



Social dominance orientation, right-wing authoritarianism, and their relation with alienation and spheres of control

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Abstract

This study examined the extent to which Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism were correlated with Alienation and Spheres of Control. The findings demonstrated that Social Dominance Orientation correlated with many of the scales but Right-Wing Authoritarianism correlated with none of them, emphasizing their distinctiveness. Although Social Dominance Orientation correlated negatively with Powerlessness, it correlated positively with numerous other Alienation subscales and with Socio-political Spheres of Control suggesting that those scoring high on Social Dominance Orientation also have greater feelings of alienation and less perceived control over political and social affairs.

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1. Introduction

Social Dominance Orientation is a measure that was first developed by Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, and Malle (1994). It is based on Social Dominance Theory, which argues that groups and societies are organized into various hierarchies of dominance. What benefits and advantages (or

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disadvantages) a group gets depends upon their position within this hierarchy (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Social Dominance Orientation measures the extent to which a person accepts group-based dominance.

Research has shown Social Dominance Orientation to be a strong predictor of prejudice. Social Dominance Orientation is correlated with sexism and ethnic prejudice indices (Altemeyer, 1998; Bates & Heaven, 2001; Duriez & Van Hiel, 2002; Pratto et al., 2000; Pratto et al., 1994; Snellman & Ekehammar, 2005). For instance, Heaven, Organ, Supavadeeprasit, and Leeson (2006) found in an Australian sample that Social Dominance Orientation was negatively correlated with attitudes toward people from the Middle East. Those scoring high on Social Dominance Orientation are less likely to support equality between men and women (Lippa & Arad, 1999) or empowerment for immigrants (Jackson & Esses, 2000). Negative attitudes are expressed particularly toward those groups of people that occupy low power and status within society (Duckitt, 2006).

Right-Wing Authoritarianism is another indicator of prejudice, frequently compared with Social Dominance Orientation. Although the construct authoritarianism has its roots in psychoanalytic theory (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), the newly devised measure (Altemeyer, 1988; Altemeyer, 1998) is believed to have its origins in social learning theory (Altemeyer, 1998). The instrument is supposed to capture a person's attitudes toward following established authority, attitudes toward accepting and following aggressive acts and policies that are supported by established authority figures, and acceptance of existing social conventions (Altemeyer, 1988). Research with Right-Wing Authoritarianism has shown that those scoring high on authoritarianism have negative attitudes regarding homosexuality and gender equality (Altemeyer, 1988; Lippa & Arad, 1999) and negative attitudes to minority groups (e.g., Altemeyer, 1998; Heaven et al., 2006).

Although Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism are correlated (Altemeyer, 1998), construct- and criterion-related validity studies have revealed that both instruments measure distinct constructs. Altemeyer (1998) suggested that Social Dominance Orientation is the "other authoritarian personality;" those scoring high on Social Dominance Orientation are not submissive to authority. Duckitt (2006) promotes a model by which attitudes to outgroups are differentially influenced by Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism such that Social Dominance Orientation is based upon tough-mindedness and the view that the world is a place in which we must compete for valuable resources, while Right-Wing Authoritarianism is based upon fear of a dangerous world, thus perceiving certain outgroups as threats. Research has shown that Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism correlate differently with personality traits (Heaven & Connors, 2001) and values (Heaven & Bucci, 2001). For instance, Ekehammar, Akrami, Gylje, and Zakrisson (2004) found Social Dominance Orientation correlated negatively with Agreeableness while Right-Wing Authoritarianism correlated negatively with Neuroticism and Openness to Experience and positively with Extraversion and Conscientiousness. Duriez and Van Hiel (2002) found that Social Dominance Orientation correlated negatively with the values universalism, benevolence, and tradition, and positively with power, achievement, hedonism, and stimulation. Right-Wing Authoritarianism was negatively correlated with the values of hedonism, stimulation, and self-direction and positively with tradition, conformity, and security.

Little research has been conducted examining the relation of either Social Dominance Orientation or Right-Wing Authoritarianism with alienation and social control. Alienation refers to an

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