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At a Loss for Words: Capturing the Duality of Political Correctness (PC)

Master's thesis

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Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.

2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.

3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague, 3rd of January, 2024,

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Reference

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1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of political correctness (PC), originally meant to designate loyalty to the political party line (Hughes, 2010; Stade, 2017), has, throughout the second half of the 20th century, solidified into a decisively Western social movement whose declared purpose is the promotion of *norms* of social justice through the protection of historically disadvantaged groups of people. PC seeks to achieve its goals almost exclusively by advocating for *behaviors* that are often perceived as restrictions on specific types of personal freedom, such as freedom of speech. In a "civilization" that regards individualism as one of its primary cornerstones, PC can thus be both a source of change and conflict.

As such, in the international arena, PC is a coin with two sides. On one side is its prescriptive nature, where the goal of exuding norms of respect and inclusion guides actors' behaviors. Here, PC can serve as a tool for bridging cultural divides and fostering mutual understanding and cooperation. On the other side, however, lies its potential to cause friction over competing values and, in its extreme form, act as a mechanism for suppression, censorship, and manipulation. It is within these tensions that the current debate about PC is positioned.

Of late, this debate has not only been an element of political partisanship divides but has acted as a persistent object of reference in the context of several political events in the West, such as the 2016 US presidential elections, Brexit, and the 2015 European migrant crisis. As such, PC is a topic meriting academic attention. Studies in psychology and sociology already attest to the theoretical and empirical relevance of this phenomenon. Moreover, PC continues to be a pervading subject among citizens – sparking online debates in the form of survey pools, comment threads of social media networks and forums, and even memes.

Yet one common characteristic of all these deliberations is the persisting absence of an established definition of PC. Its different interpretations reflect too often the opposing sides of a debate concentrated around groups of people with different ideas about the role and content of norms in shaping political debates, strategies, and actors' actions. Consequently, conceptualizations of PC span from enthusiastic endorsements of its aims and principles to pejorative critiques questioning its premises, significance, and impact, with a middle ground remaining largely elusive.

In this sense, the first reason PC has been chosen as the topic of the present thesis is to contribute to the understanding of this complex concept and explore how it can be approached at the empirical level. This will be attempted by providing 1.) an overview of PC's historical development, 2.) a review of the existing literature theorizing and operationalizing the concept, 3.) a conceptualization based on this literature, and 4.) a measurement tool of PC at the individual level.

More specifically, the present thesis will explore PC as a dual concept of adherence to norms through the prescription of designated behaviors meant to be their expression. It will be argued that PC behaviors are not necessarily an expression of PC norms, nor does the endorsement of PC norms guarantee the exhibition of PC behaviors. This claim will be tested empirically by developing measurement tools of the two (i.e., 1. normative and 2. behavioral) dimensions of PC and measuring the *gap* between them.

Therefore, I argue that the two dimensions do not correlate perfectly and that this gap is an important phenomenon to explore, not only because it enables an evaluation of the effectiveness of behavioral expressions of PC, such as language guidelines and policies, but also because it highlights a disconnect between beliefs, rhetoric, and behaviors and how this disconnect can exacerbate political polarization on social and political issues.

Moreover, developing a definition and a measurement of this phenomenon is a valid

quest in political science and IR, which has so far been somewhat overlooked. The present research wishes to fill some of that gap. Indeed, the practical impacts of PC in these realms can be profound and multifaceted. PC influences the language employed by individuals, organizations, and states in addressing critical issues and each other. It can shape political debates and human rights, conflict, and global governance narratives. At the same time, it raises questions about the significance of and the relationships between values, identities, communication, reputation, and power.

These impacts relate to existing IR work on the importance of norms in influencing global governance structures (e.g., Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001), the role of interaction in reflecting and reconstituting identities (e.g., Wendt, 1999), the role of (religious and cultural) identities as sources of conflict (e.g., Huntington, 1997), the idea of soft power as a marker of states' reputation and influence (e.g., Nye, 1990), the concept of "knowledge" as an expression of power and the importance of language in its affirmation (e.g., Foucault[1], 1980), and similar ideas of socially constructed categories that perpetuate inequality in the form of critiques of ethnocentrism (e.g., Said, 1979) or gender (e.g., Butler, 1990; Enloe, 2000).

PC's impacts and dilemmas raised above call for further inquiry into this phenomenon and its interaction with other variables. As such, the focus of the thesis will also be on exploring potential influences on the hypothesized gap between the normative bases of PC and its behavioral manifestations.

1.1 Research Focus & Questions

In view of the above, the present research has three main aims. The first is to provide

[1] Although Foucault is not an IR scholar, his theoretical contributions have been very influential in the field.

an overview of the historical development of PC.

The second aim is to develop a definition and a measurement tool of PC.

An extensive part of the scarce empirical research on PC has focused on its relationships with other phenomena, such as personality traits (Dickson, 2017), prejudice (Lalonde et al., 2000; Levin, 2003), political orientation and ideology (Dickson, 2017; Moss & O'Connor, 2020; Strauts & Blanton, 2015), self-censorship (Ford, 2017), and adherence to specific policies, such as the COVID-19 guidelines (Mackey et al., 2023). In the process, researchers either created their conceptualization of PC or ignored the practice altogether, opting for measuring individual attitudes toward it. This has resulted in diverse and often incompatible definitions of the concept and confusion for the average reader trying to navigate through them.

As a response, the thesis will develop and empirically test at the individual level two measures of PC to capture its dual nature. In other words, it will be hypothesized that PC has two distinct dimensions. The measures will be based on a thorough review of the existing literature on PC and the debate about it, with the underlying logic being that PC, by the nature of being a social phenomenon based on specific norms and values, is a concept whose meaning is constructed socially.

The third aim of the thesis is to examine the correlation between the two dimensions of PC and their relationship to three other variables – specifically those of 1.) social desirability, i.e., tendency to present oneself in a positive light (Holden & Passey, 2009), 2.) psychological reactance, i.e., emotional response to perceived restrictions of personal freedom (Brehm, 1966), and 3.) political orientation. These variables have been recognized in theoretical and empirical literature as exerting an influence on attitudes toward PC and its behavioral expressions, such as the use of PC language. As such, the present research will aim to explore their correlations with PC's two dimensions and the extent of their impact on

the gap. This will be done by juxtaposing the two PC measurement tools with established measures of social desirability, psychological reactance, and a new measurement tool for political orientation.

Through a multidisciplinary lens that draws upon psychology, sociology, linguistics, and philosophy, the thesis will thus aim to contribute to the conceptual clarification of PC by exploring the interplay between its two dimensions. For this purpose, it is posing the following questions:

1. What is the correlation between the two dimensions of PC – what is the gap?

2. How do social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation influence this gap?

1.2 Thesis Outline

The remaining chapters will be structured as follows.

To introduce the topic, Chapter II will first examine the historical context of PC, underscoring its origins and evolution over time. This examination will be complemented with a review of the current debate on the issue. The chapter will conclude by presenting an overview of PC conceptualizations and the existing PC measures while also addressing the hypothesized influence of variables of social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation on PC.

The third chapter will delve into the analysis of the critical aspects of PC. Firstly, the conceptualization of the concept and the theoretical framework used will be presented. The analysis will subsequently turn to PC's two dimensions. The first, behavioral dimension will be introduced by detailing PC's external manifestations in areas of social life. The second,

normative dimension will be presented as an overview of PC's theoretical foundations, focusing on norms and values of social justice and human rights. Moreover, a division of PC "knowledge" will be made based on the shared ideas that enable different interpretations of this phenomenon and, thus, the gap. This will be followed by an introduction of the "collective identity" hypothesis that aims to offer a theoretical solution to the gap. In conclusion of this analysis, the hypotheses of the thesis will be presented.

Chapter IV will introduce the methodological framework of the thesis. It will outline the research design, specify data collection methods and analytical techniques used in the analysis, and explain how all the variables are operationalized.

Chapter V will outline the results of the studies, followed by a discussion of their nature and relevance.

Finally, the thesis will conclude with a discussion of the findings, their implications and limitations, and possible directions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 PC Through Time: From Political Partisanship to Social Change

The purpose of this section is to offer an overview of the historical development of PC and the debate about it to provide the context within which the definition and the theoretical framework of the present research are situated.

2.1.1 Introduction

Throughout history, there have been many attempts to regulate language and behavior in a manner that aligned with certain norms (for recent examples, see Mchangama, 2022 for a depiction of censorship in US journalism; see Zimmerman & Finlay, 2014 for a discussion on speech legislation in the Weimar Republic). The promotion of a particular ideology, or "truth," was the common denominator of many governments, and various societies had their forms of etiquette that reflected the social and moral values of their time. These historical antecedents provide an introductory perspective to the evolution of the phenomenon of PC and suggest that it is neither a new nor a unique phenomenon.

There is general agreement (Hughes, 2010; Oxford English Dictionary, 2023; Stade, 2017) that the first written mention of the term "political correctness" is from a statement of Justice James Wilson in a US Supreme Court case from 1793:

> The states, rather than the people, for whose sake the states exist, are frequently the objects which attract and arrest our principal attention... Sentiments and expressions of this inaccurate kind prevail in our common, even in our convivial, language... 'The United States,' instead of the 'People of the United States,' is the toast given. This is not *politically correct* [emphasis added] (Chisholm v. Georgia, 1793, p. 462).

According to Hughes, the term is used here in a literal rather than an ideological (i.e., modern) sense, with the intended meaning of "politically accurate" (2010. p. 62).[2] It can be argued, however, that, despite not being grounded on the same principles as it is today, its sense *is,* in fact, ideological in that it is used to express a normative idea of a government founded on the sovereignty of the people rather than on the individual state – an idea that promotes specific values and principles. In line with this train of thought, a claim can also be

[2] Oxford English Dictionary somewhat vaguely defines "politically correct" as originally meaning "appropriate to the prevailing political or social circumstances" (2023c).

put forward (and in fact, is by some – e.g., see Magnani, 2016; Mattingly et al., 2018) by which PC is simply an expression of a particular ideology, or a set of ideologies. These ideologies have a joint concern for principles such as social justice, diversity, and inclusivity.

2.1.2 Soviet Beginnings

Despite appearing in the 18th century, the term "politically correct" remained largely dormant for the next two hundred years (Google, n.d.; Oxford English Dictionary, 2023; Stade, 2017). It was not until the birth of the Communist doctrine that it started to develop as an independent concept (Hughes, 2010).

Although part of the literature attributes the modern origins of political correctness to Mao Zedong (e.g., Hughes, 2010), other scholars point to Vladimir Lenin (Ellis, 2002).

Lenin and his successors aimed at creating their own brand of a "revolutionary theory" (Lenin, 1973, p. 12). This theory was effectively to be based on principles of ideological orthodoxy. Lenin wrote extensively about the "correctness" of theoretical, ideological and political (Ellis, 2002, p. 410) premises of the Marxist doctrine. As the end goal of his revolutionary theory was to overthrow the existing economic and political order, ensuring "correctness" in all fields was paramount to its success. In other words, for the members of the Marxist-Leninist movement, there became a "politically correct" answer to everything (ibid, p. 3).

The purpose of these politically correct answers was to form a "correct truth" that would aid the "mission of the revolutionary transformation of the nature of social relations" (Beglov, 1984, p. 362, as cited in Ellis, 2002, p. 412). To explain what this "truth" entailed, Ellis points to the semantic distinction in the Russian language between *istina* and *pravda*:

> [*Istina*] denotes the correspondence between the notion and the objective reality.

> *Pravda* is a unique and specifically Russian concept: it means the highest concept of truth, a truth elevated to the rank of an idea... A Russian who 'stands for *pravda'* or who 'struggles for *pravda,'* does not stand or struggle for the sum of all kinds of truth, big and small, but for the truth which needs to be attained, truth in action, the ideal of conduct, the correspondence between acts and the demands of ethics. Perhaps in English one would have to say 'the right truth' or 'knowledge plus righteousness', but this splits the concept – and in the thirties this split created an abyss. In the rooms of the NKVD [Soviet secret police] and at Party meetings, *istina* was nothing – it was relative and it could easily be changed: only *pravda* was absolute. (Berger, 1971, pp. 52-53, as cited in ibid, p. 419).

