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**THE EFFECT OF TYPE OF THREAT ON POLITICAL
IDEOLOGY**

BENGI AKTAR

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THE EFFECT OF TYPE OF THREAT ON POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

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A thesis submitted to
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In addition, I acknowledge that any claim of irregularity that may arise in relation to this work will result in a disciplinary action in accordance with the university legislation.

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24/06/2022

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THE EFFECT OF TYPE OF THREAT ON POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

ABSTRACT

There is currently no consensus about the relationship between threat and political ideology in the literature. While conservatism as motivated social cognition account (MSC) suggests that when people are under threat, they become more politically conservative, the Terror Management Theory (TMT) argues that threat leads people to support their existing worldviews. On the other hand, the Issue Ownership Model suggests that some parties or leaders might seem more compatible in solving certain problems. Therefore, different types of threats might result in various types of shifts in political ideology. To clarify the controversy, in this research, we examined the relationship between the type of threat and political ideology in a Turkish context. We investigated whether the type of threat might produce different effects on political ideology. Participants read one of the three articles, and then responded to the political ideology measures. Two articles (terror threat – climate threat) served as manipulations (intended to elicit a conservative shift or liberal shift) while the other one served as a control condition. Our main hypotheses were that (1) participants in the terror threat condition would score higher on the conservatism scale compared to other conditions, (2) participants in the climate threat condition would score lower on the conservatism scale compared to other conditions, and (3) participants in the threat conditions will display more negative mood assessment compared to control conditions. We found no support for our main hypotheses; on the other hand, our exploratory analyses yield significant results for future studies to take into account.

Keywords: threat, terror, climate, political ideology, issue ownership, ideology shift

TEHDİT TÜRÜNÜN POLİTİK İDEOLOJİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

ÖZET

Literatürde, tehdit ve politik ideoloji arasındaki ilişki konusunda halen bir fikir birliği bulunmamaktadır. GÜdülenmiş sosyal biliş olarak muhafazakarlık, insanların tehdit altında olduklarında politik olarak daha muhafazakar olduklarını öne sürerken, Dehşet Yönetimi Kuramı, tehdidin insanları mevcut dünya görüşlerini desteklemeye yönlendirdiğini savunmaktadır. Öte yandan Soruna Vakıflık Modeli ise bazı parti veya liderlerin belirli sorunları çözmeye daha yetkin algılanabileceğini bu sebeple de tehdit türüne göre ideoloji üzerinde de farklı etkiler olabileceğini öne sürmektedir. Literatürdeki bu tartışmanın çözülmesine katkı sağlamak amacıyla bu araştırmada, tehdit türü ile politik ideoloji arasındaki ilişki Türkiye örneğinde incelenmiştir. Tehdit türünün politik ideoloji üzerinde farklı etkiler üretilip üretilmeyeceği araştırılmıştır. Katılımcılar, üç gazete haberinden birini okudular, ardından politik ideoloji ölçeğine yanıt verdiler. İki makale (terör tehdidi – iklim tehdidi) manipülasyon işlevi görürken diğeri ise kontrol koşulu işlevi görmüştür. Temel hipotezlerimiz, (1) terör tehdidi koşulundaki katılımcılar, muhafazakarlık ölçeğinde diğerk koşullara göre daha yüksek puan alacaktır, (2) iklim tehdidi koşulundaki katılımcılar, muhafazakarlık ölçeğinde diğerk koşullara göre daha düşük puan alacaklardır, (3) tehdit koşullarındaki katılımcılar, kontrol koşullarına kıyasla daha negative bir duygulanım göstereceklerdir. Ana hipotezler için yapılan analizler anlamlı bir fark ortaya koymamıştır, öte yandan, keşifsel analizler gelecekteki çalışmalar için dikkate alınması gereken önemli sonuçlar vermektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: tehdit, terör, iklim, politik ideoloji, soruna vakıflık modeli, ideoloji değişimi

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CPB: Compensatory Political Behavior

MSC: Motivated Social Cognition

TMT: Terror Management Theory

WEIRD: Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, Democratic

1. INTRODUCTION

Threat might be conceptualized as potential intentional or unintentional harm, damage, or hostility to an individual, a group, or society. How do people behave under threat? In every threat situation that comes to mind, do you expect people's behavior to be the same or different? This has been a topic that social psychologists have been studying for a long time because we may face threats at any time in our lives; the threat can be directed against us or the group and society we are bound. Besides, it can come from a person and a group, state, or nature.

Political psychology literature is mixed in terms of how people react to the presence of a threat such as terrorism, resource scarcity, pandemics, or climate change. Two dominant accounts have been proposed to explain the psychological consequences of various threats. The first one, Terror Management Theory (Greenberg et al., 1986), suggests that people cling more to their worldview in times of threat, which in turn increases their self-esteem, making it easier for them to cope with the current threat and decreases their anxiety. In line with this, one might expect liberals to endorse liberal values more and conservatives to endorse conservative values more. As an alternative theoretical framework, the motivated social cognition model (MSC) suggests that conservatism arises from the psychological need to manage threats and stress that come from uncertainties (Jost et al., 2003). Jost et al.'s (2003) extant meta-analysis showed that conservatism is a motivated social cognition to manage uncertainty and threat. In other words, conservatism is conceptualized as a tool to cope with threats, and people become and react more like conservatives under threat regardless of their pre-existing political ideologies. According to this account, the threat gives rise to a conservative shift. Because there is evidence for each theoretical model (e.g., Castano et al., 2011; Nail & McGregor, 2009), there is no clear consensus on this issue. The controversy in the literature is also not limited to the two perspectives that explain the relationship between threat and political ideology. Some studies using mortality salience provide

evidence for worldview defense (Castano et al., 2011; Vess et al., 2009), while others support MSC (Landau et al., 2004; Nail & McGregor, 2009; Van de Vyver et al., 2016). In order to converge the two theoretical models, by using the Issue Ownership Model, Eadeh and Chang (2020) claimed that both can be true depending on the type of threat.

The Issue Ownership Model was first proposed by Budge and Farlie (1983); according to them, some parties might seem more suitable for solving certain problems. The researchers indicated that leaders or parties are perceived as more committed to the issue when they propose particular policies. Therefore, they are recognized as the best solution (Seeberg, 2020). For instance, in many Western countries (e.g., Europe), while citizens see left-wing parties as more competent in solving environmental problems related to climate change, they see immigration-related issues as a matter of more right-wing parties (Lefevre et al., 2015). This situation also has the potential to play a role in determining which party or leader people will prefer in the presence of emerging or current problems. Having certain parties and leaders in mind for certain problems might mean that when these problems arise, they turn to those parties and people and support them. For example, one study showed that when citizens are concerned about democracy, they might be more prone to demonstrate support for democratic leaders (Petrocik, 1996). However, this study did not ask participants whether they see a particular party as more convenient at handling certain problems; instead, they used experts' opinions about issue ownership. Another study tested the model on voting behavior and found that certain policy changes slightly but significantly alter the voting preferences (van der Brug, 2004).

In the current study, we tested the Issue Ownership Model by investigating the effects of different types of threats on political conservatism in a Turkish sample. Before moving on to the current research, we will first look at what kind of threat manipulations produced what kind of results in the past literature.

1.1 Terror Management Theory (TMT)

Humans live with the awareness that they will die eventually, and according to Terror Management Theory (TMT), this awareness plays an essential role in shaping people's behaviors and thoughts (Greenberg et al., 1986; Pyszczynski et al., 2004). TMT is shaped around the idea of coping with the feelings of anxiety and fear that arise from being aware of one's mortality. Previous studies indicated that after reminding people of their own death/mortality, they tend to rely more on their beliefs and worldviews and this effect allows individuals to cope with the anxiety and fear that comes with it (Rosenblatt et al., 1989). Many studies support TMT and its effects on people's beliefs and thoughts. For example, when people are reminded of their death, they are more likely to accept harsher and sometimes violent punishment for those who violate the norms (Rosenblatt et al., 1989; Hirschberger & Ein-Dor, 2006; Pyszczynski et al., 2006), favor their in-group (Castano et al., 2002), show positive attitudes towards people who share similar views and negative attitudes to ones who have opposite views (Greenberg et al., 1990; McGregor et al., 1998), engage in romantic and non-romantic social relationships (Taubman-Ben-Ari et al., 2002; Mikulincer & Florian, 2000). Additionally, since beliefs and intentions incorporate political opinions, TMT suggests that in the presence of death reminders, both liberals and conservatives cling to their values more (Pyszczynski et al., 2015). Overall, past studies supported the idea that death reminders might affect individuals' behaviors or intentions. However, due to the fact that these studies in the previous literature were carried out before the open science movement, comprehensive cross-cultural replication studies in recent years based on open science practices have revealed conflicting results about the effect of mortality salience (Chatard et al., 2020; Klein et al., 2019).

Despite the studies mentioned above supporting worldview defense, studies conducted after some major terrorist attacks (real-life death reminders) showed that liberals and conservatives became more conservative by supporting military spending, showing the endorsement of conservative party leaders, and expressing more negative attitudes towards immigrants (Bonanno & Jost, 2006; Landau et al., 2004). Jost et al.'s (2003)

account might explain these different and conflicting results, which will be explained in the next section.

1.2 Motivated Social Cognition (MSC)

The effect of threat on political ideology has been shaped around a conservative shift perspective since Jost et al.'s (2003) influential meta-analysis. This meta-analysis, covering 22,818 participants from 12 countries, demonstrated that political ideology differences tally with certain psychological, existential, and social needs: "resistance to change" and "opposition to equality." Jost et al. (2003) indicate that conservatives show stronger endorsement of these two dimensions than liberals. In other words, conservatism helps individuals to preserve the current hierarchy and traditions; in this way, everything will remain as it is, and the problems and threats that may arise with change will be eliminated. Therefore, according to Jost et al. (2003), people use relevant motivations linked with political conservatism to protect themselves from the fear and anxiety that the uncertainty of change might create. These threats may be many things for individuals and groups, and we could react differently to each threat since they all might not be dangerous, urgent, or severe at the same level. For example, Landau et al. (2004) primed participants by reminding them of the attacks of 9/11, and the results suggested that participants supported George W. Bush (conservative party leader) more in the presence of either a terrorist attack or mortality salience prime. In line with that, in a study comparing attitudes before and after 9/11, Nail and McGregor (2009) showed that both liberals and conservatives endorsed conservative values more after the attack. Jost et al. (2017) conducted another meta-analysis and showed that people tend to be more conservative when given reminders about death. On the other hand, Lambert et al. (2010) showed that after the 9/11 attacks were reminded, university students wanted to increase the military power overseas and showed more support for George W. Bush. Still, this conservative shift took place only on military power, and their thoughts on general liberal and conservative issues remained the same.

