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Facets of Personality and “Ideological Asymmetries”

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Abstract

How do individual personality traits shape political leanings or “ideological asymmetries”? The present study investigates the association between political preferences, global personality domains and specific personality facets. We measured personality domains and facets in a heterogeneous German sample using the 60-item Big Five Inventory-2 and used bifactor structural equation models to investigate associations with attitudes and party support. Our results demonstrate the unique explanatory power of personality facets. In particular, specific facets of *Open-Mindedness* and *Agreeableness* exhibited unique relationships with left-wing/liberal attitudes and party preferences, whereas supporters of (far) right-wing parties could be distinguished in overall *Conscientiousness*. These findings have important implications for our understanding of how individuals’ basic patterns of thoughts and feelings relate to their ideological leanings.

Keywords

personality, Big Five facets, political attitudes, voting, bifactor model, Germany

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