By claiming *pravda*, i.e., the "correct" truth to define what is in accordance with the official party line (*generalnaya liniya partii*) (Stade, 2017, p. 110), the Communist Party was able to act as the arbitrator of meaning, effectively creating a "wooden language" made up of "formulas and empty slogans, whose purpose was to prevent people from thinking outside the boundaries of collective thought" (Pellicani, 2003, p. 235). Media forms, such as newspapers, cinema, radio, and posters, became propaganda tools aiding the revolutionary mission. Referring to political posters specifically,

> to be a Soviet citizen meant not simply to commit to the idea but also to radically change one's life. The socially progressive ways of thinking did not come from above, but instead, through a fundamental lifestyle reform, by thinking and acting in the interest of the collective. The posters worked to transform the beholder into a new man, guiding *politically correct behavior* [emphasis added] (Constructing Revolution, n.d., p. 10).

Indeed, George Orwell, in observing how easily language can deteriorate thought, took his inspiration precisely from Soviet propaganda (Fengyuan, 2004; Hughes, 2010).

Similar criticisms related to the "corruption" of free thought (with parallels to Orwell's "Newspeak" and "thought police") are often raised in debates about PC today (Bush, 1991; Hughes, 2010; Loury, 1996).

2.1.3 Mao's Logocracy[3]

After Lenin's rise to power, it did not take long for the affiliated Communist parties around the world to follow suit and adopt the Soviet vocabulary of "correctness" (Stade, 2017, p. 110) in their programs, not least in Communist China, whose leader Mao perfected the practice of linguistic engineering (Fengyuan, 2004, p. 2).

The basic premise of linguistic engineering, which will be discussed in Chapter III in the context of PC's framing of language as action, is that linguistic change will lead to the internalization of particular definitions and values. These definitions and values will, according to the Marxist logic of dialectical materialism, gradually formulate the "correct" truth:

> In all the practical work of our Party, all correct leadership is necessarily "from the masses, to the masses". This means: take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action. Then once again concentrate ideas from the masses and once again go to the masses so that the ideas are persevered in and carried through. And so on, over and over again in an endless

[3] *Logocracy* – a community or system of government in which words are the ruling powers. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2023a)

spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge (Mao, 1965, p. 119).

The differences between the Soviet and Mao's "correct" truth and ways of its implementation will not be discussed here in detail. However, there are two significant milestones in the development of PC from this period.

Firstly, after the Sino-Soviet split in the late 1950s, China, in competing for global ideological supremacy with the Soviet Union, financed translations, printing, and distribution of Mao's *Little Red Book* around the world (ibid), distributing more than 800,000 copies to 117 countries in the time span of 7 months (Xu, 2014, p. 85, as cited in Stade, 2017, p. 111). It is widely accepted that, despite not being mentioned explicitly in any of the texts, this book is the progenitor of the phrase "politically correct" (Allen, 1995; Perry, 1992; as cited in Hughes, 2010) because of the influence it would later have on anti-establishment movements around the West, primarily in America.

Secondly, it was also in this period that the original Marxist depiction of a class conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was replaced by Maoism with a political undertone of class conflict between the Left and the Right (Konye, 2016, p. 64), in parallel to how the issue of political correctness is most often presented today (e.g., Fairclough, 2003; Jones, 1994; Norris & Inglehart, 2019).

Indeed, after the failure of The Great Leap Forward plan weakened Mao's authority, he decided to harden his stance against anti-revolutionary expressions in the Communist party. This atmosphere marked the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, whose purpose was not only to purge the Party from any threats to Mao's rule but to complete the process of transforming China into a modern socialist society by overthrowing old behaviors and ideas:

Currently our objective is to struggle against and crush those people in authority who are taking the capitalist road, to criticize and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois

> academic "authorities" and the ideology of the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes and to transform education, literature and art, and all other parts of the superstructure that do not correspond to the socialist economic base, so as to facilitate the consolidation and development of the socialist system (Central Committee of the Cultural Revolution Group, 1966, as cited in Konye, 2016, p. 65).

In this process, physical violence was initially to make way for "verbal struggle" (*wendou*) (Konye, 2016, p. 65) in achieving political and social change. Consequently, campaigns focused heavily on language and rhetoric and consisted of posters and slogans aimed at facilitating the internalization of Mao's "correct" truth. A salient example was the *dazibao* ("big character poster") campaigns – public expressions of criticism of government officials or policies by citizens (Kluver, 2013). To citizens, the posters were effectively a means of political communication (ibid), albeit "one certainly had to be astute to political correctness" (Ludden, 2018, p. 124). To the Chinese Communist Party, they were, similarly to the Soviets, an opportunity to spread propaganda and suppress anti-revolutionary sentiment under the guise of the pursuit of the "correct truth": posters exposing anti-revolutionary sentiment by political officials and citizens would get circulated in the press, and the practice of this form of "doxxing" would later escalate into the infamous "struggle sessions" (Fisher, 2013), where "enemies" of the regime would be publicly exposed and abused to inspire "ideological fervor" (ibid) and to "purge" the accused from any anti-revolutionary thoughts. The violent pursuit of ideological "correctness" in the cultural revolution led to an estimated 500,000 – 2,000,000 deaths (Britannica, n.d.).

Based on the above, it is hard to believe that some scholars cite Mao as having played a key role in popularizing the term "political correctness" to the West (Hughes, 2010; Stade, 2017).

2.1.4 1960s: US Social Movements

During Mao's time, the term "politically correct" was already present in the English language[4]. In fact, it started appearing in newspaper articles and political party documents more regularly in the first half of the 20th century, most likely as a result of Soviet influence (Hughes, 2010; Stade, 2017). At that time, its use was mostly limited to describing adherence to the official party line. One of the early examples of such use is from a 1934 issue of *The New York Times* that reported about Nazi Germany granting journalistic permits "only to pure 'Aryans' whose opinions are politically correct" (p. 4).

In the aftermath of World War II, the term continued to be used in a similar way, although it was still largely restricted to Communists and Socialists (Stade, 2017) due to sectarianism within their parties and their general lack of power in the US political scene.[5] The 1960s, however, marked a new phase in the development of PC. It was then that the newly forming American New Left assumed the term.

There is no general agreement on whether PC was immediately used in a context that is mocking totalitarian and radical ideologies (e.g., Hughes, 2010; Jones, 2001, as cited in Ellis, 2002; Musto, 2022) or not (e.g., Stade, 2017). Supporting the former hypothesis is a quote from the 1955 memoir of the effects of Communism by Czeslaw Milosz:

> A politically correct theme would not have saved him from the critics' attack... because he described the concentration camp as he personally had seen it, not as one was supposed to see it [original italics] (1955, p. 120, as cited in Hughes, 2010, p. 63).

On the other hand, contributing to the claim that PC was, at least periodically, taken

[4] The literature agrees that the modern version of PC originated in the United States. As such, existing research exploring the history of the use of the term focuses almost exclusively on this country, with rare exceptions (e.g., Hughes provides a historical account of its use in the United Kingdom).

[5] By the 1950s, communism was essentially outlawed by the US government using a variety of legislation, including the Smith Act (1940), the McCarran Act (1950), and the Communist Control Act (1954) (Hughes, 2010, p. 39).

seriously is the fact that, at the time, many US black nationalists considered themselves a part of the global anti-imperialist struggle (Williams, 1967, p. 4, as cited in ibid). Mao recognized this, too:

> I wish to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Chinese people, to express our resolute support for the American Negroes in their struggle against racial discrimination and for freedom and equal rights... I call upon the workers, peasants, revolutionary intellectuals, enlightened elements of the bourgeoisie, and other enlightened personages of all colors in the world, white, black, yellow, brown, etc., to unite to oppose the racial discrimination practiced by US imperialism and to support the American Negroes in their struggle against racial discrimination. In the final analysis, a national struggle is a question of class struggle (Mao, 1963).

Note: People of the Whole World Unite and Defeat the American Aggressors and All Their Running Dogs, 1969 Chinese School/ © The Chambers Gallery, London (source: Bridgeman Images, 1969)

Furthermore, in the same decade, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, the founders of the Black Panther Party (BPP), made *The Little Red Book* a common accessory among the black

community in America (Stade, 2017). As such, the terms “politically correct” and “political correctness” likely spread primarily to and through black Maoism (Hughes, 2010; Stade, 2017) and began to be represented in black and feminist circles in their activism.

Another argument against the claim that the term was always used in a deprecatory sense can be found in an essay by author and social activist Toni Cade, in claiming that “racism and chauvinism are anti-people. And a man cannot be *politically correct* [emphasis added] and a chauvinist too.” (Bambara, 1970, p. 107). This quote is usually cited as the first “modern” use of the term (Oxford English Dictionary, 2023; Perry, 1992, as cited in Hughes, 2010; Stade, 2017).

Nevertheless, even those like Stade, who claim that “politically correct” was initially used in a literal, sincere way, agree that this very sincerity enabled a quick “ironic inversion of its meaning” (Stade, 2017, p. 112). Literal, ironic, and self-ironic uses quickly started to alternate. The term was used with irony by leftists to describe their fellows who uncritically accepted dogmatic party lines (Feldstein, 1994, p. 4, as cited in Dvořák, 2013, p. 13) or were exuding self-righteous behaviors (Perry, as cited in Weigel, 2016). Feminists, on the other hand, used it to criticize their “inability to live up to their ideals” (Feldstein, 1994, p. 6, as cited in Dvořák, 2013, p. 13). Hughes explains this shift to irony as being a consequence of PC – a concept born in a totalitarian doctrine – entering a democratic political system (2010, p. 64), where it was destined to become “an empty formula of conformity open to subversion” (ibid).

Simultaneously, in its evolution within a democratic political system at a time of growing awareness of the need for inclusivity and tolerance in a diverse society, PC started to intertwine with the concept of multiculturalism, so much so that it would sometimes become equated with it (Hughes, 2010, pp. 70-71). The reason for this was that the first groups to adopt the term were those seeking to challenge the established power structure and norms

relating to such concepts as race. Consequently, PC, whether used literally or ironically, became an expressive tool in the activism of various US social movements of the 1960s, such as the civil rights movement, feminist movement, and LGBT movement. The confluence of PC and multiculturalism formed a vision of a more egalitarian, inclusive, and diverse society. Presumably, this is also when PC started to be associated with the idea of social justice, which would become one of its primary declared causes and theoretical underpinnings.

Step by step, activism united around the joint goal of rectifying injustices caused by the unfair distribution of opportunities and resources (Parvin, 2018, p. 23) started to resonate across various social and political circles – causing cultural and legislative changes (Stade, 2017, p. 112), such as the abolishment of racial segregation and the introduction of female contraception. PC, although still in its beginnings, was slowly making a name for itself in the American cultural and political landscape.

2.1.5 1970s – 1980s: US University Reforms

Even with the above in mind, clearly outlining the "PC advocates" is an arduous task as the PC movement is not derivable from one definable source but a variety (Hughes, 2010, p. 7). Likewise, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when a specific type of activism became known as "PC activism." However, most agree that the first debates about PC developed primarily around university campuses (D'Souza, 1991; Geser, 2010; Hughes, 2010; Loury, 1996).

As a result of social advocacy in the previous decades, the number of women and members of minority groups in colleges and universities increased significantly in the 1970s and 1980s (Aichinger, 2023). The increasing diversity brought about demands for change concentrated around the university curriculum, communication, and the recruiting processes.

Naturally, these demands were met with immediate – and primarily verbal – resistance (Stade, 2017, p. 113). As a result, language, already a relevant topic among feminists in the previous decade, soon became a central point in the debate between the "politically correct" and "politically incorrect" university factions (ibid). The former faction's fight to replace certain words under the pretext of giving dignity and representation to previously marginalized groups of people spread throughout the academia and, by the late 1980s, culminated in speech codes, i.e., normative acts of language control (Nekhaienko, 2021, p. 81), in universities across the United States (Aichinger, 2023; D'Souza, 1991; Stade, 2017). In 1990, 75 colleges and universities (Uelmen, 1990) had codes "prohibiting racially offensive speech" (McFadden, 1991, p. 32). By 1991, this number had increased to over 300 (Uelmen, 1990).

The implementation of such codes against racially offensive speech can be seen as an attempt to control the narrative within academic institutions via language. These efforts are a testament to the perception of the power of language in constructing knowledge, as echoed in poststructuralist (e.g., Campbell, 1994) and constructivist perspectives (e.g., Onuf, 2002; Wendt, 1999).