Although terror threats and death reminders are the most used form of threats, researchers used other types of threats for experimental manipulation. In other studies the researchers conceptualized threat as disgust sensitivity by using the Parasite Stress Model (showing participants disgusting images) and found that it is positively linked with conservative ideology (Inbar et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2011). According to the Parasite Stress Model, in the presence of a pathogen threat, it is predicted that there may be some changes in the behavior and cognitive processes of individuals in group relations. For example, ethnocentric behavior patterns are observed in individuals with a high perception of pathogen threat (Navarrete & Fessler, 2006). Additionally, when participants were primed with the disease, they showed resilience to outgroups (Faulkner et al., 2004). Studies demonstrated that pathogen threat is especially prevalent in collectivistic and more authoritarian cultures (Fincher et al., 2008; Thornhill et al., 2009).

However, part of the literature is mixed because most of the previous literature extensively relied on outgroups that conservatives dislike (Brandt et al., 2014). For instance, in Inbar et al. (2009), the researchers used only the picture of a gay couple kissing as the stimulus which was intended to activate disgust; however, using a picture that has a possibility to disgust one side of the political spectrum more (i.e., conservatives) might have confounded the results of the study (Sherkat et al., 2011; van der Toorn et al., 2017). Other studies showed that when the researchers used outgroups from both sides of the political spectrum (e.g., gay people for conservatives and CEOs for liberals), liberals tend to avoid out-groups as much as conservatives (Brandt et al., 2015; Chambers et al., 2013; Iyengar & Westwood, 2015).

Overall, past studies and accounts revealed conflicting and biased results. Throughout the literature, terrorism and death threats were used more frequently than other types of threats; studies were unclear about to what extent political ideologies shift under threat and in what direction (left-right); the definition of threat was vague and sometimes biased. In order to gradually unravel all this controversy, we may first need to look at the definition of threat.

1.3 Definition of Threat

Crawford (2017) argued that political psychology literature overlooked conservatism and threat. Therefore, he proposed the Compensatory Political Behavior (CPB) Model, in which two different threat types are identified: meaning threats and physical threats. According to CPB Model, meaning threats are more abstract and can pose a threat to the identity (i.e., belonging of the person or a group), while physical threats are all kinds of threats that contain physical harm and can have a more concrete and direct effect. Previous literature showed that meaning and physical threats could evoke different emotional responses that may result in different reactions (Kanai et al., 2011; Proulx & Heine, 2010; Proulx & Inzlicht, 2012). Since reactions may depend on the type of threat, Crawford (2017) also suggested that liberals and conservatives react similarly to a certain threat; thus, we cannot know how they might react without knowing the type of threat. The researcher classified threats as meaning and physical threats and indicated that liberals and conservatives display biased attitudes in terms of meaning threats. However, Crawford (2017) mentioned that conservatives might be more sensitive to physical threats, which include physical harm and danger. Prior to Crawford (2017), the dominant idea in the literature was that liberals and conservatives do not respond to threats in the same way because their underlying characteristics are different. Thus, there are studies that conflict with this idea and that liberals and conservatives are somewhat symmetrical in some aspects. For example, Nam et al. (2013) showed that when conservatives and liberals were asked to write an article defending the opinions of the candidate they did not support, conservatives had more difficulty than liberals writing it. On the other hand, some studies found that liberals avoid opposing views as much as conservatives (Crawford et al., 2013; Ditto et al., 2019). Crawford (2017) proposed that this controversy is unfruitful because it stems from the fact that the concept of threat is not defined correctly. Although Crawford proposed defining the threat as meaning and physical threats, this distinction still may not be efficient in predicting the effect of threats on political attitudes because some threats may violate both individual's identity and physical well-being.

Following Crawford (2017), Eadeh and Chang (2020) made a conceptual distinction and found that different types of threats might create different effects on political attitudes. In their study, they used terror reminders (ISIS) to create a conservative shift and water pollution prime to create a liberal shift. Their results showed that the relationship between threat and political ideology might depend on the type of threat. They used the Issue Ownership Model, which will be explained in the next section, to clarify the link between threat and ideology.

1.4 Issue Ownership Model

Eadeh and Chang (2020) used the perspective derived from the Issue Ownership Model and claimed that certain people, leaders, or groups might appear more competent in eliminating some threats and problems. This model was first defined by Budge and Farlie (1983) in the political science literature claiming that people might trust a particular party to solve or handle a certain problem. Although the political science literature has not yet fully defined the boundaries of the Issue Ownership Model, we can consider this term as the identification of certain problems with certain parties in general (Stubager, 2018). From this perspective, it seems quite understandable that after reminding of the terror attacks to liberals, their attitudes toward national security and immigrants have become more like conservatives (Nail & McGregor, 2009; Van de Vyver et al., 2016), yet their views on gay rights remained the same (Lambert et al., 2010). This might be due to the fact that conservative leaders and policies might seem more effective as a solution to the threat of terrorism.

On the other hand, it is not the case when we talk about different threats other than terrorism, which the past literature heavily relied on. Accordingly, Eadeh and Chang (2020) used different types of threats that either conservative or liberal policies could offer a better solution. They found that after reading the article about the healthcare threat (Study 1), pollution threat (Study 2), and corporate misconduct threat (Study 3), regardless of their previous political opinions, both liberals and conservatives supported certain liberal values and policies that are relevant to that certain threat. The researchers

first conducted a preliminary study to see if the types of threats they would use in the main study were as threatening as the terrorist threat. They found no differences in terms of the perceived threat and negative mood assessment scores between conditions (Eadeh & Chang, 2020; Figure 1). After the preliminary study, in Experiment 1, the researchers used two articles and randomly assigned participants to one of the two conditions. There were 558 participants, and they read a newspaper article about a child who was not entitled to health insurance and died because of cancer in the manipulation condition. In the control condition, the participants read an article about the recent research on food allergies. They included items about healthcare, and in addition to this, they also had social conservative items, hawkish items, and general liberal items.

The results indicated that participants in the healthcare threat condition displayed greater levels of negative mood compared to the control condition. More importantly, the main analyses revealed that participants who were in the manipulation condition showed higher endorsement of healthcare policies compared to the control condition; on the contrary, there was no effect of threat on other political attitudes (i.e., social conservatism, hawkish attitudes, and general liberal attitudes).

In Experiment 2, the researchers used pollution threats (water and air pollution) vs. control. In water pollution conditions, the researchers provided an article mentioning that a little child will suffer from health problems throughout her life as a result of being poisoned by polluted water. In air pollution conditions, the participants read a newspaper article mentioning that a young boy died as a result of an asthma attack due to air pollution. The control condition was the same as in Experiment 1. In this experiment, they used hawkish, social liberalism, social conservatism, healthcare, and environmental items (see Appendix C; Eadeh & Chang, 2020). The results illustrated that participants who were primed with pollution threats showed higher levels of fear/anxiety and anger compared to control. Similar to Experiment 1, participants in the threat conditions exhibited more endorsement towards environmental attitudes compared to control. Likewise, they found that participants in the manipulation conditions displayed greater support for liberal attitudes. On the other hand, participants in the threat conditions showed less support for social conservatism compared to the

control condition. They found no differences between the conditions for other political attitudes.

The researchers mentioned that they used children in the previous conditions; therefore, in Experiment 3, they included a corporate misconduct threat vs. control. In the financial threat condition, participants were given an article about the 2008 financial crisis in the US summarizing corruption throughout that time, and the control condition was the same as in the previous designs. In Experiment 3, the researchers included items about financial regulation, hawkish, social liberalism, social conservatism, healthcare, and environmental attitudes (see Appendix D; Eadeh & Chang, 2020). The results demonstrated that participants displayed greater levels of negative mood (fear/anxiety and anger) compared to the control condition. Lastly, participants expressed higher support for financial regulation.

Eadeh and Chang (2020) provided distinct evidence for the threat and political ideology relationship. However, their choice of political items is somewhat mixed; to elaborate more, they used twelve items for hawkish attitudes in Experiment 1, while they included only four of these items in Experiment 2 without a justification. According to the perspective of the Issue Ownership Model, it makes sense to use domain-specific items since shifts are expected in the contexts related to that particular threat. However, the researchers did not specify why they changed the number of items in each experiment. Lastly, they did not report whether there was an effect of financial threat on other political attitudes.

Overall, this study occupies an important place as the first study to show the effect of "liberal shift" with an experimental design, its adaptability to other cultures is controversial because it was conducted in a country with a dual political system. However, Brandt et al. (2021) showed, in a large-sampled study ($N = 60,278$), that the type of threat might be linked with various political opinions. The researchers acquired the data from the World Values Survey, which comprises various types of threat measures such as war, crime, surveillance, and police threats. The study illustrated mixed results in cross-country comparisons; researchers stated that this might be due to

the fact that questions suitable for the country structure were not formed by taking into account the past events in each country. On the other hand, the results indicated that the relationship between threat and ideology is not as direct as we think, and in addition, the political ideologies associated with different types of threats may vary from country to country. Therefore, unlike the previous accounts, novel findings suggest that not all threats are equal in leading to a conservative shift; instead, the political reactions may vary based on the type of threat.

1.5 Threat and Political Ideology in Non-WEIRD Countries

In psychological sciences, most studies were conducted in Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) countries, even though the world population is pre-dominantly non-WEIRD (Henrich et al., 2010). Researchers generalized the results that were conducted with the small and same non-representative populations (e.g., Northern American or Western European individuals) to humankind (Henrich et al., 2010). For example, even visual memory traits that are not expected to show much variance among humans differ between WEIRD and non-WEIRD societies (Segall et al., 1966). As a result, there is a problem in adapting the results obtained in Western countries to the majority of the world. For example, after 9/11, terror threat studies increased in political psychology; however, they were overwhelmingly conducted in the Western context. Therefore, the terrorist groups and attacks that are referred to in those studies were Islamic terrorist groups, and their attacks were towards the majority group (Godefroidt, 2022). Additionally, Godefroidt (2022) stated in their meta-analysis that studies about political ideology shifts after terror threats or reminders were vastly studied in the Western context; hence in the meta-analysis, there were only seven studies conducted in non-WEIRD countries.

