



# Values, ideological attitudes and patriotism



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## ABSTRACT

We tested a series of discriminant associations, investigating how dimensions of patriotism (i.e. blind and constructive) differently relate to value orientations, and to ideological attitudes such as Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO). Using an Italian student sample ( $N = 146$ ) we found that blind patriotism correlated positively with tradition and negatively with universalism, whilst constructive patriotism correlated negatively with tradition and positively with universalism. Both RWA and SDO correlated negatively with universalism, whilst only RWA was associated with security and tradition and only SDO related positively to power and self-direction. Mediation analyses revealed that most of the effects of value orientations on patriotism were mediated by SDO and RWA.

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## 1. Introduction

Several studies have investigated the relationship between Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) and values (Duriez, Van Hiel, & Kossowska, 2005; McFarland, 2010); the associations among patriotism and values have also been assessed (Schwartz, Caprara, & Vecchione, 2010); nonetheless, there has been no simultaneous observation of the value associates of RWA, SDO, and patriotism. In particular, no investigation has simultaneously linked SDO, RWA and value dimensions with two distinct forms of patriotism, blind and constructive (Schatz, Staub, & Lavine, 1999). We hypothesize that values, ideological dimensions and patriotism represent different levels of conceptual generality/specificity: patriotism represents a specific set of attitudes, values represent a much broader set of evaluative dimensions, while SDO and RWA represent socio-ideological dimensions in an intermediate level in the generality/specificity continuum. Hence, we will model the associations among the three conceptual layers of variables as a meditational process, where the effects of value dimensions on patriotism are mediated by the more proximal ideological dimensions of SDO and RWA. Furthermore, we expect to find discriminant associations among blind and constructive patriotism, SDO, RWA and value dimensions. Such association would ascertain

discriminant validity of the two forms of patriotism, linking them differently to ideological and value dimensions.

### 1.1. Socio-psychological roots of nationalism and patriotism

A theoretical distinction can be drawn between nationalism and patriotism, two constructs that are often fuzzily defined, confused or overlapped. Adorno and colleagues (1950) studying the process of individual/group attachment, defined 'genuine patriotism' – in a characteristically evaluative fashion – as "love of country, [...] attachment to national values based on critical understanding" and defined 'pseudopatriotism' as "blind attachment to certain national culture values, uncritical conformity with the prevailing group modalities and rejection of other nations as 'outgroup'" (p. 107). Nationalism is based on an ideology that envisions other countries from a comparative perspective and is dominated by the desire to demonstrate the superiority of one's own, more akin – in Adorno and colleagues' terms, to pseudo-patriotism.

More recently, Schatz, Staub, and Lavine (1999) have distinguished 'blind patriotism' from 'constructive patriotism'. Blind patriotism is defined as "an intense alignment by people with their nation or group and uncritical acceptance and support for its policies and practices, with an absence of moral consideration of their consequences or disregard of their impact on the welfare of human beings who are outside the group or are members of its subgroups" (Staub, 1997, p. 213). Constructive patriotism instead reflects "attachment to and consideration for the well-being of one's own group with an inclusive orientation to human beings, with respect for the rights and welfare of all people" (Staub, 1997, p. 214).

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Both positions could be deemed ‘patriotic’ to the extent that they reflect a sense of emotional attachment to the Nation. Like constructive patriots, blind patriots are loyal to and proud of their country, but they do not judge invariably the actions of their nation as right or necessary. Blind patriotism overlaps with nationalistic attitudes and requires a submissive attitude to the nation and its leaders; criticism and dissent are generally regarded as signs of unwarranted rebellion and disloyalty, even treason to the Homeland. Conversely, constructive patriotism is a form of behavioural attachment to the Nation based on flexibility, aptitude and willingness to reflect and act with regard to the welfare of one’s own country.

These two forms of patriotism may be differently related to value dimensions and to ideological dimensions. Right-wing and conservative ideological dimensions can be related in particular to blind forms of patriotism (Pena & Sidanius, 2002; Jugert & Duckitt, 2009). Recent conceptualizations of the ideological roots of conservatism focus on a two-dimensional approach to socio-political ideologies pivoted on the constructs of Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO). According to Altemeyer (1996), RWA refers to an ‘authoritarian follower’ with a disposition towards discipline and punishment (i.e. aggression), respect for authority (i.e. submission) and adherence to conventional values (i.e. conventionalism). RWA has been linked to heightened concern about power, security, conformity and tradition, such that the higher the RWA score, the more punitive and easily influenced by authority directives an individual tends to be (Altemeyer, 1981). Social Dominance Orientation reflects the tendency of certain individuals to subject others to their own anti-democratic authoritarianism (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). High-SDO individuals develop and support so-called hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing myths (HELMs), or societal, consensually shared social ideologies, that provide moral and intellectual justification for practices that asymmetrically allocate social values among social groups (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Research has shown that SDO correlates strongly with prejudice, racism, sexism, cultural elitism, political and economic conservatism, meritocracy, a Protestant ethic, ‘just-world’ beliefs, and nationalism (e.g. Pratto, 1999).