Moreover, the focus on language can also be viewed as a reflection of broader developments of norms and power structures in the post-WW2 West, particularly in America. Norris and Inglehart, for example, analyze these developments within the context of a cultural shift toward post-material values such as gender equality, civil rights, environmental protection, and freedom of speech (2019). The increasing salience of these values has had significant implications for politics and society, affecting public debates, voting patterns, and political party programs.

2.1.6 1980s – 1990s: Decades of "Backlash"

Simultaneously with these developments, the 1980s marked the beginning of an uprising against the PC movement and, to a certain extent, social-democratic reforms in general (Stade, 2017).

The election of Margaret Thatcher in the UK and Ronald Reagan in the US, coupled with the activism of right-wing think tanks (Fish, 1994; Stade, 2017), largely dominated the political discourse of the time. Neo-liberal political agenda redirected the focus from calls for social justice toward free-market policies and, more generally, ultimate individual freedom. Literature criticizing the PC movement started to consume the public debate. Allan Bloom, professor of philosophy and political science, was among the first to lament the:

> "value relativism," with its compulsive "openness" to every opinion and lack of intellectual conviction on any, as the inheritance of the popularization and vulgarization of German philosophical and sociological notions in American universities during the 1920s and 1930s (Kennedy, 1987).

Moral relativism – the view that all beliefs, practices, and moral judgments are relative to a particular (usually cultural) context and equally valid, with the underlying normative argument of tolerance (Westacott, n.d.) – suddenly emerged as one of PC's theoretical premises in the debate. In his book, Bloom argued that these ideas are incompatible with the democratic system (ibid) and concluded that students' commitment to social justice instead of "objective truths" (Lawton, 2021) acts as an obstructor of free speech and causes the corruption of education (ibid). Despite never naming "political correctness" (ibid), Bloom's book *The Closing of the American Mind* has been credited as one of the first critiques of the growing "PC-climate" in American colleges and universities.

It was only a couple of years later that Dinesh D'Souza, a right-wing political commentator and a former policy analyst for the Reagan administration (Depalma, 1991),

released a book considered the cornerstone of the PC debate in the 1990s. In *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus*, D'Souza's take on PC is one with an emphasis on and search for a "moral capital of victimhood" (D'Souza, 1991, p. 242, as cited in Goldner, 1992, p. 1291). According to this perspective, a "victim's revolution" (D'Souza, 1991, p. 14) led by the promotion of values of multiculturalism, affirmative action policies, and a new curriculum was infecting post-secondary education institutions and demoting them from aspirants of equal opportunity to guarantors of equal results (Goldner, 1992, p. 1291). Fears started to grow about the radicality of PC activism in academia, likening it to totalitarian regimes where no proof of disagreement remains unpunished:

> In a certain prestigious university in the United States two male faculty members told me they hated PC but did not dare say so, if they wanted to keep their jobs. They took me into the park to say it, where we could not be over- heard, as used to happen in the communist countries. Militant feminists were in charge (Lessing, 2009, p. 92).

Critics like Bloom and D'Souza blamed the dreadful situation on American campuses on "the assorted ideologies of the late 1960s: the civil rights movement, the protest movement against US involvement in Vietnam, and the burgeoning causes of feminism and gay rights" (D'Souza, 1991, p. 17; Goldner, 1992, p. 1292). In response, scholars such as Stanley Fish decried the backlash against PC, suggesting that "there is no such thing as free speech" (1994) and that the anti-PC sentiment is a strategy used to fight against inevitable social change (ibid) in the name of protection of traditional values.

It was in the wake of this backlash that PC was "hijacked" by the American political right to describe those with "radical" leftist views (Hughes, 2010). In other words, the PC debate began to constellate around "left" and "right" perspectives. The controversy culminated with President Bush's speech at the University of Michigan:

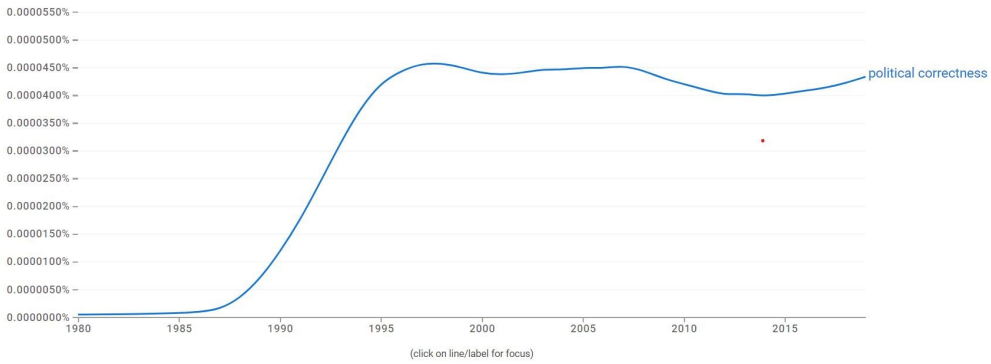
> The notion of political correctness has ignited controversy across the land. And

> although the movement arises from the laudable desire to sweep away the debris of racism and sexism and hatred, it replaces old prejudice with new ones. It declares certain topics off-limits, certain expression off-limits, even certain gestures off-limits. What began as a crusade for civility has soured into a cause of conflict and even censorship. Disputants treat sheer force – getting their foes punished or expelled, for instance – as a substitute for the power of ideas. Throughout history, attempts to micromanage casual conversation have only incited distrust. They have invited people to look for an insult in every word, gesture, action. And in their own Orwellian way, crusades that demand correct behavior crush diversity in the name of diversity. (1991)

Although Bush's speech marked the moment PC officially entered the mainstream political arena, the academic and political debate subsided toward the approach of the new millennium (Stade, 2017), as concerns about PC were temporarily replaced by arguments about terrorism (Weigel, 2016). However, by then, PC had already become embedded within English vocabulary (Stade, 2017).

2.1.7 2000s – Present: Current Controversy

It is precisely this enduring presence in everyday vocabulary that enabled a renewed interest in PC in the following decades. The revival of the controversy was sustained by the continuance of the "silent revolution" (Norris & Inglehart, 2019), where the shift towards more socially liberal values on issues such as gender, sexuality, culture, religion, and national identity was accompanied by a cultural and political backlash fueled by populist and authoritarian political parties (ibid). Events such as the 2016 US presidential election, the European migrant crisis, and Brexit are examples of such developments.



Note: Frequency of *political correctness* (source: Google Books Ngram Viewer)

New terms associated with PC, such as "woke," "cancel culture," "trigger warning," "safe space," "snowflake," "social justice warrior," and "microaggression," were coined and quickly became widely used, mostly in everyday language to label individuals whose behavior is "characterized by oversensitivity, censorship, and militancy" (Hughes, 2010, p. 284).

As for the term "PC," it solidified itself as a snide attribute, never as a self-designation, of a liberal leftist ideology aided by groups and movements such as feminists, LGBTQ+, Black Lives Matter, #Metoo, and the Peoples Climate Movement, that is said to have failed to address the everyday concerns of people. A notorious example comes from President Trump, who made PC one of the leitmotifs of his 2016 presidential campaign:

> I think the big problem this country has is being politically correct. I've been challenged by so many people, and I don't frankly have time for total political correctness. And to be honest with you, this country doesn't have time either. This country is in big trouble. We don't win anymore. (2015)

The cacophony of conceptualizations of PC and their positioning along the lines of the Left vs. Right political divide is demonstrated by a direct response from President Obama:

> I suspect the president-elect's definition of political correctness would be different

> than mine... If what's meant by political correctness is that there is some broad disapproval that's expressed when somebody uses a racial epithet, or somebody makes a derogatory comment about women, or about the LGBT community, and people say, "Hey, you shouldn't do that. That's wrong, that's cruel, that's hurtful. Here's the history of that word." And when you use words like that, you're reinforcing people feeling like they're outsiders, and less than other Americans. (ABC NEWS, 2016)

Obama's conceptualization hints at PC's (positive) role in the (re)constitution of American national identity. At the opposite side of this spectrum are those, primarily conservatives and the alt-right represented by politicians like Trump, who identify PC as the ruling ideology of an "orchestrated plan" (Beirich and Hicks, 2009, p. 118, as cited in Mirrlees, 2018, p. 49) meant to undermine traditional, "true" Western values (ibid). This plan, often referred to as "Cultural Marxism," is said to span as far as the 1960s and to have developed from the ideologies and arguments of neo-Marxism and the Frankfurt School (Esposito, 2018; Konye, 2016; Musto, 2022).

Indeed, Cultural Marxism shares with PC a concern with culture and the norms and values that constitute it. Likewise, members of the Frankfurt School, akin to PC, criticized the established power structures and advocated for social change. In addition, some, like Herbert Marcuse and Jürgen Habermas, emphasized the importance of communication (and limits thereof), albeit with different theoretical underpinnings. However, the absence of the term "political correctness" in their writings, as well as the fact that the discourse about Cultural Marxism is not produced by scholars with specialized knowledge about Marxism but by far-right thinkers with no record of accomplishment or experience in this area (Mirrlees, 2018, p. 53), draw skepticism to the legitimacy of the theory of Cultural Marxism and brand it as a conspiracy within academic circles. Even so, the idea of PC as a tool in the subversion of Western society has gained significant traction in US conservative circles over the last

thirty years (ibid, p. 49), shaping the current political debate about this phenomenon.

Simultaneously, Trumpism and the theory of Cultural Marxism have given a new boost to a myriad of right-wing political actors across the European scene, from Nigel Farage and the Alternative for Germany (AfD) to Marine Le Pen and Giorgia Meloni.

The former leader of the Brexit Party, Farage, has made PC a common accessory to his political statements, boldly "cracking its code:" "The Marxist agenda is to make us hate our country, hate our history, be divided between all of us – they're doing quite a good job" (GB News, 2021) and "are winning the culture wars" (Farage, 2022). In 2021, he joined the ensemble of the British show *The Political Correction,* which aimed to take on cancel culture (The Northern Echo, 2021).

Meanwhile, the rise of conservatism in Italy has been accompanied by a similar backlash against multiculturalism and PC. In her autobiography, the incumbent Prime Minister Meloni suggests that:

> You see, political correctness is a shock-wave, a cancel culture that tries to upset and remove every single beautiful, honourable and human thing that our civilization has developed. [...] It is a nihilistic wind of unprecedented ugliness that tries to homogenize everything in the name of One World. In short, political correctness – the Gospel that a stateless and rootless elite wants to impose – is the greatest threat to the founding value of identities. (2021, p. 198)

PC has been featured in a comparable tone in political deliberations of the German AfD, even making its way into the Party's manifesto (AfD, n.d.; Ciechanowicz, 2016). Shortly after running for the 2016 national election, AfD's co-leader Alice Weidel stated that "as democrats and patriots, we will not keep quiet. 'Political correctness' belongs to the scrap heap of history" (Peters, n.d.). Criticism of PC in the Party's manifesto was positioned alongside the problems of the German public, from which PC is supposedly a deliberate

distraction (AfD, n.d.; Ciechanowicz, 2016).

Note: Illustration by Joy Lau (source: Szilágyi, 2017)

In the above discourses, PC is thus reduced to an elite concern irrelevant to objective social and political dynamics (Szilágyi, 2017). The accusation made is that those in power have failed to address the "real" problems of society, putting PC above everything else. Consequently, political figures attacking PC are presented as siding with the "regular" people and labeled as "honest" and "brave" while doing so (ibid).

In this sense, when employed in a political setting, the "PC" label largely serves as a tool to describe the divide between the ruling "elites" and the "ordinary people" (Norris & Inglehart, 2019; Szilágyi, 2017; Weigel, 2016). It is now a recurring element of the critique of a radical leftist ideology of these elites that "have put political correctness above common sense, above your safety, and above all else" (Trump, 2017).