In terms of the Turkish context, there are few studies conducted on this topic, observing terror threat and its effect on political attitudes. For instance, Aytac and Carkoglu (2021) showed with cross-sectional data that after the terror attacks between 2015 and 2016, citizens' political party and leader preferences shifted, and they favored Justice

and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) more which is a right-wing party. Researchers also asked which party could handle the terror problem better, and the majority of the participants pointed out AKP as the solution. This may be the reason why only one of the right-wing parties (the one thought to be better at solving the terrorist threat) increased the vote share after the terrorist incidents. Likewise, Kibris (2011) stated that terrorist attacks between 1991 and 1995 were positively correlated with the increased endorsement of right-wing parties in Turkey. These results seem consistent with the Issue Ownership Model, but since right-wing parties and leaders gaining support under the threat of terrorism is an expected result of MSC as well, it is not possible to draw a clear conclusion based on these data. Another study examined the effect of terror threats on conservatism through two experiments in the Turkish context (Erol, 2022). Erol (2022) found evidence for the terror threat – conservatism relationship in Experiment 2. On the contrary, the researcher found an effect in the opposite direction resulting in decreased conservatism identification in Experiment 1. These mixed and conflicting results suggest that the researchers need to conduct more studies in the Turkish context.

1.6 The Present Research

In recent years, the relationship between threat and political ideology has been studied more, but the association between them is still not clear enough to answer the inconsistencies in the literature. The most dominant account proposed that people become more like conservatives under threat (MCS: Jost et al., 2003). However, plenty of past experiments used only terrorist attacks as an operationalization of threat, known to lead to a conservative shift. (Bonanno & Jost, 2006; Landau et al., 2004; Nail & McGregor, 2009; Van de Vyver et al., 2016). To elaborate on this, Crawford (2017) suggested that a more precise operationalization of threats is needed since people might react to each threat in different ways. Following the lead of this criticism, Eadeh and Chang (2020) conducted a study and used the Issue Ownership Model to reconcile the previous models (MSC and TMT) on the effect of threat on ideology. Issue Ownership Model suggests that each group or political party may be perceived to solve specific

issues better than their counterparts. For instance, people may trust conservative parties more to deal with terror threats, whereas liberal parties may be expected to solve threats related to environmental issues more. Accordingly, a liberal shift was observed in participants in response to the threats that liberals are believed to deal with better. Therefore, their results supported the Issue Ownership Model. Additionally, previous studies did not yield a general ideological change, but rather they provided evidence for the contextual change in ideological views and policies.

In this research, we compared the previous well-established accounts (e.g., MSC, TMT) and the novel accounts (e.g., issue ownership) on the different effects of threats on political ideology in a high-powered experiment. The experiment was conducted with a Turkish sample, and we investigated the effect of types of threat (i.e., threat thought to cause conservative shift; threat thought to cause a liberal shift and a control condition) on political attitudes. We expected participants' political attitudes to be affected based on the threat condition (terror threat, climate threat, or control) they were assigned to. Based on previous findings, our hypotheses are as follows:

H₁. Participants in the terror threat condition will score higher on Conservatism Scale than participants in the climate threat and control condition.

H₂. Participants in the climate threat condition will score lower on Conservatism Scale than participants in the terror threat and control condition.

H₃. Participants in terror and climate threat conditions will express greater levels of negative mood assessment than in the control condition.

2. METHOD

We pre-registered the hypothesis and planned analysis for the current study, which can be seen in the following link. In addition to the pre-registration, Qualtrics file, materials, and raw data can be found on OSF (<https://osf.io/8f2zw/>).

2.1 Participants

In this research, we used the average of the effect sizes from Eadeh and Chang (2020) ($f = 0.17$) since this will be the first study about the relationship between threat and political ideology in the Turkish sample. Using G * Power 3.1.9.2 (Faul et al., 2007), it was decided that our sample should consist of at least 540 participants in order to determine the main effect of threat manipulation in a one-way ANOVA model with $\alpha = 0.05$ and $1-\beta = 0.95$.

We recruited participants in two ways; first, we sent the Qualtrics link of the study to the participants by using MINT (<https://www.moralintuitionslab.com>) Lab's online panel that includes more than 2000 participants who volunteered to get e-mails about studies. Second, we shared the study link with the psychology students. We incentivized the former with a lottery draw for gift cards and the latter with extra credit.

The survey was closed after a week, and at the end of one week, we collected data from 1314 participants. As pre-registered, we excluded 334 participants because they did not respond to dependent variables and excluded 31 more because they failed to answer attention check questions which left us with 949 participants in total. Additionally, it should be noted that demographic questions were not forced choices; therefore, the demographic characteristics of each item may vary in numbers.

The mean age for this data was 26.8, ranging from 18 to 67 years old ($SD = 8.48$). 78.7% of participants were female ($N = 719$), 20% were male ($N = 183$), and 1.3% identified themselves as “Other” ($N = 12$). More than half of the participants had a bachelor's degree (43%, $N = 393$), and the majority of the remaining had a high school degree (39.2%, $N = 358$). Followed by master's degree (12.1%, $N = 111$), two-year degree (3%, $N = 27$), doctoral degree (2%, $N = 18$), primary school (0.4%, $N = 4$), and secondary school (0.3%, $N = 3$) degrees. To assess socio-economic status, we asked participants to rank themselves on a ladder from 1 (very low) to 10 (extremely high), SES of participants were as follows: 82.8% middle ($N = 754$), 10.7% low ($N = 98$), and 6.4% were high ($N = 59$). Lastly, the mean of participants religiosity level was $M = 2.96$, $SD = 1.81$, ideology level was $M = 2.96$, $SD = 1.29$ (Table 2.1)

Table 2. 1 Demographics

	Gender	Education	Age	SES	Religiosity	Ideology
N	914	911	902	911	913	909
Mean	1.23	5.12	26.8	5.40	2.96	2.96
Std. error mean	0.0149	0.0381	0.282	0.0495	0.0600	0.0429
Median	1.00	5	24.0	5	3	3
Standard deviation	0.449	1.15	8.48	1.49	1.81	1.29
Variance	0.202	1.32	71.8	2.23	3.29	1.67
Minimum	1	1	18.0	1	1	1
Maximum	3	7	67.0	10	7	7
Skewness	1.74	-1.29	2.02	-0.215	0.382	0.492
Std. error skewness	0.0809	0.0810	0.0814	0.0810	0.0809	0.0811
Kurtosis	2.04	1.05	4.17	-0.0461	-1.19	0.479
Std. error kurtosis	0.162	0.162	0.163	0.162	0.162	0.162

2.2. Planned Analyses

Planned analyses include confirmatory and exploratory analyses. In the confirmatory analyses, we tested the Issue Ownership Model, and in the exploratory analysis part, we conducted an analysis that might be fruitful for future studies on this topic.

2.2.1 Confirmatory analyses

Confirmatory analyses included two one-way ANOVAs for the manipulation check and main effect test. In both analyses, three conditions (terror threat-climate threat and control condition) served as independent variables. Dependent variables were the Perceived Threat Scale and Conservatism Scale in manipulation check and main effect analysis, respectively.

2.2.2 Exploratory analyses

Exploratory analyses consisted of multiple regression to see whether one-item political ideology served as a moderator between the threat conditions and Conservatism Scores.

2.3. Materials and Procedure

Data were collected through Qualtrics. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions (climate threat, terror threat, and control conditions), and after the consent form, they were given an article corresponding to their assigned condition. The next page button did not appear before 20 seconds in order to make sure they read the

article. After the newspaper article, they were asked to write at least three sentences about the article they saw, which was incentivized in exchange for an additional gift card lottery. After this optional writing prompt, they were given the dependent variable measured by the Conservatism Scale (Saribay et al., 2017). Following this, a manipulation check scale was given, followed by a mood assessment. Finally, the demographic form was given. The demographic form also included four questions related to the exploratory analysis. In the end, participants were either asked to state their e-mail address (for gift card lottery) or school number (for extra credit), and a short debriefing form was given.

2.3.1 Newspaper articles

There were three conditions that participants were assigned. In the first condition, they read an article about the previous terror attacks in Turkey (Appendix A). This condition was designed to result in a conservative shift. In terror threat condition, previous bombings were reminded with two images from the scene. Participants were informed that there had been 20 bomb attacks in Turkey since 2013, in which civilians have been killed. Seven of the attacks took place in Istanbul, four in Diyarbakir, three in Ankara, and the others in the provinces of Mardin, Izmir, Hakkari, Hatay, Urfa, and Antep. Four hundred fifty-eight civilians were killed. Nine attacks were made against military lodgings, police vehicles, or buildings; 74 security personnel and 93 civilians lost their lives. An uncountable number of people were injured in the attacks. There were also some who lost their lives among the injured, whose treatment continued after the explosions. In the attacks in different parts of the country, 461 people, 363 of whom were civilians, lost their lives, and more than 2,000 were injured.

The second article served as the climate threat manipulation, and it was designed to prime participants about the threat of air pollution and possible health threats that might come with this pollution (Appendix B). Participants were informed that air pollution

took seven times more lives than traffic accidents in Turkey in 2017. When air quality was evaluated according to national limit values in 2018, More than half of the 81 provinces (56%) breathed polluted air. According to the Black Report prepared by the Right to Clean Air Platform, if the air pollution in Turkey had been reduced to the guidelines recommended by the World Health Organization in 2017, 13% of the deaths in our country could have been prevented. According to the same report, it has been proven that polluted air is associated with miscarriage, autism, diabetes, sudden infant death syndrome, respiratory diseases such as asthma, COPD, and bronchitis, and health problems such as pneumonia and mental retardation.

Lastly, in the control condition, participants were given an article about recent research on food allergies (Appendix C). The article mentioned that food allergy is caused by an abnormal response to foods by our immune system. Clinically, symptoms may be mild (urticaria, etc.), as well as severe life-threatening reactions (anaphylaxis). Most of the undesirable reactions occur due to pharmacological properties and metabolic or toxic effects of foods. Food allergy is caused by an abnormal response to foods by our immune system. Clinically, the symptoms may be mild (urticaria, etc.), or they may lead to severe life-threatening reactions (anaphylaxis). Again, depending on the nature of the immune response, symptoms can be seen in many organs (skin, digestive system, etc.). Avoidance of food products to which the patient is allergic is the only way to prevent reactions. Some drugs can be used in mild reactions that occur in patients with food allergies.