RWA and SDO should be both linked positively with blind patriotism, which is a form of out-group derogation and in-group enhancement that fits well both with the “authoritarian follower” who derogates the out-group because it is always a potential threat to the ingroup. Furthermore, blind patriotism fits also with the social dominant individual, who likes to impose a self-serving hierarchy and allocation of resources to maximize the advantages of one’s own group, or Nation for that matter. Instead, constructive patriotism does not feature the same concern on security, threat and hierarchy embedded within blind forms of national attachment. Consistently, blind patriotism has typically been found to be strongly correlated with RWA; instead, constructive patriotism has been found to be unrelated to RWA (Schatz et al., 1999; Spry & Hornsey, 2007). Pratto and colleagues (1994) found that patriotism (which was measured in a way more reminiscent of its blind version) increased as a function of SDO among white Americans, the dominant group, while it decreased as a function of SDO among African Americans, subordinates, a pattern that represents a special case of the ideological asymmetry hypothesis (Sidanius, Levin, & Pratto, 1996). These results would imply also an as yet untested negative association between SDO and constructive patriotism.

The results of these studies represent a good starting point for the investigation of SDO and patriotism, as no research to date has explicitly examined SDO and blind or constructive patriotism. We here hypothesize that both RWA and SDO should be associated positively with blind patriotism, reflecting two different motivations (threat and dominance, respectively) underpinning dogmatic

favouritism for one’s own nation; instead, RWA and SDO should be negatively or negligibly associated with constructive patriotism, because the latter reflects an attachment to one’s own country conceptually unrelated with worries about threat-avoidance or hierarchy-enhanced motivations (RWA and SDO, respectively).

## 1.2. Values as distant roots of patriotism

SDO and RWA could act as the ideological mediators between the specific attitudes and beliefs that comprise blind and constructive patriotism and broader dispositional dimensions, as values. Schwartz’s Values Inventory (1992), developed to measure values expressing basic human motivational goals, has proved very useful as a conceptual tool for disentangling the distinct antecedents of RWA and SDO. The theory of basic human values developed by Schwartz (1992) distinguishes ten types of motivational value: Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity, Security, Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, and Self-direction. Because of the inherent compatibilities and conflicts of the motivational goals underlying these value types, they are arranged in the afore-mentioned order in a two-dimensional structure. On one dimension, Self-enhancement values – power, achievement – contrast with Self-transcendence values – universalism, benevolence; and on the other dimension, Conservative values – tradition, conformity, security – contrast with Openness-to-change values – hedonism, stimulation, self-direction. The dynamic relationships between values have been confirmed in a large number of societies all over the world, using various samples and different methods of measurement and data analysis (Schwartz, Melech, Lehmann, Burgess, & Harris, 2001).

SDO and RWA differ in their associations with the value dimensions. Duriez, Van Hiel, and Kossowska (2005) and McFarland (2010) related RWA to the conservatism vs. openness-to-change axis, while SDO lies on the self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence axis. Both RWA and SDO correlate with self-enhancement and conservative values, but only RWA is strongly correlated with conservatism (security, conformity, and tradition) vs. openness-to-change – (stimulation and self-direction). In contrast, SDO relates correlated with self-enhancement (achievement, power, and hedonism) vs. self-transcendence (universalism, benevolence). Cohrs, Maes, Moschner, and Kielmann (2007) found that security was positively associated with RWA and SDO, which in turn correlated negatively with universalism. Stangor and Leary (2006) used different measures of motivationally-based values but also found a strong positive correlation between conservative values and RWA, but not SDO, and a negative correlation between egalitarian values and SDO, but not RWA.

Previous research have also investigated the direct associations between values and blind patriotism. Schwartz et al. (2010) reported that blind patriotism correlates positively with security, conformity, tradition and power, because uncritical attachment to, and identification with one’s country provides a sense of certainty and superiority. On the other hand, blind patriotism showed negative correlations with universalism, self-direction, stimulation, and hedonism, because blind patriotism is intolerant of out-groups and conflicts with free, individual self-expression.

The aforementioned associations are compatible with a mediation pattern where the proximal associates of patriotism (SDO and RWA) mediate the distinct associations of blind and constructive patriotism with value dimensions. We aim at testing such pattern. For this purpose, we will first test a model focusing on the associations of SDO and RWA with values, in order to compare the results with those previously reported in the literature (see Duriez et al., 2005). We consider values to represent the starting point from which ideological dispositions as RWA and SDO develop. To simplify the model, we decided from a theoretical standpoint to focus

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