Importantly, the alienation of the "ordinary people" is a reflection of a "broader cultural shift that has brought greater emphasis on environmental protection, peace movements, sexual liberalization, democracy and human rights, gender equality,

cosmopolitanism, and respect for the rights of homosexuals, immigrants, handicapped people, and ethnic/racial minorities" (Norris & Inglehart, 2019, p. 33), that are perceived by some as threatening "Western lifestyles, security, and Christian traditions" (ibid, p. 123). These changes are largely a result of the continuous general increase of economic prosperity that has transformed the traditional left-right divide from one of material to one of post-material concerns such as PC. The recent rise of right-wing populism in Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, the UK, and the US are examples of this shift, as is the increasing Euroskepticism by political figures like Marine Le Pen, Geert Wilders, and Matteo Salvini, who are ready to expose "Brussels' politically correct élite" (Mucci, 2016; Szilágyi, 2017).

Note: Tweet by Argentinian president Milei referencing Cultural Marxism (source: Fahsbender, 2022)

Consequently, the current backlash against PC is a political backlash against globalism, multiculturalism, international institutions, and, crucially, perceived attacks on "traditional" values and identities (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). The following statement by President Trump surprisingly sums up a considerable part of this debate:

> For years the American people have worried about letting radical Islam spread within our shores. But the elites, who only want to raise more money for global corporations,

ignore the concerns of the American voters. Very simple. (Trump, 2017)

As simple as that, the PC movement has transformed from a tool of US domestic politics used for tackling underlying social and economic inequalities between races, sexes, and ethnic minorities into a political argument used to frame ideologically-laden debates in policy areas relating to immigration, human rights and international cooperation, and causing polarizing effects along these ideological lines. Importantly, the constitution of the "Other" here differs from Said's conceptualization in that it is now located within the Western context itself, in which Western (colonial) constituents perceive themselves as marginalized and under threat by multiculturalism and globalism championed by social liberal values. In this sense, Trump's lamentations of PC appeal

> to a 'golden past' when American society was more homogeneous, US leadership of the Western alliance was unrivalled, threats of terrorism pre-9/11 existed only in distant lands, and sex roles for women and men reflected traditional power relationships. The Us-versus-Them frame is used to stir up fears that provide a support base almost impervious to criticisms of Trump's actual policy performance (Norris & Inglehart, 2019, p. 52).

Although these lamentations happen mostly within national societies (and the focus here is particularly on the US society, where the PC debate is the most prominent), they can be used by international actors to capitalize on internal divisions of their competitors or contest the principles of global governance. As such, PC now plays a role in the international arena, symbolizing a rejection of a vision of cooperation based on multilateral diplomacy (Norris & Inglehart, 2019) and security communities (Deutsch, 1958). Given this broader impact, PC becomes a focal point in the foreign policy of state leaders who employ the term to support their own ideological narratives.

Another serious challenge to Russia's identity is linked to events taking place in the

> world. Here there are both foreign policy and moral aspects. We can see how many of the Euro-Atlantic countries are actually rejecting their roots, including the Christian values that constitute the basis of Western civilization. They are denying moral principles and all traditional identities: national, cultural, religious and even sexual. They are implementing policies that equate large families with same-sex partnerships, belief in God with the belief in Satan. The excesses of political correctness have reached the point where people are seriously talking about registering political parties whose aim is to promote paedophilia (Putin, 2013).

This type of language, where concern for PC is labeled as excessive, even abnormal, behavior (Szilágyi, 2017), can be used by state leaders to justify actions across domestic and foreign policy domains. It enables Trump, while commenting on his proposal to ban Muslims from the US, to confidently state, "not politically correct, but I don't care" (Trump, 2015, as cited in Itkowitz, 2015).

The employment of the "PC" discourses can thus be analyzed in the context of "a renewal of local and national identities" as "the logical counter-reaction to a global governance system with cosmopolitan intent" (Fioretos & Tallberg, 2020, p. 10). The backlash against this system is an attempt to "maintain a sense of self" (Barnett, 2020, as cited in ibid) in a globalized world.

In this sense, the varied responses to PC are thus a reflection of the various identities of actors engaging with it. Differences in interpretation underscore the multifaceted nature of this phenomenon. This complexity is further reflected when examining the various ways PC is conceptualized in literature.

2.2 PC Conceptualizations

Considering the conflicting nature of the debate, there have been many definitions of PC based on clearly diverse theoretical foundations. Nevertheless, there are some commonly highlighted elements.

The first is the focus on *language* and, more specifically, its restriction. Whether operating covertly (i.e., as self-censorship through social conventions (Loury, 1996)) or explicitly (e.g., through the pressure of civil society or governments), restriction of expression is an undeniable feature of PC (Glazier, 2017). The appropriateness and underlying goals of this restriction are, however, contestable in literature.

Many consider "PC language" as an effort to prevent the discrimination of members of specific groups in society (Delekta, 2020; Moller, 2016; Scalcău, 2020; Weigel, 2016) such as women, racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, or the LGBTQ+ community. According to this conceptualization, PC's broader goal is the achievement of social change through the modification of language (Fairclough, 2003; Hořavová, 2013).

Others, however, disagree with PC's restriction of expression, citing the importance of free speech (D'Souza, 1991; Loury, 1996; Lukianoff & Strossen, 2021a, 2021b, 2022; Zimmerman & Finlay, 2014) and the negative repercussions of its suppression (Dunant, 1994, as cited in Hughes, 2010; Moller, 2016). As such, they conceptualize PC as a form of censorship (Hughes, 2010), leading to a culture of intimidation that discourages critical thinking and intellectual inquiry (D'Souza, 1991). Pressure to conform to PC is often cited as stifling public debate on specific, controversial issues such as immigration or socioeconomic inequalities. Consequently, some also refuse the portrayal of PC as a politically neutral phenomenon and highlight its political agenda (D'Souza, 1991; Moller, 2016).

Indeed, PC is about more than just language. This is because the promotion of value-

laden expressions implies likewise the promotion of certain political views and policies of the issues discussed. More specifically, in championing its causes, PC adherents advocate for the correction of historical injustices committed against specific groups of people (Moller, 2016). Evident in this process is, if not the creation of a specific ideology, the advancement of specific *values and norms*, such as equality, diversity, and inclusivity (Andary-Brophy, 2015; Hughes, 2010; Moller, 2016). *PC activism*[6], by which PC is seen either as an "equalizing factor" (Glazier, 2017, p. 28) or a type of "liberal orthodoxy" (Kramer & Kimball, 1995, p. 12, as cited in Hughes, 2010, p. 24), is a political endeavor just like any other type of activism, due to its practice of selective promotion of norms and values.

Norris and Inglehart define these values as post-materialist and socially liberal values (2019, p. 88). Their rise is the result of increased physical and economic security in the West, which led to the prioritization of individual free choice and self-expression (ibid, p. 32). PC is one of the manifestations of this "intergenerational value shift" (ibid).

Importantly, these changes in values also brought about changes in identities – traditional identities have found themselves feeling threatened in the face of growing cultural diversity in Western societies (ibid, p. 42). As such, backlash against PC can be perceived as a manifestation of a broader resistance to identity transformation. This conceptualization is in line with arguments made within debates about PC that frame this phenomenon within the context of identity politics[7] (Dzenis & Faria, 2020; Glazier, 2017; Jones, 1994; Lalonde et al., 2000; Spencer, 1994).

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[6] PC activism consists of the promotion of language, policies, and measures aimed at avoiding offense or discrimination based on characteristics like race, gender, and sexual orientation, as well as increasing sensitivity to and inclusion of these identity groups in society.

[7] Identity politics is defined as the social and political activity of groups organized around a particular racial, ethnic, national, religious, sexual, class, or other identity (Duignan, 2023a).

2.3 PC Measures: Operationalizations & Link to Social Desirability, Psychological Reactance, and Political Orientation

As a result of diverse views on how to conceptualize PC, attempts to operationalize and measure it have been few. Likewise, it is important to note a prevalent majority of studies in psychology and sociology and a notable absence of empirical investigations in IR and political science more broadly.

Among the first empirical investigations involving PC are two studies by Lalonde et al. (2000) measuring attitudes toward the stereotypical positions of the "PC crusader" (i.e., avid supporter) and "PC basher." In line with the current political debate, these studies found a positive association between conservative views and the endorsement of the PC crusader stereotype as a threat to freedom.

On the other hand, by measuring sensitivity to PC and non-PC language, Andary-Brophy identified a two-factor structure of PC composed of a *PC-Liberalism (PCL)* and a *PC-Authoritarianism (PCA)* sub-scale (2015).[8] The study found PC not to be an entirely liberal or "left" construct, being enforced by liberals and conservatives alike, albeit with different aims – while PCL is concerned with the promotion of inoffensive language and diversity, PCA focuses on security and uniformity.

These findings are contradictory in light of the arguments offered by Norris and Inglehart (2019) that position resentment against PC as a form of backlash among social conservatives, suggesting instead that opposition to PC might not be a clear-cut manifestation of conservative views despite being championed mainly by conservative political figures.

Instead, PC appears to involve a "symbolic threat" (Stephan et al., 1998, as cited in Lalonde et al., 2000) to actors' freedom to which they react emotionally and behaviorally. In

[8] Andary-Brophy's conceptualization was replicated by Moss and O'Connor, who found the scales to be internally reliable (2020).

line with this, Strauts and Blanton (2015) developed a PC scale with a two-factor structure composed of an *emotion sub-scale* measuring negative emotional response to hearing politically incorrect language and an *activism sub-scale* measuring willingness to correct those using such language (p. 1).

These perceived threats to freedom can be conceptualized as an emotional and behavioral response called psychological reactance (Brehm, 1966). Limited research on the connection between PC and psychological reactance has focused on positioning their relationship as one where opposition to PC is viewed in correlation with increased reactance. For example, in a study analyzing the results of the 2016 US presidential election, Conway et al. (2017) found that psychological reactance toward restrictive communication norms (i.e., here defined as PC) was positively associated with support for Trump (but not Clinton) and that this effect remained significant even when controlling for political ideology.

Furthermore, Levin's study (2003) hypothesized that a negative attitude toward PC (operationalized as self-reports of perceived external pressures of language restriction) may counteract support for PC norms, producing reactance to them. Despite the lack of empirical support for this claim in the study, the author advised that the relationship warranted further examination. As such, the present research will also be interested in the correlation between psychological reactance and PC's normative and behavioral dimensions and its influence on the gap.

Generally, studies have opted for conceptualizing PC as a type of concern for language and operationalizing it via self-reported questionnaires measuring attitudes (Andary-Brophy, 2015; Strauts & Blanton, 2015; Thiele, 1999). Apart from these studies, research has likewise focused on the effects of such language on perceptions and attitudes.

For example, Arokiasamy et al. (1994) investigated the effects of politically correct and politically incorrect language on self-reported perceptions of counselor credibility. The

study used taped segments of counseling sessions in which language and counselor skills were manipulated. No effects of either type of language were found.

On the other hand, across two separate vignette-based experiments, Arnestad (2019) found that politically incorrect language had a negative effect on perceptions of the trustworthiness of managers. The participants were given one of two vignettes with a description of a manager expressing politically correct or politically incorrect views, followed by a scale measuring trustworthiness.

In a similar vein, Millington and Leierer found that the use of politically incorrect labels in a survey of attitudes toward people with disabilities resulted in more positive self-reported attitudes compared to the use of politically correct labels (1996). However, the authors suggested that these results might have been an effect of social desirability.

Social desirability is the tendency for people to present themselves in a positive light (Holden & Passey, 2009). According to Crowne and Marlowe, it is a reflection of actors' need to gain approval by appearing in a culturally appropriate manner (1960, p. 353). It can be categorized as a concern for reputation.

The relationship between social desirability and attitudes is well established in social research (Edwards, 1959; Taylor, 1961, as cited in Millington & Leierer, 1996). Specifically, it represents a difficulty in measuring attitudes explicitly (i.e., in self-reported studies) (Antonek & Livneh, 1995, as cited in ibid). As for its connection to PC, there is indirect evidence connecting the two concepts.

For instance, in their study on prejudice, Plant and Devine (1998) highlighted the inconsistency between self-reports of prejudiced attitudes and measures where prejudice was

measured indirectly (i.e., implicitly).[9] Although they did not focus on social desirability specifically, they differentiated between internal and external motivation to respond without prejudice, suggesting that the latter reflected formal compliance with, rather than internalization of, social norms (Crosby et al., 1980; Dovidio & Fazio, 1992; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991; Jones & Sigall, 1971, as cited in Plant & Devine 1998, p. 812) such as PC. Formal compliance was suggested to stem from pressures of norms and a resulting need for societal approval from others (ibid, p. 811), which aligns with the underlying motivations of social desirability (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). Along this line, Plant and Devine hypothesized and confirmed that self-reported endorsement of stereotypes about Black people would be a function of levels of internal or external motivation and public or private settings.