2.3.2 Writing prompt

We asked participants to write a few sentences right after the article to increase the effect of manipulation. The participants were informed that they would be included in another lottery (Migros 100 TL gift card) if they wrote at least three sentences about the article they have just read.

2.3.3 Conservatism scale

Conservatism Scale is a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) and consists of 26 items (Appendix D). The scale was developed by Sarıbay et al. (2017) and is comprised of two dimensions. The Opposition to Equality dimension has 17 items ($\alpha = .90$), and Resistance to Change dimension has 9 items ($\alpha = .80$).

2.3.4 Perceived threat scale

The Perceived Threat Scale is a Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) developed by Eadeh & Chang (2020), which consists of a total of 14 items (Appendix E). It served as a manipulation check in this study. The scale was translated to Turkish for this study. Scale included items like "I feel threatened after reading this article" and "I believe the article I read described a threat to society-at-large." Reliability analysis demonstrated a good fit of the scale with Cronbach $\alpha = .94$. Additionally, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted, and the results showed that KMO measures of sampling adequacy were .93, and the test of sphericity was significant $\chi^2(91) = 11255, p < .001$. In addition to EFA, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was run to test the fit indices and it demonstrated an acceptable fit to the data as a single factor, $\chi^2(77) = 2678, p < .001$, RMSEA = .191 90% CI = [.185 – .197], CFI = .77.

2.3.5 Positive and negative affect schedule

Mood assessment was measured with the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson et al., 1988), which was translated and adapted to Turkish by Gençöz (2000). This scale consists of 20 adjectives which 10 of them are negative ($\alpha = .83$) and ten are positive ($\alpha = .86$). Participants were asked to indicate how they felt from 1 (very little/not at all) to 5 (extremely) for each adjective.

2.3.6 Demographic form

We presented a standard demographic form to the participants. Participants were asked to indicate their gender, age, socioeconomic and educational level. Additionally, in this experiment, a single item left-right political ideology scale was included since it is also used in other studies conducted in Turkey and has emerged as a valid measurement type (Alper & Yilmaz, 2020; Saribay & Yilmaz, 2018).

2.3.7 Exploratory questions

We asked participants to indicate on a scale of 1 (left) to 7 (right) whether they think leftist or rightist parties and/or leaders would be more efficient in solving problems about environmental issues, terrorist threats, healthcare system, and minorities (e.g., In your opinion, which politically oriented party or parties can better solve a terrorist threat in the country?).

2.4. Data Exclusion

As stated in the pre-registration, participants who failed to answer attention check questions and naturally data with incomplete dependent variables (Conservatism Scale) were excluded from the analysis.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Data Analysis Strategy

Analyses were conducted on Jamovi 2.3.2 (The Jamovi Project, 2022). As stated in the pre-registration, participants who failed to answer the attention check questions ($N = 31$) and failed to complete the dependent variable ($N = 334$) were excluded from the analysis. Confirmatory analyses were conducted with the remaining dataset ($N = 949$).

Data cleaning, assumption checks, and confirmatory and exploratory analyses were conducted on Jamovi. Descriptive statistics and correlations between the variables can be seen in Table 3.1. and Table 3.2., respectively. Complete dataset and analyses can be found on osf.io/8f2zw files.

Table 3. 1 Descriptive statistics of variables

	Conservatism Scale	Cons. Scale Opposition to Equality Subscale	Cons. Scale Resistance to Change Subscale	Perceived Threat Scale	Ideology
N	949	949	949	924	909
Missing	0	0	0	25	40
Mean	5.32	2.48	2.84	4.66	2.96
Median	5.16	2.41	2.56	4.93	3
Standard deviation	1.66	0.830	1.24	1.47	1.29
Minimum	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1
Maximum	10.5	6.12	7.00	7.00	7
Skewness	0.352	0.552	0.761	-0.556	0.492
Std. error skewness	0.0794	0.0794	0.0794	0.0805	0.0811
Kurtosis	-0.491	0.225	-0.0198	-0.584	0.479
Std. error kurtosis	0.159	0.159	0.159	0.161	0.162

Table 3.2 Correlation among variables

	Religiosity	Ideology	Resistance to Change	Opposition to Equality	Conservatism	Environmental Issue	Terrorism Issue
Religiosity	—						
Ideology	0.508	—					
Resistance to Change	0.513	0.464	—				
Opposition to Equality	0.140	0.261	0.263	—			
Conservatism	0.452	0.477	0.877	0.695	—		
Environmental Issue	0.431	0.647	0.476	0.211	0.459	—	
Terrorism Issue	0.445	0.619	0.406	0.304	0.454	0.573	—
Healthcare Issue	0.488	0.618	0.447	0.261	0.464	0.669	0.669
Minority Issue	0.482	0.619	0.536	0.227	0.512	0.688	0.688

3.2 Confirmatory Analyses

First, a manipulation check analysis was conducted to see whether the manipulation worked as intended. Afterward, we analyzed whether participants in the manipulation conditions and control conditions differed in terms of conservatism scores.

3.2.1 Manipulation check

One-way ANOVA with three levels (terror threat-climate threat and control conditions) was conducted on the composite score of the Perceived Threat Scale. The results of the ANOVA revealed that there were significant differences between the conditions, $F(2, 921) = 380, p < .001, \eta^2 = 0.452$ (Figure 3.1). Tukey's HSD post-hoc test showed that participants in the terror threat condition ($M = 5.25, SD = 1.04, 95\% \text{ CI } [5.13, 5.36]$) significantly scored higher on Perceived Threat Scale compared to the control condition ($M = 3.18, SD = 1.22, 95\% \text{ CI } [3.04, 3.33]$), $t(921) = 23.27, p < .001, d = 1.9$ (Table 3.3). Likewise, participants in the climate threat condition ($M = 5.39, SD = 1.0, 95\% \text{ CI } [5.28, 5.55]$) significantly scored higher on Perceived Threat Scale compared to the control group, $t(921) = 24.89, p < .001, d = 2.02$. There was no difference between the terror and climate threat conditions $t(921) = -1.65, p = .22, d = -.13$.

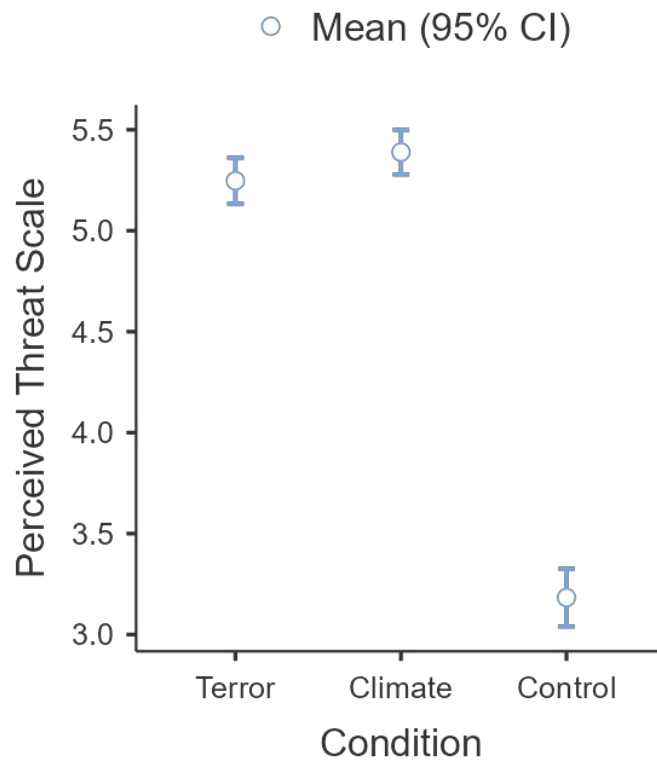


Figure 3. 1 One-Way ANOVA for the manipulation check

Table 3.3 Post Hoc Comparisons for Manipulation Check

Comparison		Mean Difference	SE	df	T	p_{tukey}	Cohen's d	
Condition	Condition							
Terror	- Climate	-0.142	0.0859	921	-1.65	0.224	-0.131	-
	- Control	2.064	0.0887	921	23.27	<.001	1.899	
Climate	- Control	2.206	0.0886	921	24.89	<.001	2.029	

3.2.2 The effect of threat on political ideology

As pre-registered, one-way ANOVA was conducted with a composite score of the Conservatism Scale as the dependent variable. The results demonstrated that there is no difference between the conditions, $F(2, 946) = 1.17, p = 0.31, \eta^2 = .002$, meaning that participants' political ideology did not change after being subject to different types of threats (Figure 3.2). Tukey's HSD post-hoc test revealed that there is no difference between terror threat condition ($M = 5.37, SD = 1.64, 95\% \text{ CI } [5.19, 5.55]$) and climate threat condition ($M = 5.20, SD = 1.70, 95\% \text{ CI } [5.02, 5.39]$), $t(946) = 1.25, p = 0.42, d = .09$. Likewise, control condition ($M = 5.39, SD = 1.64, 95\% \text{ CI } [5.20, 5.58]$) did not differ from terror threat ($t(946) = -.16, p = .99, d = -.013$) and climate threat ($t(946) = -1.38, p = .35, d = -.11$) conditions.

