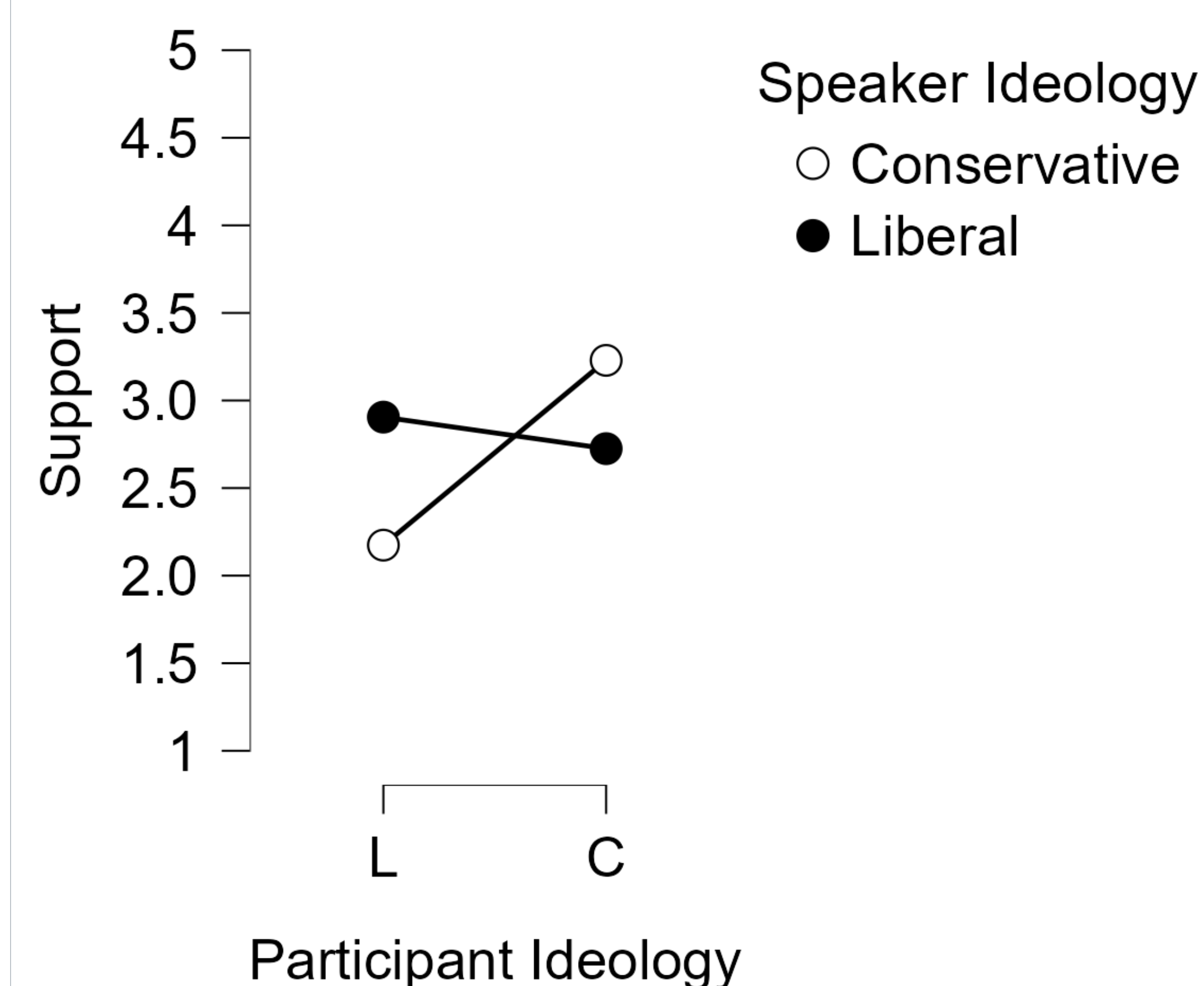
Results:

- N=128 participants, 82.8% (N=106) self-identified as liberal, 17.2% (N=22) self-identified as conservative
 - Convenience sample of authors' family, friends, coworkers, and on-campus organizations
- Cronbach's alpha
 - Correlation of dependent value measures ($\alpha = 0.88$), agreement scale is reliable
- Two-way ANOVA: predicting political biases from speaker condition & participant ideology
 - Speaker ideology did not predict an in-group bias ($F(1, 124) = 0.281$. $p = 0.597$)

- Participant ideology significantly predicted an in-group bias ($F(1, 124) = 4.19$. $p = 0.04$)
- Speaker manipulation and participant ideology interacted to predict partisan agreement ($F(1, 124) = 8.35$. $p = 0.005$).

- Both groups of participant ideology had higher agreement when participant political ideology matched speaker political ideology.
- Self-reported conservatives had both the lowest agreement when ideology didn't align ($M = 2.17$, $SD = 0.83$), and the highest agreement when ideology did align ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.23$).

ANOVA Interaction Graph



Participant support for speaker's policy proposal depended on the speaker's political affiliation in relation to their own.

Limitations and Future Directions

- Convenience sample did not equally represent liberals and conservatives.
 - To obtain a more equal representation, we had to contact conservative student organizations to participate in this study.
- Due to the nature of our course, participant ideology was analyzed as a categorical variable.
- Further research: analyze representative sample
 - Replicate with a continuous subject variable.

Bibliography

- ¹Mason, 2015
- ²Baar & Hall, 2022
- ³Tesler, 2012

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