Similarly, Barker (1994) found that humor ratings of politically incorrect ethnic jokes were lower in public versus private settings (as cited in Andary-Brophy, 2015).

Furthermore, Andary-Brophy found a connection between social desirability and the use of PC language, albeit indirectly, i.e., through personality traits that have previously been linked to social desirability in research (Barrick & Mount, 1996; Collani & Grumm, 2009; Ones et al., 1996; Paulhus et al., 1995, as cited in Andary-Brophy, 2015, p. 38).

Finally, further support for the connection between PC and social desirability was also given by Levin, who found a discrepancy between scores of implicit and explicit prejudice as a function of perceptions of external pressure to comply with PC (2003, p. 8), where high perceptions of pressure (e.g., awareness of the repercussions for politically incorrect behavior) were accompanied by a greater discrepancy between implicit and explicit prejudice scores

[9] A commonly used measurement tool of implicit attitudes is the Implicit Association Test (IAT) developed by Greenwald et al. (1998) which involves measuring the strength of automatic associations between mental representations of concepts (e.g., race) and attributes (good vs. bad).

(i.e., lower explicit prejudice but higher implicit prejudice).

Some of these studies offer a two-dimensional perspective of attitudes measurement for the present research, by which PC attitudes can be measured implicitly and explicitly (i.e., indirect measurement tools vs. self-reports) and where the explicit dimension is affected by pressures to comply with widely established social norms conceptualized as social desirability. In essence, social desirability thus prevents the full "grasp" of PC via self-reports. In the present context, it is also suggested as the reason why there can be a discrepancy between PC's normative and behavioral dimensions.

On the other hand, the above literature review also implies that a negative perception of said pressures can produce psychological reactance (i.e., a threat to freedom) (Levin, 2003), resulting in the rejection of said norms. This may have an effect on actors' behaviors, like voting patterns.

As such, framing PC as a two-dimensional construct composed of implicit and explicit elements challenges the idea that exhibiting politically correct behavior equals to a universal endorsement of PC norms, positing that there is more at play when it comes to being, or not being, "PC." Specifically, it is argued that the influence of widely recognized societal norms (embedded primarily within PC language) and the resulting pressures to comply with them may create different individual patterns of behavior, depending on levels of actors' perceptions of pressure (social desirability) and its threat to freedom (psychological reactance).

3. CONCEPTUAL & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Conceptualization

Several observations can be made from the overview of PC conceptualizations and measures outlined above. All of them paint PC as a multifaceted phenomenon. This divisiveness is not only due to the standard positioning of PC perspectives alongside the Left and Right political spectrum (Konye, 2016; Moss & O'Connor, 2020; Norris & Inglehart, 2019), where PC is conceptualized as a distinctively "left" phenomenon but also due to its inherent ambiguity.

Firstly, "political" matters are "concerned with the form, organization, and administration of a state, and with the regulation of its relations with other states" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2023). As such, they naturally cover a wide range of social, cultural, and economic issues, encompassing everything from government structures and diplomacy to healthcare and education (Hughes, 2010, p. 17).

Secondly, "correctness" refers to the condition of being in accordance with accepted rules, standards, or facts (ibid; Oxford English Dictionary, 2023). Consequently, the phrase elicits the impression of there being an accepted or "correct" answer to everything concerning the state. Politics is, however, a field of constant debates, conflicts, and power struggles (Geser, 2010, p. 2; Glazier, 2017, p. 6), particularly outside illiberal regimes. In fact, without authoritative decisions in the form of binding laws (Geser, 2010, p. 2), there can be no universally agreed-upon substance of what is "politically correct." As such, PC will mean "different things to different people" (Glazier, 2017, p. 6). However, the phrase "political correctness" suggests the existence of principles beyond any debate, conflict, or power struggle (Geser, 2010, p. 2). These informal principles are presumed to be so fundamental and widely accepted that they not only shape the realm of political legislation but also

influence political discourse in that they determine which topics should be discussed and, most notably, how (ibid). In other words, they are seen as universally objective and not open to interpretation. However, this conclusion cannot hold because PC, like all social phenomena, is what actors make of it (Wendt, 1992).

The second observation in analyzing PC conceptualizations is the importance of language, or better yet – norms and values expressed by it, as language has no purpose outside of the meanings it tries to convey (Fish, 1994). Accordingly, when opponents of PC bash PC language, they do not do so for the sake of discrediting an expression itself but of questioning the ideas behind it (Szilágyi, 2017). This is not to say that there is a commonly shared knowledge or understanding of PC – as has been pointed out, PC can mean different things to different people. However, precisely because the meaning of PC is *not* objective or predetermined but constructed through interpretations (Wendt, 1992), language plays an essential role as both a reflection and a constructive element of its social reality (Wendt, 1994; 1999). Although PC activism encompasses more than language, extending to advocacy for specific measures and policies such as affirmative action, it manifests primarily via language. Consequently, PC language and the different discourses embedded within the PC phenomenon entail the creation of different social realities (Glazier, 2017).

In conceptualizations of PC, the process of the social construction of reality is identified and discussed explicitly as the quest for social change (Fairclough, 2003). Critics of PC either refuse this vision of social change (Glazier, 2017) or do not agree with its principles and strategies used to achieve it. More specifically, disagreements over PC can thus be attributed to differing perspectives on norms, the power dynamics of PC, the significance of language and the need for its restriction, and so on. These disagreements reflect competing interpretations by different communities of actors holding varying identities. As each community seeks to assert the validity of its interpretations, identity

clashes may arise.

Based on the above, two underlying drivers of PC can be delineated: 1.) the upholding of shared meanings about the social reality contained in specific norms and values, and 2.) purposive activities to promote these meanings in society via certain behaviors, most notably language, to achieve social change. In other words, PC can be conceptualized as a social phenomenon comprised of a

1. Normative, or implicit dimension, defined as a set of social liberal beliefs, norms, and values whose goal is the achievement of social justice, primarily through sensitivity for and protection of historically disadvantaged groups of people, and a

2. Behavioral, or explicit dimension, defined as a set of attitudes and behaviors, such as the use of PC language and promotion of specific policies and measures, that can accompany them but nevertheless represent a separate component of PC.

It is posited that there is a gap between these two dimensions at the individual level of measurement that stems from different identities and manifests in varying levels of social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

As might have already been deduced from the above, the present research will use social constructivism as its theoretical lens. Constructivism focuses on the intersubjective ideas that define social structures (Wendt, 1987; 1992; 1994; 1999). PC can be considered as a component of such structures – it encompasses a set of norms, beliefs, and expectations about appropriate behavior.

Considering that PC is a *social* phenomenon that has been empirically investigated

primarily in the fields of psychology and sociology, constructivism seems an appropriate fit, as it is not a substantive theory of politics but rather "a social theory that makes claims about the nature of social life" (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 393). The main works used will be by Alexander Wendt, specifically his book *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999), as well as his articles *Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics* (1992) and *Collective Identity Formation and the International State* (1994).

Wendt's theory of constructivism was selected because it provides a formidable framework for understanding how identities are shaped by shared ideas such as those embedded within PC and how disagreements over PC can be analyzed within the context of belief and identity differences. Moreover, it is able to account for how PC can simultaneously exist as a set of understandings by actors that are often in disagreement and as an objective fact producing specific patterns of behavior over time (Wendt, 1999). In other words, it can account for the existence of both of PC's dimensions.

The theory sees the normative dimension as constructed through collective understandings that give rise to social norms. Secondly, it posits that whether actors behave in accordance with these norms (behavioral dimension) depends not just on their beliefs but also on how they perceive themselves in relation to the wider social group (i.e., role identities). The gap between the normative and the behavioral dimensions can thus be understood as a reflection of the process of social construction of knowledge.

At this point, it needs to be noted that Wendt's theory is a systemic one where states, not individuals, are the fundamental units of analysis. This might raise doubts about the appropriateness of such a theory for the present case. Nevertheless, I claim that an analogy can be made by which individuals can be analyzed within individual social structures (such as those involving PC), just like states are analyzed within the international system. States are not equal to individuals, but they are comprised of them – of their discourses and

behaviors (Wendt, 2004, p. 289).

Particularly fitting is the concept of "supervenience" that Wendt applies to summarize the relationship between such macro- and micro-structures (1999, p. 152). The principle of supervenience means that macro-structures depend on micro-structures for their existence but are not reducible to them (ibid). It allows for an analogy between states and individuals to be made.

In this sense, individuals can be considered micro-structures in social structures. While they have the capacity to make choices, these choices are also shaped by the social structures in which they operate. Moreover, while change in these social structures means change in the individual, the opposite is not necessarily the case; equality as a social norm, for example, emerges from individual behaviors but cannot be fully explained by them. Therefore, just as the international system is supervenient but not reducible to states, individuals are the building blocks of social structures but do not solely determine them.

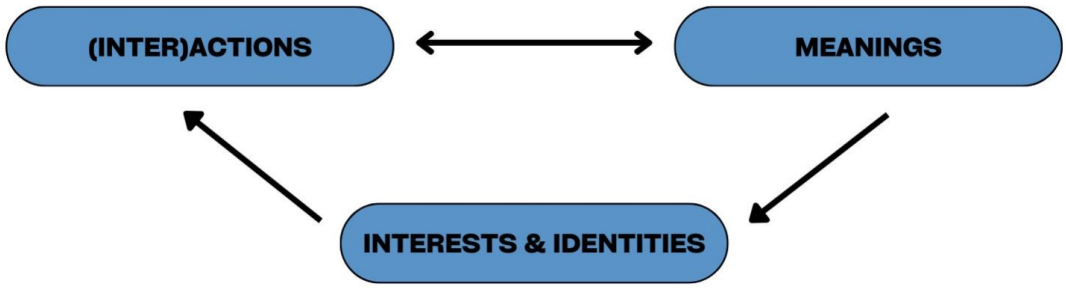
Even with this analogy, it needs to be noted that applying Wendt's concepts to individuals and social structures is an extension of his theory, not a direct application. As such, it comes with certain limitations, particularly the risk of oversimplification of the complexities of individual psychology and social interactions.

Despite these limitations, the thesis is moving forward with Wendt's theory due to its ability to explain both PC dimensions efficiently via its focus on the interplay between beliefs, identities and social structures.

Constructivism points to the crucial role of social process (i.e., interactions) in both expressing and constituting these shared beliefs, identities, and relationships between actors (Wendt, 1992, p. 411). This social process is evident in PC activism, particularly in sensitivity to language conventions categorized as "politically correct."

In this sense, for example, respect and advocacy for PC language can be a reflection

of specific intersubjective meanings that actors hold about the social world. These meanings – such as shared ideas, norms, and expectations – form the basis of the identities and interests of its constituents. These are, in turn, expected to shape their interpretations of future situations in similar contexts and organize their actions. Depending on the outcome, the pursued actions will then either reinforce or challenge existing meanings. Because of the social process, actors' meanings are thus constantly being reproduced (Wendt, 1999, p. 346).



Note: A visual representation of the dynamics of the social process (source: Canva)

For instance, in discussing a draft proposal for a resolution on human rights, actors might attempt to use expressions that demonstrate respect for cultural differences, avoid stereotypes, and prioritize inclusivity (i.e., PC language). In so doing, they not only demonstrate allegiance to certain beliefs about other actors (including, but not limited to, norms of social justice and diversity); they also participate in creating an environment that fosters these beliefs.

On the other hand, some actors might possess different understandings of the situation that stem from different beliefs (for example, of their role in the international system, the role of actors behind the resolution proposal, and PC in general). In such a case, it will be in their interest to resist PC language.

In both instances, differences in the understanding of the proposal are differences of identities (Wendt, 1992, p. 399). Even though identities and interests are considered relatively stable in certain contexts, constructivism considers this stability to be an ongoing accomplishment of the social process (Ashley, 1988, as cited in Wendt, 1994, p. 386) and, as such, susceptible to change. Therefore, the identity of actors is not simply shaped by their belonging to certain social structures but is reproduced by their continuous engagement with and interpretation of exchanged ideas within these structures.