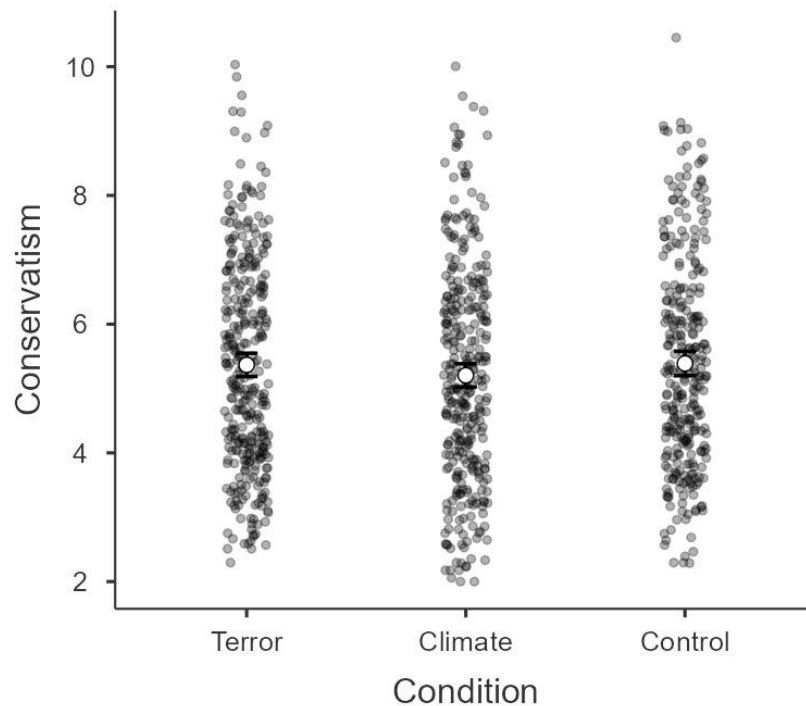


Figure 3. 2 Estimated marginal means of the conditions on conservatism

3.2.3 The effect of threat on mood

From the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS), two composite scores (negative and positive) were created. The results showed that there is no difference between the conditions in terms of negative $F(2,929) = 0.63, p = .53, \eta^2 = .001$, and positive $F(2,925) = 2.29, p = .10, \eta^2 = .005$ affect (Figure 3.3). For negative affect, Tukey's HSD post-hoc comparisons showed no difference between terror threat ($M = 2.56, SD = .82, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.47, 2.66]$) and climate threat ($M = 2.53, SD = .85, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.44, 2.63]$) conditions ($t(929) = .46, p = .89, d = .036$). Control condition ($M = 2.49, SD = .83, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.39, 2.59]$) did not differ from terror threat ($t(929) = 1.12, p = .50, d = .091$) and climate threat ($t(929) = .67, p = .78, d = .054$) conditions.

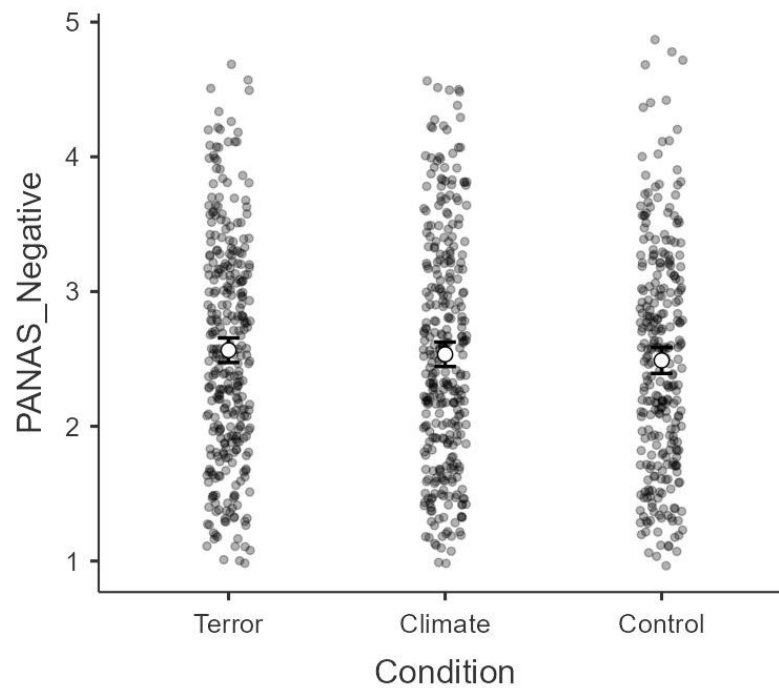


Figure 3. 3 Estimated marginal means of the conditions on negative mood

3.3 Exploratory Analyses

In the exploratory analyses, first, we tested whether one item political ideology question has a moderated effect on the threat and political ideology relationship. Then, two subscales of the Conservatism Scale were analyzed separately in two one-way ANOVAs. Lastly, it was tested whether there is an effect of manipulations on the exploratory questions (e.g., In your opinion, which politically oriented party or parties can better solve a terrorist threat in the country?). We conducted four separate one-way ANOVAs with manipulations as independent variables and questions as the dependent variables.

3.3.1 Moderated effect of one item political ideology question on conservatism

First, we dummy-coded conditions (Climate Threat and Terror Threat), then dummy-coded variables, one-item political ideology question, and interactions of dummy-coded conditions and ideology were entered as the moderator variables on conservatism score.

The results showed that there is a significant effect of political ideology ($\beta = .48, p < .001, \eta^2 = .23$), and an interaction of terrorist threat and ideology ($\beta = .07, p = .037, \eta^2 = .004$) on conservatism scores. On the other hand, there was no significant effect of terror threat ($\beta = -.01, p = .76, \eta^2 = .000$), climate change threat ($\beta = -.07, p = .05, \eta^2 = .003$), and interaction of climate threat and ideology ($\beta = .044, p = .19, \eta^2 = .001$) on conservatism scores (Table 3.4).

Table 3. 4 Dummy-coded manipulation conditions and ideology as predictors and conservatism scores as the dependent variable

Names	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		β	df	t	p
			Lower	Upper				
(Intercept)	5.2983	0.0482	5.2037	5.39282	0.0000	903	109.970	<.001
Terror	-0.0371	0.1196	0.2719	0.19759	0.0107	903	-0.310	0.756
Ideology	0.6146	0.0373	0.5414	0.68778	0.4804	903	16.485	<.001
Climate	-0.2364	0.1197	0.4713	0.00148	0.0680	903	-1.975	0.049
Terror* Ideology	0.1922	0.0919	0.0119	0.37253	0.0716	903	2.092	0.037
Climate* Ideology	0.1186	0.0914	0.0608	0.29811	0.0442	903	1.298	0.195

3.3.2 Moderated effect of one item political ideology question on subscales of conservatism

Dummy-coded conditions (Climate Threat and Terror Threat), one-item political ideology question, and interactions of dummy-coded conditions and ideology were entered as the moderator variables on two subscales which are Opposition to Equality (OTE, see Table 3.5) and Resistance to Change (RTC, see Table 3.6).

The results showed significant effect of climate threat ($\beta = -.08, p = .02, \eta^2 = .005$), one item political ideology ($\beta = .27, p < .001, \eta^2 = .07$), interaction of climate threat and political ideology ($\beta = .09, p = .011, \eta^2 = .007$), and interaction of terror threat and political ideology ($\beta = .11, p = .002, \eta^2 = .009$) on OTE subscale scores. There was no significant effect of terror threat condition ($\beta = .006, p = .872, \eta^2 = .000$).

Table 3. 5 Moderated Regression: Dummy-coded manipulation conditions and ideology as predictors and OTE scores as the dependent variable

Names	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		β	df	t	p
			Lower	Upper				
(Intercept)	2.4779	0.0264	2.4260	2.5298	0.00000	903	93.705	< .001
Terror	0.0106	0.0656	0.1183	0.1394	0.00605	903	0.161	0.872
Ideology	0.1718	0.0205	0.1316	0.2119	0.26721	903	8.393	< .001
Climate	-0.1489	0.0657	0.2778	0.0199	0.08528	903	-2.266	0.024
Terror * Ideology	0.1529	0.0504	0.0539	0.2519	0.11345	903	3.032	0.002
Climate * Ideology	0.1282	0.0502	0.0297	0.2267	0.09503	903	2.554	0.011

The results showed only significant effect of political ideology ($\beta = .46, p < .001, \eta^2 = .22$) on RTC subscale scores. There was no significant effect of terror threat ($\beta = .02, p = .60, \eta^2 = .000$), climate threat ($\beta = -.03, p = .34, \eta^2 = .001$), interaction of climate threat and political ideology ($\beta = -.004, p = .90, \eta^2 = .000$), and terror threat and political ideology ($\beta = .02, p = .57, \eta^2 = .000$). Simple slope plots of OTE and RTC subscales can be seen in Figure 3.4 and Figure 3.5 respectively.

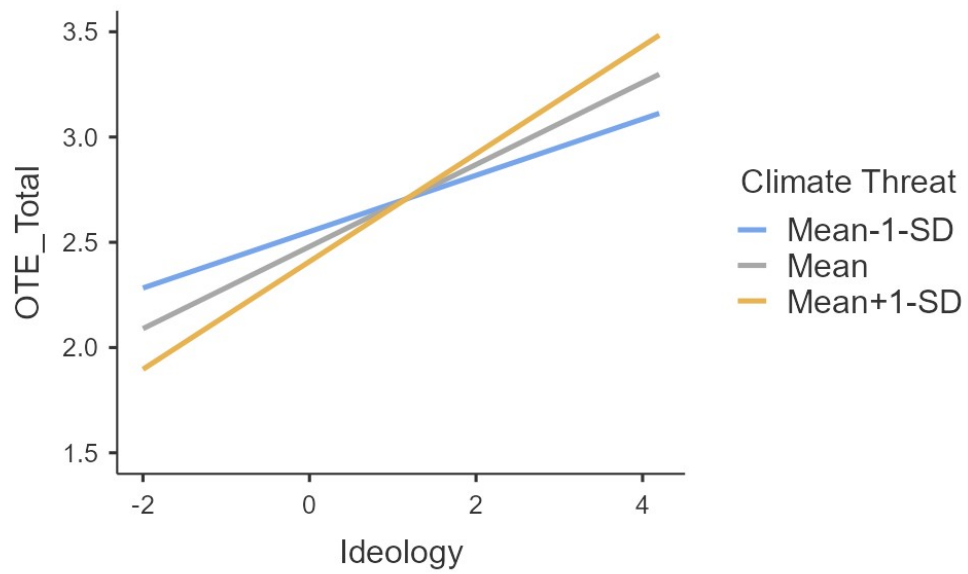


Figure 3. 4 Simple slope plot of dummy-coded climate threat condition and ideology as predictors and OTE scores as the dependent variable

