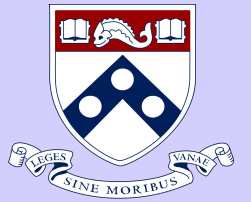




# Exploring the Relationship between Research Quality and Political Slant of Research

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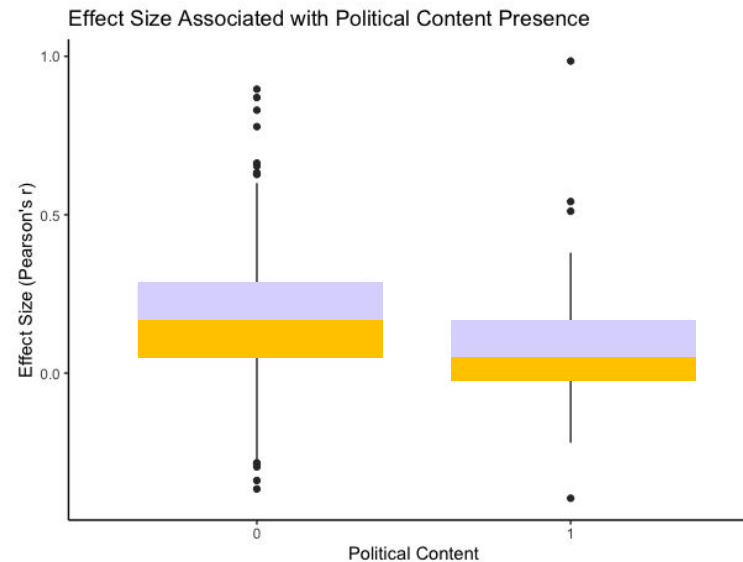
## Introduction

- Psychology is a very left leaning and liberal field. Only 6% of social and personality psychologists surveyed identified as economic, foreign policy, and social conservatives, whereas 85% identified as liberal (Inbar & Lammers, 2012).
  - Scholars have been debating how the political homogeneity of the social sciences potentially distorts empirical findings
- Duarte et al.'s 2015 paper warns of many possible dangers that could result from overwhelming political bias, specifically liberal, bias in a field.
  - liberal values and assumptions being embedded in the theory and methods
  - researchers concentrating on "liberal" topics and topics that liberals agree with and moving away from more controversial, centrist, or conservative topics, mischaracterization of conservatives based on liberal attitudes, and confirmation bias
- We are looking for evidence of political influence on the published psychological literature by comparing bodies of research that explore political topics and nonpolitical topics
- We included various metrics, but for the purposes of this poster, I am looking at the effect sizes only

## Methods

- We title-searched the term "meta-analysis" in the APS journals Psychological Science and Perspectives on Psychological Science for all articles published between 2012 and 2021. These combined searches yielded an initial dataset of 717 meta-analyses

- Of these 717, 304 articles met the inclusion criteria
  - Articles were excluded from the effect size analysis if they did not report a quantifiable effect size or an effect size using a statistic that could be directly converted to an r effect size
- All effect sizes were converted to Pearson's r correlation coefficients for ease of comparison
  - For articles reporting multiple effect sizes, we computed an overall average effect size
- Political content was determined from the presence of key words from Duarte (2015) within the abstracts/titles
  - Since the majority of psychological professors are liberal-leaning, Duarte and other topics important to liberals are suggested to have bias within those domains.
  - Key words: prejudic, discriminat, race, raci, black, minorit, stereotyp, inequa, implicit, gender, conservati, African American, polit, ideo.



Articles were coded as either 0, a non Duarte topic article and not politically significant, or 1, a Duarte topic article and political significant

## Results

- Comparison were analyzed using independent sample t-tests using RStudio software
- Of these studies, 87%, or 266, included non-Duarte topics, and 13%, or 40, included Duarte topics.
- The relationship between effect size and political content analyzed from Duarte topic presence is statistically significant
  - An independent t test finds that  $t(48.3)=2.1253$ ,  $p<.03871$
  - Meta-analysis that cover political topics have smaller effect sizes than papers that didn't

## Discussion

- We found a significant difference between articles covering political topics compared to non-political topics
  - Effect sizes in papers on Duarte topics were smaller than effect sizes in studies on non-Duarte topics.
- This could mean there is more heterogeneity with political topics in which those finding supportive conclusion and those finding opposing conclusions, cancel out and create smaller effect sizes in total
  - People may want to make political topics more scientifically important, when they are not
  - Scholars might want to study these topics, despite them being generally not significant and low relationship association

## References

Duarte, J. L., Crawford, J. T., Stern, C., Haidt, J., Jussim, L., & Tetlock, P. E. (2015). Political diversity will improve social psychological science. Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 38.

Inbar, Y., & Lammers, J. (2012). Political diversity in social and personality psychology. Perspectives on Psychological Science, 7(5), 496-503.