Identities, beliefs, and interpretations associated with PC thus determine whether actors will endorse the normative dimension of PC and whether they will complement these norms with behavior or challenge them. The following pages will further explore these two dimensions from a constructivist standpoint.

3.3 Behavioral Dimension of PC (Explicit PC - EPC)

The rationale behind using the behavioral dimension of PC as a starting point of the analysis is rooted in the constructivist idea by which ideas play a primary role in shaping actions. In other words, because ideas shape actions, identifying these actions first is necessary for understanding their underlying dynamics.

While reasserting that the treatment of PC in the present research is that of a distinctively Western phenomenon, this section will explore only the behavioral manifestations of PC in North America and Europe. There are four main contexts in which such manifestations can be observed – social, political, legal, and administrative.

In the general social context, discussions about PC make up the daily lives of social actors, from political commentators and citizens to journalists. Referenced almost

exclusively in a critical way, PC extends to conversations about largely moral-based and, thus, controversial topics. Examples include issues like gender equality, racial discrimination, immigration, LGBTQ+ rights, and climate change.

In the political context, PC is used extensively in the rhetorical practices of state leaders and politicians. As an overview of these practices has been offered in Chapter II, they will not be discussed here any further.

However, importantly, PC behavior can likewise be observed in legal and administrative contexts, where states and international institutions alike introduce new laws and policies to promote equality, diversity, and inclusivity. Moreover, moves to re-assess the gender-related and ethnic terminology used in legal documents (e.g., in the European Parliament) can also be labeled as "PC" concerns.

In Europe, PC is reflected in hate speech and anti-discrimination laws, initiatives, and bodies promoting the rights of minority groups and women.

Examples of national hate speech laws include the aforementioned 1990 *Gayssot Act* in France, sanctioning the questioning of crimes against humanity committed by the Nazi regime in WW2 (Crif, 2006). Similar laws exist in Germany, where Holocaust denial and any exhibition of Nazi symbols and propaganda are prohibited under the country's Criminal Code (Glaun, 2021). Furthermore, the 2018 *Network Enforcement Act* compels social media companies to monitor and censor German online content, spreading misinformation and hate speech (McMillan, 2019).

As for hate speech regulation on the EU level, despite the obvious difficulty of achieving such regulation, there is a growing initiative to do so – in 2021, the European Commission adopted a Communication calling for an extension of the list of EU crimes to hate speech and hate crime (n.d.-a). As of December 2023, the proposal is awaiting a vote of the European Parliament (European Parliament, n.d.).

Most European countries also have anti-discrimination laws in their national legal frameworks. Consequently, they will not be discussed here in detail.

As for similar laws, working bodies, and initiatives at the European level, several examples can be offered. For instance, in 1993, the Council of Europe established the *European Commission against Racism and Intolerance* (ECRI) specializing in questions relating to "racism, discrimination (on grounds of "race", ethnic or national background, skin colour, citizenship, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics), and intolerance in Europe" (Council of Europe, n.d.-a). Moreover, in 2013, the Council launched the *No Hate Speech Movement*, an initiative to increase awareness of hatred by sponsoring educational workshops for students (Council of Europe, n.d.-b).

The EU has a legal framework of protection against discrimination, where *Employment Equality Directive*, *Racial Equality Directive*, and *Gender Equality Directive* combat discrimination in employment and occupation on the basis of religion or belief, race, gender, disability, age, or sexual orientation (European Business Development Services, 2023). Furthermore, in 2015, the European Commission presented the *List of Actions to Advance LGBTI Equality*, the first policy framework specifically combating discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community (n.d.-b). The Commission sponsors awareness-raising campaigns and civil society organizations that promote LQBTQ+ rights (ibid).

The EU also has a number of working bodies aimed at promoting equality. Firstly, the above-cited *Race Equality Directive* introduced a requirement to designate National Equality Bodies that today operate in most European countries (European Network of Equality Bodies, n.d.). Moreover, The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) was established to produce studies and statistics, monitor and report on the EU's adherence to international gender equality commitments, and provide support, resources, and knowledge to EU institutions and member states in promoting gender equality (European Union, n.d.).

Another example is the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women, a consultative body that helps the Commission "formulate and implement measures to promote equal opportunities for women and men" (European Union, 2016).

A couple of points are in order. Firstly, although hate speech and anti-discrimination laws are not explicitly labeled as "PC," they are a part of the PC phenomenon in that they are based on the same underlying values, such as equality and inclusivity. Moreover, their purpose is related to restrictions on freedom of speech, which are one of PC's main strategies in asserting its norms (Lukianoff & Strossen, 2021a, 2021b, 2022; Sparrow, 2002, as cited in Geser, 2010). This is why these laws can be categorized as behavioral manifestations of PC in the general sense. Secondly, sanctions imposed by hate speech laws are not designed to target the insult to the "victims" as such but the current use made of the offense, for example, by negating the memory of the Holocaust (Crif, 2006). This is important in the context of classifying speech as incitement to action, which PC proponents do.

The United States has its own anti-discrimination laws, bodies, and policies promoting diversity in education, public offices, and workplaces in general. Known under the umbrella term of "affirmative action," these policies aim to provide equal/fair opportunities to marginalized groups of people. The classification of "equal" or "fair" is based on an interpretation of history where injustices committed by the "white man" (Pilkington, 2007) led to systemic inequalities that persist today and are preventing its victims from achieving the same quality of life as the rest. Such interpretation is heavily based on America's colonial identity and its historical experience with racism. These policies are thus meant to address any continuing discrimination based on gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, or religion, as well as to ensure diversity of representation.

First affirmative action efforts emerged in the 1960s to address the subjugation of

racial and ethnic minorities and women, initially by focusing on ensuring equal employment opportunities (White House, n.d.). The 1964 *Civil Rights Act* and the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) were among the first steps toward regulating discrimination in employment (AAAED, n.d.). Today, government and private institutions use recruitment and training programs to "advance qualified minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and covered veterans" (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.).

Moreover, the civil rights movement directed the focus toward educational affirmative action, where the 1978 *Bakke* case established the framework of considering race in university applications to promote diversity (White House, n.d.). In the following years, universities across America started applying affirmative action in their admission process and scholarship programs. These policies have been heavily contested on the basis of being unconstitutional and unfair.

On the other hand, European laws on hate speech stand in sharp contrast to the United States, where the First Amendment of the US Constitution limits the role of the government in restricting speech (Glaun, 2021). There are certain exceptions, namely "when the speech directly threatens certain serious, imminent harms, such as intentional incitement of imminent violence or targeted harassment" (Lukianoff & Strossen, 2021a), in which case it is treated as motivation for action. However, unlike in Europe, US law does not allow the government to restrict "hate speech solely because of disagreement with or disapproval of a speaker's viewpoint, or because of vague fears the speech might indirectly lead to some potential harm at some future time" (ibid).

3.3.1 Speech vs. Action

Discussions in some of the above contexts center heavily around language, with a

focus on how it either perpetuates or challenges discrimination and prejudice. Besides the constructivist emphasis on ideas and interaction, such perspective clearly echoes poststructuralism in that it views the relationship between language and reality as a reflection of power relations within modern society and advocates for its transformation – in PC's case, through the prevention of direct offense and increase in sensitivity toward the struggles of disadvantaged groups of people.

Of particular interest in this argument is the differentiation between speech and action. Practical applications of this relationship generally recognize the distinction between the two. In international law, documents such as the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* (UDHR), the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR), and the *European Convention on Human Rights* (ECHR) recognize the right to freedom of expression as an unalienable right. At the same time, they specify "special duties and responsibilities" (ICCPR, 1966) that can pose limitations to freedom of expression in the name of protection of the rights of others, national security, public order or morals (ICCPR, 1966). The limitations are context-driven, and as such, dependent on interpretations. Such framing indicates the acknowledgment of how speech can influence action, even if it does not imply a lack of distinction between speech and action as such.

On the other hand, among the key understandings of PC advocates is the belief that speech *is*, in fact, action because it involves real-life consequences in the form of violence and perpetuation of systemic inequalities.

In discussing the mechanisms that describe the connection between PC language (i.e., speech) and PC behaviors (i.e., action), the principle of linguistic relativity provides a crucial framework of reference. This concept, also known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, posits that the language used by individuals influences their perception of reality (Lucy, 1997, p. 291). Essentially, it suggests that different types of observations and evaluations of

reality are available to members of different linguistic communities (Whorf, 1940; 2012). Within the context of PC, language is thus expected to have a transformational influence on attitudes and, eventually, behaviors.

Indeed, the posited influence of language on thought is what describes why moderation of language is a key element of PC activism, where the purpose of respect for and pursuit of inoffensive (i.e., PC) expression is not solely to prevent the direct offense itself but also to "correct" prevailing norms and attitudes deemed to be prejudiced and/or discriminatory. Correspondingly, PC is sometimes said to represent a form of "speech therapy" on account of its willingness to correct the perception of reality through the correction of language (Dirakis, 2017, p. 2). The main strategy used to achieve it is semantic change consisting of replacing offensive terms with non-offensive ones, mostly euphemisms (Hughes, 2010; Ženíšek, 2010).

However, this strategy has received a lot of criticism in literature, not the least among the proponents of the so-called "euphemism treadmill" phenomenon, which is the name of the repetitive process of the said semantic change, whereby the new euphemistic term is expected to become offensive itself, usually by acquiring the connotation of its predecessor (Pinker, 1994; Ženíšek, 2010). As such, critics point out that attempts at changing people's attitudes through language are largely futile because artificially modifying the signifier does not necessarily alter the signified (Simon, 2019).

In line with the prevalence of such criticisms, the validity of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis has thus far not been proven. Several studies found support for the covariation of language and thought (Boroditsky, 2001; Levinson, 2003; Pederson, 1995; Pederson et al., 1998; Prentice, 1994) but no evidence of causal influence of language (Prentice, 1994).

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis clearly distinguishes between speech and action. Nevertheless, as constructivism emphasizes the active role of interaction in recreating

beliefs, identities, and realities, the present research categorizes speech as a special kind of action that moves the social world in one direction or another (Fish, 1994).

3.4 Normative Dimension of PC (Implicit PC - IPC)

As per its name, the normative dimension of PC is concerned with norms, values, and beliefs commonly associated with PC.

The first among these is social justice. Defined as "the fair treatment and equitable status of all individuals and social groups within a state or society," as well as "social, political, and economic institutions, laws, or policies that collectively afford such fairness and equity" (Duignan, 2023b), social justice is both a theoretical concept and a practical ideal (ibid) of PC. As a practical ideal, it is evident in social movements concerned with dismantling systemic forms of oppression, primarily among racial, ethnic, and cultural minorities and women (ibid). Its practical applications stem from specific theoretical conceptions in societies and their political arrangements as a whole (ibid; The Open University, 2016). Accordingly, the conception of social justice associated with PC is a decisively Western one.

Theoretical deliberations of this conception of social justice focus on "distributive" and "commutative" justice. Distributive justice is concerned with the fair distribution of goods among actors (The Open University, 2016). Domestically, an example could be affirmative action policies. Internationally, it could be the rhetoric and actions of the United Nations or the Paris Agreement suggesting the existence of an obligation by wealthy countries to increase their contributions to less developed countries in economic (Beitz, 1975) and climate change affairs. Commutative justice, on the other hand, is about the fair

treatment of actors in a particular transaction (The Open University, 2016). An example might be the fight against the gender pay gap in the context of ensuring equal compensation for equal work without gender discrimination.

Among the primary focuses of social justice is the pursuit of human rights. Human rights are thus another key element of PC's normative dimension, sharing the concern with values of equality, dignity, and non-discrimination.

Besides the influence of social movements, the Western conception of human rights is grounded in legal charters and political theory (ibid), developed mostly by the United Nations. The 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), the 1966 *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR), and the 1966 *International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights* (ICSECR), although interwoven with security concerns, signified a turn towards an ideology of universal human rights in international relations (ibid). A key idea behind this development was the view of an international order governed by global justice (ibid). As such, human rights and social justice go hand in hand when theorizing about PC.

However, because its goal is the betterment of society as a whole, i.e., the "greater good," social justice is, much like PC, concerned with accommodating the rights of different groups of people. The normative dimension of PC identifies these groups as historically marginalized minorities and women. In PC terms, the greater good thus prioritizes these groups' advancement and inclusion in the spheres of society. In this sense, the pursuit of social justice can come in conflict with individual (human) rights and freedoms (ibid) that the Western civilization, in the context of the philosophical tradition of individualism, is largely based on. Tensions arise when individual rights are violated in the interest of alleviating inequality (Parvin, 2018, p. 22) and vice versa.