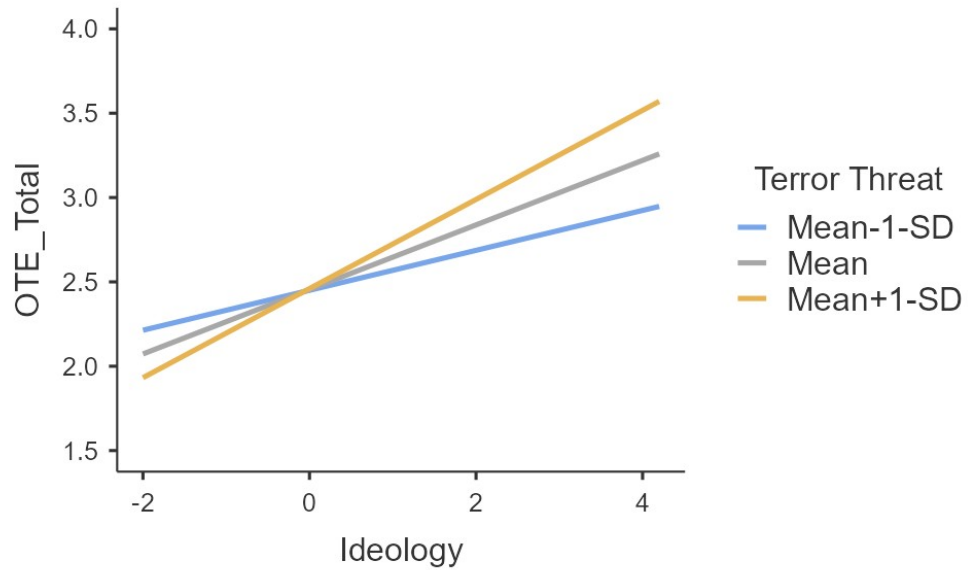


Figure 3. 5 Simple slope plot of dummy-coded terror threat condition and ideology as predictors and OTE scores as the dependent variable

Table 3. 6 Moderated Regression: Dummy-coded manipulation conditions and ideology as predictors and RTC scores as the dependent variable

Names	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		β	df	t	p
			Lower	Upper				
(Intercept)	2.82035	0.0363	2.7492	2.8915	0.00000	903	77.796	<.001
Terror	0.04769	0.0900	0.2243	0.1289	0.01847	903	-0.530	0.596
Ideology	0.44286	0.0281	0.3878	0.4979	0.46548	903	15.786	<.001
Climate	0.08753	0.0901	0.2643	0.0892	0.03388	903	-0.972	0.331
Terror * Ideology	0.03929	0.0691	0.0964	0.1750	0.01969	903	0.568	0.570
Climate * Ideology	0.00954	0.0688	0.1446	0.1255	0.00478	903	-0.139	0.890

3.3.3 Main effect test on subscales of conservatism scale

Our main confirmatory analysis was conducted again with the two subscales as the dependent variables. The results showed that there was no significant effect of manipulations on OTE $F(2, 946) = 2.77, p = .06, \eta^2 = .006$ and RTC $F(2, 946) = .15, p = .86, \eta^2 = .000$.

3.3.4 One-way ANOVA with dummy coded political ideology as the dependent variable

We dummy-coded the one-item political ideology question by using z scores. After calculating the z scores, we divided political ideology into three groups according to their z scores. Those with the lowest score to the z-1 value were the first group and from the z+1 value to the highest score were the second group. Other values in between were coded as missing values. Afterwards, we conducted a 3 x 2 one way ANOVA and the

results showed no significant effect of manipulation conditions on political ideology $F(2, 403) = .17, p = .845, \eta^2 = .001$.

3.3.5 Exploratory questions

First, we analyzed whether the manipulations have an effect on these four questions (In your opinion, which politically oriented party or parties can better solve a terrorist/environmental/healthcare/minority threat in the country?). A one-way ANOVA with these questions as the dependent variable was conducted. The results showed that there is no significant effect of manipulations on the questions. The results were as follows: $F(2, 906) = .53, p = .60, \eta^2 = .001$ for environmental issues, $F(2, 902) = .39, p = .68, \eta^2 = .001$ for terrorism issues, $F(2, 905) = .23, p = .80, \eta^2 = .001$ for healthcare issues, and $F(2, 906) = .06, p = .94, \eta^2 = .000$ for minority issues (see Table 3.7).

Table 3. 7 One-Way ANOVA for exploratory questions

	F	df1	df2	p
Environment	0.5271	2	906	0.590
Terrorism	0.3897	2	902	0.677
Healthcare	0.2338	2	905	0.792
Minorities	0.0595	2	906	0.942

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview of the Findings

The current study aimed to test whether threat affects political ideology in line with the Issue Ownership Model's predictions in a non-WEIRD sample (Turkey). Previous literature on the Issue Ownership Model suggested that an individual's political views can shift depending on the type of threat (Eadeh & Chang, 2020). Contrary to the previous literature, the current results did not support the predictions proposed by the Issue Ownership Model. Thus, we were unable to find evidence for the previous account because, according to MSC (Jost et al., 2003), people, regardless of their previous political beliefs, were becoming more conservative in the presence of a threat. In this study, threats – which were either terror-related or climate-related – did not alter the participants' political ideology. Although the main effect was non-significant, the manipulation check showed that manipulation worked as intended. Additionally, we tested whether a one-item political ideology question moderates the relationship between threat and political ideology, but we could not find any significant results. However, when the same analysis was repeated with the sub-dimensions of the conservatism scale, a significant difference was found in opposition to equality sub-scale.

The first hypothesis was that participants in the terror threat condition would score higher on the Conservatism Scale than participants in both the climate threat and the control conditions. However, the results did not support this hypothesis. Accordingly, the second hypothesis was that participants in the climate threat condition would score lower on Conservatism Scale than participants in the other conditions. Similarly, this hypothesis was not supported by our data. Lastly, we hypothesized that participants in the threat conditions would display greater negative moods than in the control condition, but our results were insignificant.

4.2 Interpretation of the Results

This study aimed to test the previous and current accounts (MSC, TMT, and Issue Ownership) with a non-WEIRD sample. Eadeh and Chang (2020) found support for a liberal shift as a reaction toward health or pollution threats in their study, yet this experiment's results failed to conceptually replicate this finding. Likewise, there was no support for any of the previous accounts that attempt to explain the consequences of different types of threats on political ideology in this study. There might be several explanations for these results. First, we tried to test several accounts; therefore, we used the general Conservatism Scale, unlike Eadeh and Chang (2020). Their study preferred specific political attitude questions (attitudes toward climate change etc.), which might be more plausible with the Issue Ownership Model. For example, they did not ask participants about attitudes toward gay marriage or the death penalty in the outcome measure after the water pollution manipulation. Instead, they included specific political items about pollution and climate change because they thought that only political opinions related to that particular threat would change as a reaction toward the relevant threat. Since, to our knowledge, this is the first study in Turkey to experimentally test the effect of different types of threats on political ideology in the framework of the Issue Ownership Model, in order to assess and test several accounts in a single experiment, the current study adapted the general political opinion items similar to the previous literature (see Jost, 2017). The current findings indicated that manipulations were effective but had no effect on political ideology, which contradicts TMT and MSC. Regarding the Issue Ownership Model, using general items instead of specific or contextual ones might be the reason for the insignificant results. For instance, in a study with a Turkish sample, Yılmaz and Sarıbay (2017) showed that training participants to think analytically (vs. control) resulted in a shift in contextualized liberal values but not in stable questionnaire items. Although they did not use the threat as a manipulation technique, they gave another type of manipulation (analytical thinking) to shift the participants' political ideology, but as a result, analytical thinking prime did not affect stable political opinions, as represented by the standard questionnaire items, similar to the current study. Therefore, future research should test the causal effect of different

types of threats on contextualized political opinions such as news articles (see Talhelm et al., 2015, Yılmaz & Sarıbay, 2017).

Manipulations served as intended, meaning participants in the experimental conditions perceived more threat than in the control condition. However, in real life, when someone encounters a threat like a terror threat, they may hear it on the news, discuss it with friends, colleagues, and family, or see live footage from the scene. Still, in this study, we used semi-fabricated newspaper articles, which might not be as well-founded as the real-life encounters. In real life, when there is a threat, we are constantly primed with that threat. Therefore, appealing to multiple sensory organs might create the desired effect, such as creating visual and auditory news (i.e., video clips).

Additionally, participants might have answered the manipulation check questions as expected because of the social desirability; one cannot be sure whether they perceived the news articles as real threats. Likewise, we used the previous bombings, and the last one was in 2016; therefore, it is possible that participants did not perceive it as a future threat since the bombings are not on Turkey's political agenda. At the same time, 9/11 reminders and bombings seem to be working for the Western sample even after several years from it (Bonanno & Jost, 2006; Nail & McGregor, 2009; Van de Vyver et al., 2016). The difference between the frequency of such major terrorist incidents in Western countries and the frequency of incidents in non-WEIRD countries may also cause people to react differently. For example, people in Turkey may be used to that kind of threat signals more due to real-life exposure. With that being said, the psychological distance from the terror threat and being more frequently exposed to such incidences in the previous years might have affected the results. Therefore, considering the two possible confounding factors aforementioned above, we urge caution for the current results.

Fritsche et al. (2011) stated that societal threats (e.g., terror, climate change) might create unpleasant feelings and make individuals feel as if they have lost control. And the

attempts to cope with the feeling of losing control may affect their political views (Uenal et al., 2021). In this study, the results showed that there were no differences between experimental and control conditions' moods. This finding might also indicate that there was an effect of manipulations but not as severe to create the effect that will allow us to detect the phenomenon. Another explanation is that not all threats are related to political ideology (Brandt & Bakker, 2022). For example, there is a limited number of studies from non-WEIRD countries about climate change beliefs and denial; therefore, the climate change threat might not be threatening enough for the participants to shift their political views. For instance, even for WEIRD countries, climate change may not necessarily be perceived as a severe threat (van der Linden et al., 2015). Moreover, people tend to perceive threats that fall into their scope of political views, and they might see those threats closer and more concrete than the other threats (Kahn et al., 2021). Meaning that people in our dataset, and Turkey in general, might not prioritize pollution and climate change.

Our exploratory analysis showed no moderated effect of political ideology on the threat and conservatism relationship. These findings may be because the existing interaction disappears when we dummy-coded the conditions. On the other hand, there was a significant moderated effect of political ideology on the relationship between the Opposition to Equality subscale and dummy coded manipulations. The results showed a significant increase in the scores obtained from the Opposition to Equality subscale as the participants' responses in the terrorist threat condition moved to the right in the single-item political ideology question. Similarly, participants in the climate threat condition scored lower on the Opposition to Equality subscale as they moved to the left on the single-item political ideology question. However, the absence of an effect on the total conservatism scores but a significant effect on its subscales is a situation that should be considered cautiously due to an inflated Type 1 error rate. As Issue Ownership suggests, these findings may be due to the opposition to equality dimension containing questions in a specific context. In other words, it is possible that we did not have an effect on the general scale since the overall scale has general questions, but we did have an effect on the subscales because they included specific policy questions in line with the manipulated latent construct.