An example of this tension is the 2011 French ban on face-covering veils, where the

decision was either supported by appealing to values considered universal, such as gender equality, or criticized on the basis of cultural intolerance (Westacott, n.d.) and discrimination of minority and religious rights.

On the other hand, what can also be observed in the development of PC and its "dictionary" that now encompasses terms such as "safe space" or "microaggression" is an increasing focus on individual "rights" such as emotional safety (Moss & O'Connor, 2020). In this sense, the proliferation of rights, such as the "right to be offended," reduces moral claims to rights claims and creates a social atmosphere of victims (The Open University, 2016) who ask for these claims to be protected at the expense of tolerance, inclusivity, and other values advocated by social justice and PC.

In both cases, the tensions stem from the various constellations of identities engaging in the social construction of "knowledge" in relation to PC.

3.4.1 Division of PC Knowledge

Knowledge, in this sense, is shared ideas. In constructivist terms, the normative dimension of PC is composed of common and collective knowledge (Wendt, 1999). They form the cognitive and normative context within which actors exhibit PC behaviors. Common and collective knowledge exist side by side, with the former explaining particular actions and the latter systemic tendencies (ibid, p. 164). Consequently, individual actors' manifestations of PC behavior, or lack thereof, as well as contentions over PC, can generally be understood as expressions of common knowledge. On the other hand, the existence of PC as a social phenomenon is enabled primarily by collective knowledge.

3.4.1.1 Common Knowledge

Common knowledge relates to actors' beliefs about other actors' rationality, beliefs, strategies, and interests (Wendt, 1999, p. 159). These beliefs are *subjective*, and differences between them can thus be observed. At the same time, they are shaped through the social process, i.e., interaction, and as such, are also "an *intersubjective* phenomenon which confronts actors as an objective social fact that cannot be individually wished away [emphasis added]" (ibid, p. 160).

The subjective aspect of common knowledge of PC thus lies in individual ideas about PC. These ideas do not exist in isolation but are constitutive with interaction, forming intersubjective understandings about PC norms and behaviors, specifically those that create expectations of promoting respect, non-discrimination, and inclusivity.

Crucial in these understandings is the existence of "interlocking beliefs" (Wendt, 1999, p. 160), which involve not only individual understandings but also mutual awareness of other actors' understandings. This mutual understanding is what shapes actors' expectations in relation to certain norms or behaviors as a result of socialization within shared social contexts (Wendt, 1999). What this entails is that, when discussing PC, actors will understand the expectation of "signaling" adherence with the "correct" norms and values, such as respect, non-discrimination, and inclusivity.

At the same time, these understandings and expectations do not imply that actors will always share the same beliefs regarding those norms. As such, while some actors might believe in the use of inclusive language in preventing bias (e.g., gender-neutral language and gender bias), others will disagree with this belief.

Moreover, the concept of interlocking beliefs does not suggest that actors are *always* aware of each other's beliefs. Rather, the emphasis is on shared social contexts where such expectations exist. Because of these expectations, actors can also hold different beliefs

privately than they expose publicly. Whether open demonstration of beliefs will occur depends again on the social process, where actors pursue "actions seeking to satisfy identities and interests by adjusting behavior to changing incentives in the environment" (ibid, p. 366).

Consequently, within the context of PC, exhibitions of PC behavior will not necessarily be accompanied by the same interpretations of the underlying reasons to exhibit these behaviors (i.e., of PC norms), and vice versa.

After all, though the social construction of meanings is a continuous process, actors' identities play a significant role in their formation (Wendt, 1992; 1999). Most of these identities are institutionalized in some stock of collective knowledge (Wendt, 1999, p. 227) that predates particular interactions. As such, they are relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self (Wendt, 1992, p. 397). It is in the actors' interest to maintain these stable interpretations to minimize uncertainty and avoid the costs of broken commitments made to others as part of past practices (ibid, p. 411). This is why, for example, the Iranian government is unlikely to change its stance on LGBTQ+ rights, as this would pose a threat to its role as a defender of Islamic values and to Iran's cultural identity.[10] For the same reason, the EU might be equally as unlikely to abandon its commitment to human rights.

Although there exists a certain level of "freedom" of varying interpretations (ibid), after a certain level, any information that challenges actors' role identities is likely to create cognitive dissonance and be perceived as a threat (ibid). This level will depend on how "important" actors' particular identities are (ibid) for their existence in the social world.

Therefore, the varying interpretations of PC generally stem from differences in

[10] This is not to make any general claims about Islam or the identity of Iran and its people; the key word here is "government."

identities, and their salience will determine actors' future actions in relation to PC. This explains instances of actors exhibiting PC behavior but not adhering to PC norms and actors adhering to PC norms but not exhibiting PC behavior.

In the first case, actors may exhibit PC behavior in certain contexts due to the salience of other interests, external pressures to conform, or social expectations more generally (Wendt, 1999). These constraints can overlap.

Balancing various interests is a practice integral to IR and the social world. This is particularly the case with states, which involve the interests of multiple stakeholders and address concerns such as national security, economic and political stability, social welfare, and so on. In this sense, state actors might decide to pursue diplomatic pragmatism whereby they apply PC behavior strategically to cultivate a positive reputation and foster good relations even if the state does not fully adhere to PC norms domestically. A case in point is Saudi Arabia, whose infamous seat on the UN Human Rights Council[11] stood against the backdrop of its human rights violations at home (Al-Hajji, 2020).

Secondly, external pressures refer to incentives to comply with the prevailing norms and rules in a given social context (mostly motivated by the desire to avoid ostracism). An example could be actors' avoidance of linguistic taboos (e.g., racial slurs) in interaction.

Social expectations, on the other hand, refer to the above-cited costs of breaking commitments, most notably to domestic constituencies and foreign allies in the case of states (Wendt, 1999). Germany, for example, may exhibit PC behavior in the form of hate speech laws regarding Holocaust denial to satisfy commitments arising from historical concerns.

As such, although both external pressures and social expectations involve prevailing norms, the latter involves the stability of identities, while the former is more focused on

[11] Saudi Arabia was eventually sacked from the Council after failing to secure another mandate in 2020 (Wintour, 2020).

outcomes (such as social acceptance). The tendency of actors to exhibit behavior that aligns with prevailing norms and rules has been recognized in previous pages as social desirability. It directs actors' actions in relation to PC, influencing the gap between PC's normative and behavioral dimensions.

As for instances where actors adhere to the normative dimension of PC but not the behavioral one, these can happen for several reasons.

Firstly, like in the opposite case, this can be a pragmatic decision stemming from the balancing of different objectives. PC behavior might just not be in an actor's best interest in a given situation. Instead, actors will prioritize other goals over the consistent expressions of PC behavior, even if they have internalized PC norms. This goes particularly for states, as they are mostly led by self-interest (Wendt, 1999).

Secondly, domestic and international institutionalized structures and power dynamics (ibid, p. 24) can likewise prevent actors from exhibiting PC behaviors. For example, certain domestic institutionalized norms and power hierarchies position Russia in relation to the Other (i.e., both its domestic society and the international community) as a protector of traditional values. This identity prevents manifestations of certain PC behaviors (e.g., support of LGBTQ+ rights (Burga, 2023)) even though actors within the Russian government might privately support PC norms and values.

Finally, as has been hypothesized in previous pages, a rejection of PC behaviors can occur when actors feel that their freedom, or identity (Norris & Inglehart, 2019), has been jeopardized, triggering a psychological reactance response to this "symbolic threat" (Stephan et al., 1998, as cited in Lalonde et al., 2000).

In summary, PC is positioned within common knowledge as a phenomenon containing subjective (i.e., individual beliefs) and intersubjective characteristics (i.e., shared understandings about these beliefs). This duality is what leads to contentions over PC, as

what is considered politically correct can vary widely among different actors and social contexts.

Overall, the promotion of PC behaviors in the international community can thus be understood as a "collective action problem" (Wendt, 1999). Whether the community will overcome it depends on the actors' identities and on whether these identities generate self-interests or collective interests (Wendt, 1994, p. 386). In other words, whether actors will promote PC behaviors depends on the level to which they (positively) identify with the Other (Mengshu, 2020; Wendt, 1994, p. 386).

3.4.1.2 Collective Knowledge

Collective knowledge of PC refers to knowledge structures (i.e., shared ideas, beliefs, values, and norms) held by groups that generate macro-level patterns of individual behavior over time (Wendt, 1999, pp. 161-162). This collective knowledge forms the basis of shared understandings about PC that enable its existence as a social phenomenon.

In simpler terms, if one were to imagine PC as an "abstract" collectivity, its shared understandings are that:

1.) Racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination are alive and well, that

2.) They reduce the quality of life of certain groups, that

3.) It is in some actors' interest to maintain their positions of "power," and that, in turn,

4.) The playing field needs to be leveled (Fish, 1994), and finally, that

5.) Language is the main strategy of actors perpetuating the existing, unfair power structures (Foucault, 1980; Baker, 1994, p. 1186, as cited in Glazier, 2017, p. 27).

The collective knowledge of PC is thus based on a broader shared understanding of issues such as social justice, inclusivity, and diversity. In this sense, it is composed of, but

not reducible to, common knowledge (Wendt, 1999, p. 159). Moreover, the line between the two is often arbitrary (ibid, p. 162), meaning that the same knowledge structures can be understood as common or collective knowledge. For example, the idea of "social justice" – one of the key elements of PC's normative dimension – can be viewed as collective knowledge within a society that strives for equality and social progress. At the same time, the content and the agreement with specific social justice principles and guidelines evolve over time, framing the expectations about it as common knowledge among actors (Wendt, 1999). The same goes for the idea of "PC" itself; even though beliefs and opinions about it vary from society to society and through time, there nevertheless exists a knowledge structure of PC that generates distinctive patterns of behavior in the form of language guidelines, policies, and laws.

Shared beliefs about PC are thus not necessary for its realization in the social world (ibid, p. 164). In other words, PC has an existence over and above the actors who embody it at any given time (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 56, as cited in Wendt, 1992, p. 399).

In terms of advocacy for PC behaviors, this means that social change is not a simple pursuit (Wendt, 1999, p. 163). PC might confront actors as an objective fact, but that does not mean that it will create the desirable outcomes (i.e., desirable patterns of PC behavior as a result of internalization of PC norms). This is because collective understanding accommodates diverse group interpretations and applications. These are often inscribed in "collective memory" that constitutes groups' identities (ibid) and is kept alive "by an ongoing process of socialization and ritual enactment" (ibid). An example of such collective memory and its influence on identity is the above-mentioned commitment of Germany to fight hate speech involving the Holocaust. The historical experience of WW2, the acknowledgment of historical responsibility, educational efforts and rituals in the form of commemoration events, museums, and laws, and domestic and foreign policies (in areas like

immigration) are stable, albeit not fixed, attributes and commitments of Germany's "collective identity" (ibid, p. 355).

As such, when theorizing on how to overcome the PC controversy, it is again necessary to observe that this controversy arises from diverse collective memories among different groups of people, giving rise to different identities. A possible solution thus lies in the cultivation of a collective identity in relation to PC.

3.4.2 Collective Identity Proposition

Collective identity signifies a culture where actors' identification with the Other is part of their understanding of the Self (Wendt, 1999, p. 337). Moreover, actors evaluate their interests in terms of the group, making it possible to overcome collective action problems (ibid) such as PC.

The basis for this is interaction, which pushes the boundaries between the Self and the Other (i.e., induces identity change) through the mechanism of reflected appraisals (ibid, p. 338 and 341). It is through this mechanism that actors learn about their identity through the reflection of how they are valued by others, in turn mirroring this treatment in future interactions (ibid, p. 341) and eventually remodeling their identities.

However, the stability of culture makes systemic change hard (ibid, p. 339). This is due to several reasons. Firstly, there is a need for ontological security and internalization of role identities, which generate subjective commitments to objective positions in society (ibid). For example, even though there can be overlaps, the existence of groups and their role identities is based on the quality of "difference" separating them from other groups (ibid, pp. 355-356). According to this perspective, for a feminist, for example, the practice of balancing issues such as misogyny and Islamophobia might inhibit loyalty to their group, i.e.,

their identification as a feminist (Nekhaienko, 2021, p. 79). Such "cognitive boundaries" (Wendt, 1999, pp. 355-356) reduce the prospects for the development of collective identities.