Finally, at the end of the demographic form, respondents were asked which politically oriented party or leader would better solve particular problems. The results showed that manipulations had no significant effect on these questions. There could be several reasons for this situation. First, by the time participants responded to that question, the manipulation may have lost its effect. In addition, The Issue Ownership Model may not be suitable for Turkey in certain aspects. Turkey's political climate is determined not by policies and future promises but by the identity politics revealed by polarization (Bilgiç et al., 2014; Ertugay, 2022). Social identity inclination in terms of politics in Turkey might be preventing individuals from making policy-oriented choices; since the polarization due to ideological differences can have serious and life-changing consequences (e.g., restrictions on freedom of speech, prosecutions), and it may be unlikely that individuals will support a party or leader they did not support before in order to eliminate a specific threat. For example, when there is a terrorist threat, people are expected to support right-wing parties and leaders (Newport, 2014). Still, in Turkey's political climate, such a change may not be possible for a single threat since the change of party and leader might significantly affect social life (Ertugay, 2022).

4.3 Limitations and Future Directions

The study has several limitations to be mentioned. Participants' political ideologies were right-skewed; therefore, the data comprised vastly of left-leaning participants. Even though we used an experimental design, the sample size was not representative of Turkey. The sample was highly educated and liberal, whereas Turkey's political spectrum is more complex than the current sample (Öniş, 2007). Additionally, while the left-wing participants may represent a homogeneous sample for the US and Turkey, this situation is more complex than expected. Since Turkey has a multi-party system, parties that can be described as left might seem like opposites on some political issues. Thus, threats that are seen as left-related might not threaten people who identify themselves as leftists. From a European perspective, the classic left-right division would be

insufficient to classify participants. For example, generally, leftists would be more equalitarian towards immigrants. Still, in Turkey, sometimes right-wingers could be more welcoming toward immigrants because most of them are Muslim, and leftists could have more prejudice against immigrants than rightists. Creating more valid measures would be beneficial in this mixed political environment.

In addition, we used general political ideology questions instead of contextual ones. Still, questions relevant to the current threats should have been used in addition to the general political ideology questions. Measures with general/stable political items may not be suitable for detecting political shifts. It seems that future studies should include contextual political items as the outcome measure. Nevertheless, contextual questions require knowing which threats and policies are related to which political views. In Turkey, this might be harder than in the Western context because, as mentioned above, Turkey's right-left distinction is not that precise.

Another issue, as mentioned in the overview of the findings, is the effect of manipulations that would have been more impactful. Although manipulations worked as intended, the content was relatively based on old news, and likely, people did not see it as a future threat. How close/immediate people perceive the threat is also an essential aspect that should be considered in future research. Individuals may not be at the same psychological distance level to every event, which is determined by how concretely the event is perceived or recalled regarding whether it is in the future or the past; and whether it is relevant to the individual (Liberman & Trope, 2014). If the threat is not psychologically close (such as climate change), we might not be willing to take action against it. Therefore, it might be crucial to use threats in line with the country's current situation that the participants are actively processing when conducting studies in a lab or online setting. In terms of the perceived pollution threat, it is possible that people in Turkey did not perceive it as a tangible threat, as in many countries (van der Linden et al., 2015).

Similarly, the terror threat always has been an issue for Turkey, but not every bombing event takes up the same amount of space in people's memory (Öner & Gülgöz, 2020). At the same time, Öner and Gülgöz (2020) stated that the retention of important events such as bombings in people's memories depends on aspects independent of the recency effect. In the current study, in order not to activate any specific ideological identity (e.g., ISIS), the newspaper articles did not mention a particular bombing event, which may have reduced the manipulation effect.

Another issue is that Crawford (2017) states that threats can be divided into two groups: physical and meaning, but both threat types used in this study were physical threats. Crawford (2017) stated that liberals and conservatives react differently to these two types of threats, that there is an asymmetry between the two groups in terms of physical threats, and that conservatives may react more to these physical threats. Thus, the participants in the current study were predominantly leftists; they may not have been affected by physical threats since the mood of participants in the manipulation condition did not differ from the ones in the control condition. Future studies should evaluate this possibility as well.

Additionally, changing something like political ideology with an online experiment seems far-fetched. Still, instead, we can investigate whether people's endorsement of some laws and policies are affected by the threat. For example, Eadeh and Chang (2020) measured whether participants would be in favor of some of the policies presented by the researchers. These policies were real-life policies; therefore, they were related to the current political agenda.

Lastly, we used Conservatism Scale (Saribay et al., 2017) and failed to find evidence for our second hypothesis. Participants in the liberal shift condition did not score lower than those in the other conditions, but this does not necessarily mean that their liberal values did not increase. We only included conservatism questions as represented by standard survey items; therefore, if there was a difference in terms of liberal values, it is possible

that this study failed to detect it. Our data was predominantly left-leaning; the effect of manipulations might be stronger on liberal values instead of conservative ones. For instance, Yılmaz and Sarıbay (2017) showed that when people were given analytic thought training, they endorsed contextualized liberal values more, but their views about stable opinions, as represented by survey items as in the current study, and the contextualized conservative values stayed the same.

4.4 Conclusion

The current study sought to enrich the existing literature and test the controversial accounts (TMT, MSC) by providing data from a non-WEIRD country. We found no evidence for the Issue Ownership Model, but we also failed to find evidence for the previous accounts. Even though our main results were insignificant, the previous controversial studies and this study indicate that the relationship between threat and political ideology is not as direct as we thought. People might react or not react at all to different types of threats. They may see some threats closer than others and prioritize them in their minds.

Lastly, the evidence from the literature and lack thereof from the non-WEIRD context indicates that we need to conduct more studies by considering possible complex mechanisms in both WEIRD and non-WEIRD cultures. The relationship between threat and political ideology may not be linear and may depend on several characteristics that may vary even in one country between different ethnic groups. Future studies should test the previous accounts (MSC, TMT), but more importantly, they should test various threats with more vigorous manipulation techniques (e.g., video clips) and in different cultures.

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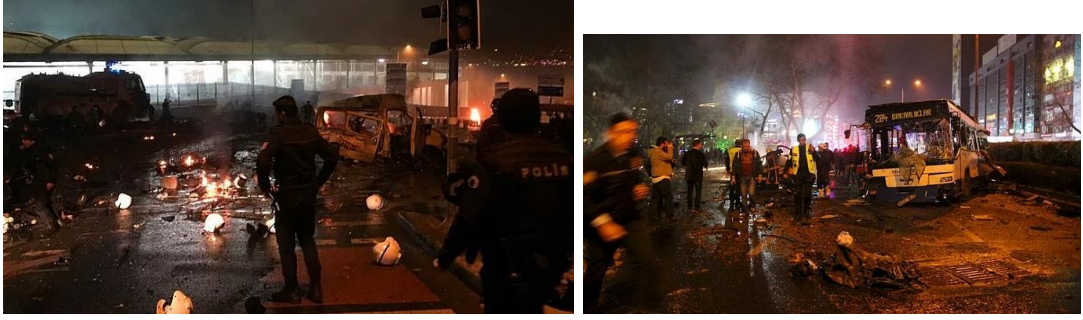
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APPENDIX A

Terror Threat Condition

“Bombalı saldırılarda son 5 yılda 458 sivil hayatını kaybetti”



Türkiye’de 2013 yılından beri sivillerin öldüğü 20 bombalı saldırı gerçekleşti. Saldırıların yedisi İstanbul’da, dördü Diyarbakır’da, üçü Ankara’da, diğerleri ise Mardin, İzmir, Hakkari, Hatay, Urfa ve Antep illerinde oldu. 458 sivil öldürüldü. Dokuz saldırı askeri lojmanlara, polis araç veya binalarına yönelik yapıldı; 74 güvenlik personeli, 93 sivil hayatını kaybetti.

Saldırılarda sayısı tespit edilemeyecek kadar insan yaralandı. Patlamalardan sonra tedavisi devam eden yaralılardan hayatını kaybedenler de oldu.

Ülkenin farklı yerlerindeki saldırılarda 363’ü sivil 461 kişi yaşamını yitirirken, 2 binden fazlası da yaralandı.

Gerçekleşen saldırılardan bazıları;

10 Ekim’de çok sayıda siyasi parti, sivil toplum örgütü ve sendikanın destek verdiği ‘emek, barış ve demokrasi mitingi’ için Ankara’ya gidenlerin toplandığı Ankara Tren Garı kavşağında meydana gelen iki ayrı patlamada 101 kişi hayatını kaybetti, 500’den fazlası yaralandı.

13 Mart’ta Ankara bir kez daha hedef oldu. Kızılay Meydanı’na yakın bir noktada gerçekleşen bombalı saldırıda 37 kişi hayatını kaybetti, 125 kişi yaralandı.

7 Haziran’da Vezneciler’de zırhlı polis araçlarına yönelik gerçekleştirilen saldırıda yedisi polis olmak üzere 12 kişi hayatını kaybetti, 35 kişi yaralandı.

APPENDIX B

Climate Threat Condition

"Burası Türkiye: Hava kirliliği trafik kazalarından fazla can aldı!"



Doğal Hayatı Koruma Vakfı kömürle çalışan termik santrallere 2,5 yıl daha havayı kirlletme izni veren yasal düzenlemenin Meclis tarafından kabul edilmesine karşı açıklama yaptı. 15 santralin filtre takmak için durdurulmalarının Türkiye'de bir elektrik sıkıntısı yaratmasının mümkün olmadığı vurgulanmıştır, "Kaldı ki bu tesislerin hepsinin aynı anda durdurulması gerekmemektedir" diye de eklendi. "İhtiyaçtan fazla santral kurulduğu için talepten çok daha yüksek bir arz bulunuyor. Dolayısıyla zaten sürekli çalışmayan santrallerin gerekli düzenlemelerin yapılması için geçici süreliğine sırayla durdurulması sorun teşkil etmemektedir" denilen açıklama şöyle devam etti:

TRAFİK KAZALARINDAN 7 KAT FAZLA CAN ALDI

Temiz Hava Hakkı Platformu tarafından hava kirliliği ölçümleri ve ölüm istatistikleri kullanılarak yapılan analize göre, Türkiye'de 2017 yılında hava kirliliği trafik kazalarından 7 kat fazla can almıştır. 2018 yılında hava kalitesi, ulusal sınır değerlerine göre değerlendirildiğinde; 81 ilin yarısından fazlası (%56) kirli hava solumuştur. Temiz Hava Hakkı Platformu'nun hazırladığı Kara Rapor'a göre 2017 yılında Türkiye'deki hava kirliliği Dünya Sağlık Örgütü'nün önerdiği kılavuz değerlere indirilmiş olsaydı ülkemizde yaşanan ölümlerin %13'ü önlenebilirdi.

Aynı rapora göre; kirli havanın düşük yapmak, çocuklarda doğum ağırlığı, otizm, diyabet, ani bebek ölümü sendromu, astım, KOAH ve bronşit gibi solunum hastalıkları, zatürre ve zeka geriliği gibi sağlık sorunları ile ilişkili olduğu kanıtlanmıştır.

APPENDIX D

Conservatism Scale

Aşağıda, çeşitli **toplumsal** olaylara dair tepkilerinizle ilgili ifadeler bulunmaktadır. Lütfen dikkatlice okuyunuz ve her ifadeye ne kadar katıldığınızı 1'den 7'ye kadar olan ölçekte işaretleyiniz.

1	5	7
Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Ne katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
	Ne katılmıyorum	

Toplumsal Eşitliğe Karşıtlık

1. Gelir dağılımı eşit hale getirilmemelidir çünkü insanların kabiliyetleri eşit değildir.
2. Gelir dağılımı daha eşit olmalıdır çünkü herkesin topluma katkısı eşit derecede önemlidir.
3. İnsanlar iki sınıfa ayrılabilir: güçlü ve zayıf.
4. Eğer insanlara daha eşit bir şekilde davransaydık daha az sorun yaşayan bir toplum olurduk.
5. Aşağı seviyedeki gruplar yerlerini bilmelidirler.
6. Bazı grupların tepede diğerlerinin aşağıda olması muhtemelen iyi bir şeydir.
7. Gelir dağılımı daha eşit olmalıdır çünkü her ailenin yemek, barınak gibi temel ihtiyaçları aynıdır.
8. Eğer gelir dağılımı daha eşit olsaydı insanları daha çok çalışmaya motive eden bir sebep kalmayacaktı.
9. Toplumsal grupların eşit olması iyi bir şey olurdu.
10. Hiçbir grup toplumda baskın olmamalıdır.
11. Toplumsal grupların eşitliği amacımız olmalıdır.
12. Bazı gruplar diğer gruplardan daha fazla yaşam hakkına sahip olabilir.
13. Tüm gruplara hayatta eşit şans tanınmalıdır.
14. Bir sürü insan ekmek bile bulamazken beş yıldızlı otellerde tatil yapmak bir insana yakışmaz.

15. Gelirleri eşitlemek için gayret etmeliyiz.
16. Gelir dağılımının daha eşit hale getirilmesi sosyalizm demektir ve bu kişisel özgürlükleri engeller.
17. Devlet gücü azınlıkta bile olsalar insanların sesini kısmak için kullanılmamalıdır.

Toplumsal Değişime Direnme

1. Devletin istikrarının korunması için yeni partilerin kurulmasına sınırlandırmalar getirilmelidir.
2. Eğer bazı gruplar yerlerini korusalardı daha az sorunumuz olurdu.
3. Toprak bütünlüğümüzün korunması kişisel çıkarlardan daha önemlidir.
4. Bu belalı zamanlarda kanunların kimsenin gözyaşına bakılmadan uygulanması lazım, özellikle işleri karıştıran devrimci ve provokatörlere karşı.
5. Batılılaşma sevdası kültürümüzün ve kimliğimizin asimile olmasına yol açacak.
6. Ülkemizin ihtiyacı daha çok medeni haktan ziyade daha katı bir hukuk ve düzendir.
7. Toplumsal ahlakımıza ve geleneksel inançlarımıza zarar veren unsurlardan mutlaka kaçınmalıyız.
8. Toplumda örf ve adetlerimizin korunması değişen dünya düzenine uyum sağlamaktan daha önemlidir.
9. Ülkenin durumu giderek ciddileşmektedir, sorun çıkaranların temizlenmesi bizi yeniden doğru yola ulaştırmak için en güçlü çözüm olacaktır.

APPENDIX E

Perceived Threat Scale

Aşağıdaki maddeleri az önce okuduğunuz gazete haberini tekrar hatırlayarak cevaplayınız. Her bir maddeyi 1(kesinlikle katılmıyorum), 7 (kesinlikle katılıyorum) olacak şekilde puanlayınız.

1. Gazete haberini okuduktan sonra tehdit altında hissettim.
2. Bir önceki gazete haberindeki olaya karşı alarma geçmiş durumdayım.
3. Gazete haberini okuduktan sonra güvensiz hissediyorum.
4. Okuduğum gazete haberindeki durumun topluma karşı büyük ölçekte bir tehdit olduğunu düşünüyorum.
5. Gazete haberini okuduktan sonra tehdit altında hissetmedim.
6. Bir önceki gazete haberine karşı alarma geçmiş durumda değilim.
7. Okuduğum gazete haberindeki durumun topluma karşı büyük ölçekte bir tehdit olduğunu düşünmüyorum.
8. Türkiye'deki insanların gazete haberindeki durumla alakalı birtakım endişeleri olduğunu düşünüyorum.
9. Gazete haberini okuduktan sonra bireysel anlamda alarma geçmiş hissediyorum.
10. Bu gazete haberi Türkiye'deki insanlar hakkında endişe duymama sebep oldu.
11. Okuduğum gazete haberindeki durumun benim de başıma gelebileceğini düşünüyorum.
12. Bu gazete haberinin benim hayatımla alakalı tehdit oluşturabilecek bir durumla ilgili olduğunu düşünüyorum.
13. Bu gazete haberinin benim çevremdeki insanların hayatlarıyla alakalı tehdit oluşturabilecek bir durumla ilgili olduğunu düşünüyorum.
14. Bu tarz bir tehdit asla benimle alakalı bir durum olamaz.

APPENDIX F

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule

Bu ölçek farklı duyguları tanımlayan birtakım sözcükler içermektedir. Son iki hafta nasıl hissettiğinizi düşünüp her maddeyi okuyun. Uygun cevabı her maddenin yanında ayrılan yere işaretleyin. Cevaplarınızı verirken aşağıdaki puanları kullanın.

1. Çok az veya hiç 2. Biraz 3. Ortalama 4. Oldukça 5. Çok fazla

1. İlgili
2. Sıkıntılı
3. Heyecanlı
4. Mutsuz
5. Güçlü
6. Suçlu
7. Ürkmüş
8. Düşmanca
9. Hevesli
10. Gururlu
11. Asabi
12. Uyanık
(Dikkati açık)
13. Utanmış
14. İlhamlı
(Yaratıcı düşüncelerle dolu)
15. Sinirli
16. Kararlı
17. Dikkatli
18. Tedirgin
19. Aktif
20. Korkmuş

APPENDIX G

Exploratory Questions

1. Size göre ÷lkedeki bir terör tehdidini hangi yönelimli parti ya da partiler daha iyi çözebilir?

(1 = Solcu, 7 = Sağcı)

2. Sizce ÷lkedeki çevre kirlilięi ile alakalı sorunları hangi yönelimli parti ya da partiler daha iyi çözebilir?

(1 = Solcu, 7 = Sağcı)

3. Sizce ÷lkedeki saęlık sistemi ile alakalı sorunları hangi yönelimli parti ya da partiler daha iyi çözebilir?

(1 = Solcu, 7 = Sağcı)

4. Sizce ÷lkedeki azınlıklarla alakalı sorunları hangi yönelimli parti ya da partiler daha iyi çözebilir?

APPENDIX H

Demographic Form

1. Yaşınız (Sayı ile)
2. Cinsiyetiniz?
Kadın – Erkek- Diğer
3. En son tamamladığınız eğitim seviyesi nedir?
İlkokul – Ortaokul- Lise- Ön lisans- Lisans- Yüksek Lisans- Doktora
4. Aşağıdaki merdivenin Türkiye'deki insanların ekonomik açıdan bulunduğu seviyeyi temsil ettiğini düşünün. Merdivenin tepesindekiler (10) her şeyin en iyisine (örneğin; en çok paraya, en iyi eğitime ve en saygın mesleklere) sahip insanlardır. Merdivenin en altındakiler (1) ise en kötü koşullara (örneğin; en az paraya, en az eğitime ve en az saygın mesleklere) sahip insanlardır. Merdivende daha Yüksek bir konuma sahip olmanız en tepedeki insanlara daha yakın olduğunuz, daha aşağıda olmanız ise en alttaki insanlara daha yakın olduğunuz anlamına gelmektedir. Kendi koşullarınızı düşünecek olursanız;
Bu merdivende kendinizi hangi konuma yerleştirirsiniz?



5. Kendinizi ne kadar dindar tanımlıyorsunuz?
(1 = Hiç dindar değil, 7 = Çok Dindar)
6. Kendinizi ne kadar solcu ya da sağcı tanımlıyorsunuz?
(1 = Solcu, 7 = Sağcı)

CURRICULUM VITAE

BENĐİ AKTAR

Education

- **Kadir Has University**

M.A in Psychological Sciences
2019 – 2022

- **Istanbul University**

B.A in Psychology
2014 –2019

Presentations

- Aktar B., Yılmaz O., (2021, November 26). *The effects of type of threat on political ideology*. National Symposium on Moral Studies in Social Psychology, Van, Turkey.
- Aktar B., Akgün A. (2019, May 4). *The relationship between militaristic attitudes and political conservatism: A Turkish sample*. The British Psychological Society's Annual Conference 2019, York, UK.
- Taşkale N., Aktar B. (2018, November 20). *Şiddet mağduru olan ve olmayan kadınların çocukluk dönemi şiddet yaşantıları ve öğrenim düzeyleri açısından incelenmesi (Analysis of violence victim and non-victim women in terms of their childhood violence experiences and level of education)*, 20th biennial meeting of the Turkish Psychology Society, Ankara, Turkey.

Experiences

- Paid research assistantship at Tübitak (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) 1001 - *How Can We Increase Compliance with Preventive*

Measures? The Impact of Personal and Social Benefit Messages. July 2020 –
December 2020

- Paid research assistantship at Tübitak (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) 1001 - *How to increase social cooperation under earthquake threat?*
2021 – 2022
- Teaching Assistant (TA) at Kadir Has University
Assisting undergraduate students throughout the curriculum and helping them with the class materials
2020 - 2022
- Graduate research assistant at Moral Intuitions Research Laboratory Aug
2019 – Present

Skills and Languages

- IBM SPSS
- Jamovi
- Microsoft Office
- Python (Intermediate)
- R Programming (Beginner)
- Adobe Photoshop
- Turkish (Native)
- English (C1)