Secondly, external sources of structural stability, which reward certain practices and punish others, can prevent change even if actors desire it (ibid, pp. 339-340). Coincidentally, this is why Germany, despite recent micro-level changes (i.e., the rise of the far right), exhibits continuity in its commitment to fight against hate speech. However, it is for the same reasons that mechanisms of racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of systemic discrimination highlighted by PC are still contained in the collective memory of groups (Collins, 2000, as cited in Nekhaienko, 2021, p. 77), making them a "self-fulfilling prophecy" (Wendt, 1999, p. 331) in that they continue to influence and shape future interactions. In turn, these interactions sustain identities (ibid) – in this case, those of "perpetrators" and "victims" of discrimination – and prevent the formation of a collective identity.

The question to be asked is how to overcome these obstacles. In other words, how to remove the barriers presented by culture and identities? The answer lies in actors' *actions*, i.e., behavioral manifestations of PC.

Indeed, despite the mutual constitution of actors, culture, and social structure, what is decisive is actors' behavior (ibid, p. 342). In this sense, constructivism suggests that actors can behave *as if* they had collective identities before actually acquiring them, thereby triggering their creation (ibid). In other words, it is possible for actors to engage in PC behavior for egoistic reasons and develop collective identities along the way, provided that this behavior is sustained over time (ibid). The process can be summarized as follows: by performing an action that signals trust, actors simultaneously communicate what is expected from the other party. If the action is reciprocated, actors' "tentative new identity will be reinforced" (ibid, p. 346) through the above-cited mechanism of reflected appraisals, where

actors' identities is reinforced by other actors' perceptions of them. The repetition and intensity of the process can give rise to collective identities.

A facilitating factor in this process can be the "ideological labor" in the form of "discussion, education, myth-making, and so on" (ibid, p. 346) that forms a shared representation of interdependence between actors (ibid). In the context of PC, these practices can be observed in domestic politics of countries like the United States, where language guidelines and education have tried to create "'imagined communities' of people who share objective attributes and as a result come to see themselves as being alike" (Anderson, 1983, as cited in ibid, p. 355) in their adherence to PC norms. Efforts in this regard are not consistent, but they exist nevertheless.

However, as the process of growing a collective identity "means giving others' needs standing alongside one's own" (ibid, p. 357), it can only occur if actors actually have *trust* in those with whom they would identify (ibid). In other words, actors need to trust that they will not lose their individuality to the group with which they are building a collective identity (ibid, p. 358).

This trust is often built via external constraints, e.g., the coercive power of the state domestically (ibid). One example might be a transition of the above-mentioned language guidelines into speech codes. It is possible that repeated compliance with these and other external constraints will gradually produce "conceptions of identity and interest which presuppose its legitimacy" (ibid, pp. 360-361). The dynamics are then expected to move from compliance to self-control (ibid).

However, counting on the development of self-control might not be sufficient as external constraints might prevent its clear identification. In other words, because external constraints exist, actors will not be entirely sure whether other actors accept them because of the internalization of PC norms or solely because of coercion (ibid, p. 271). This makes

identification with these actors difficult (ibid, p. 359). As such, although external constraints are a good starting point, they are not sufficient for the formation of a collective identity (ibid) in relation to PC.

Instead, what is needed is

> giving over to the Other at least some responsibility for the care of the Self, and that will generally require something more. That something more is a belief that the Other will constrain itself in the demands it makes on the Self (ibid).

In other words, actors need to be given a certain degree of freedom to exhibit self-restraint to enable mutual (positive) identification with the Other (ibid). According to this perspective, speech codes, hate speech laws and other coercive measures related to PC might actually hinder the formation of a collective identity rather than support it. This is not to say that external regulations are not needed but that they need to be accompanied by a social environment that nurtures the trust that is indispensable to the process of collective self-identification.

Therefore, ultimately, the basis of the formation of collective identity is self-restraint (ibid, 360) – in this case, in the form of actors' voluntary modification of behavior that takes into account the rights and differences of other actors. Apart from self-restraint, what is needed is the existence of interdependence, common fate, or homogeneity (ibid).

Interdependence is the recognition that the decisions of one group affect the outcomes of other groups. For instance, it can be the realization that a negative, "non-PC" portrayal of one group (e.g., Muslims) can influence public opinion of that group, as well as policies impacting their quality of life.

Common fate, on the other hand, refers to shared consequences of outcomes. Normalization of hate speech, for example, can represent a common threat to national or international security. In response, actors might build a collective identity around the

promotion of respectful communication.

Finally, homogeneity is built upon common beliefs and, as such, it refers primarily to groups that already share similar values and identities. Paradoxically, it is unlikely to develop in diverse, multicultural societies such as the United States, where the PC controversy is the most salient.

However, homogeneity is not needed for the nurturing of a collective identity. Whether it will ultimately develop is dependent on the existence of at least one of the three, i.e., either interdependence, common fate, or homogeneity (ibid, p. 343).

There are limitations to the collective identity hypothesis, however. Firstly, as the major part of the PC controversy is still situated at the domestic level, it cannot be asserted that a collective identity in relation to PC exists in any of these countries. This makes the application of Wendt's process of collective identity formation slightly problematic as 1. it is adjusted to the international arena and 2. it generally implies the preexistence of domestic collective identities, which Wendt does not discuss. As such, although I am using Wendt's hypothesis to account for the development of collective identities in both contexts, I acknowledge how the dynamics of domestic political and social contexts differ from the processes in international environments.

Furthermore, despite being a global phenomenon, PC is not yet a recognized element of the international arena. The lack of academic research on this topic attests to this fact. Consequently, it may be problematic to talk about an international collective identity of PC. For the same reasons, the majority of examples of international behavioral manifestations of PC cannot be labeled as "PC" explicitly but via their association with related concepts such as social justice and human rights, which, although central to PC's normative dimension, transcend it.

Therefore, when it comes to IR, collective identity in relation to PC might be

conceived as a set of identifications regarding a specific brand of social justice that emphasizes equity, non-discrimination, diversity, and inclusivity. Such identity can foster partnerships on specific issues previously polluted by bias, historical grievances, or cultural misunderstandings.

The above is a suggestion whose further theoretical exploration is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, when analyzing the phenomenon of PC from a constructivist perspective, it is clear that the only way to overcome the current disagreements is the development of issue-specific collective identities.

3.5 Hypotheses

After analyzing the duality of PC and the key elements of its two dimensions, a repetition of the key concepts and research questions of the thesis is in order.

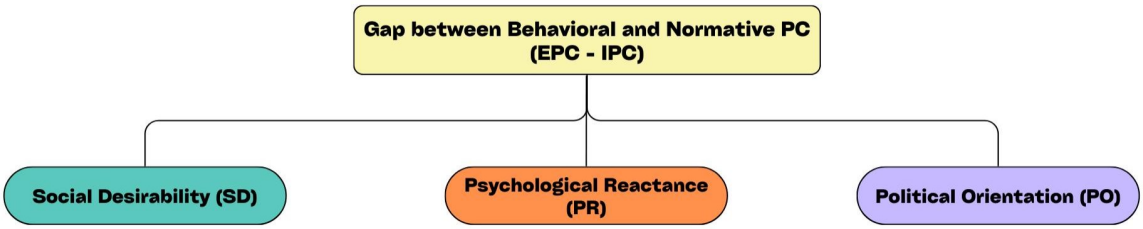
Firstly, PC is a social phenomenon built around specific beliefs, norms, and values, which can be accompanied by specific behaviors. It is intertwined with actors' shared understandings, identities, and interests. It has a dynamic character shaped by interactions that both reflect and construct PC's knowledge structures. These interactions are continuous and diverse, as are the identities of actors involved in them. As such, interpretations and applications of PC can differ among different actors. This creates tensions that manifest primarily in discussions over language. Pressures to adopt PC behaviors may arise as actors seek to assert their identities. The way actors respond to them depends on the salience of these particular identities. They might practice PC behaviors to satisfy certain interests (such as social desirability) and identities (e.g., related to their political orientation) despite not adhering to PC norms. On the other hand, they might internally subscribe to PC while refusing to adopt certain (or any) PC behaviors because of the prevalence of other interests

and identities and a sense of threat of said identities (psychological reactance). The resulting gap not only impairs the analysis of PC; it also prevents the achievement of PC's practical ideals, as the underlying mechanisms of managing attitudes via behavior cannot in and of themselves account for actors' various beliefs and identities, resulting in superficial and scattered practical applications of said ideals.

On the basis of these takeaways, the thesis is again asking the following questions to be addressed in the empirical part:

1. What is the gap between the two dimensions of PC, i.e., between normative and behavioral PC?

2. How do social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation influence this gap?



Note: A visual representation of the gap and its influences (source: Canva)

In line with the above, it is hypothesized that:

H1. There is a moderate positive correlation between the two PC dimensions, with the mean of behavioral PC (EPC) being higher than that of normative PC (IPC).

The reason why EPC is expected to be higher than IPC on average is because of the influence of external constraints in the shape of societal pressures and regulations that motivate actors to exhibit socially desirable behavior, i.e., in this case, politically correct behavior.

Along the same line, it is hypothesized that the gap is affected by other variables, namely:

H2. The gap is influenced by social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation. High levels of social desirability and psychological reactance are expected to widen it, as are low political orientation scores (i.e., conservative attitudes).

As such, it is thus also hypothesized that:

H2a. There is a positive correlation between social desirability and EPC.

H2b. There is no correlation between social desirability and IPC.

Because the normative dimension of PC will be measured via an implicit association test (IAT) aimed at revealing automatic preferences, social desirability should not have any influence on it.

H3a. There is a negative correlation between psychological reactance and EPC.

H3b. There is a negative correlation between psychological reactance and IPC.

Both PC dimensions are expected to have a negative correlation with psychological reactance because both norms and behaviors can be perceived as threats to freedom and identities. However, it is expected that correlation between PR and EPC will be higher.

H4a. There is a positive correlation between political orientation and EPC (where higher scores signify more liberal attitudes).

H4b. There is a positive correlation between political orientation and IPC.

Essentially, in accordance with the positioning of PC along the Left vs. Right political lines, PC is hypothesized to be a liberal phenomenon. At the same time,

The following pages will test these hypotheses with the aim of gaining a deeper insight into the dual dynamics of PC.

4. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK & VARIABLES

This section introduces the research design of the thesis, outlines the data collection methods and analytical techniques used in data analysis, and presents how each variable was operationalized.

4.1 Research Design

The pilot study had a correlational design. Its aim was to measure variables and examine the extent of their associations with one another. Specifically, the focus was on assessing the reliability and validity of the two measurement tools of PC dimensions and examine their correlations to one another, as well as to social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation.

The suggestion for the main study, however, was to have a quasi-experimental design with three groups to have a better chance at observing causal effects of social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation on the gap between PC's two dimensions. Group A would receive an introductory scenario manipulating the variable social desirability. Group B would receive an introductory scenario manipulating the variable psychological reactance. Group C would have no introductory scenario (control group).

4.2 Data Collection

4.2.1 Pilot study

The study was divided into two parts. The 1st part of the study was composed of the measurement tool of the normative dimension of PC (IPC). The 2nd part was composed of measurements of the behavioral dimension (EPC) and the remaining variables.

Participants were recruited through surveycircle.com, surveyswap.io, and Amazon Mechanical Turk. Analyses were done either in DATAtab or Minitab. There were no requirements for the participants besides being able to access the study via a desktop computer. This requirement was necessary as the IPC measure involved the use of keyboard keys.

The study was accessible via a link on the recruiting platforms that brought the participants to a third-party website[12] where the 1st part of the study, i.e., IPC, was located. After completing the 1st part, each participant was given a randomly generated four-digit verification code to connect their results to the 2nd part of the study. Immediately after that, participants were redirected to a Google Form containing the 2nd part of the study. The verification code participants obtained at the end of the 1st part were auto-populated in the Google Form. Once finished with the entire study, participants reported their results back to their respective recruiting platforms, after which a manual check-up of their answers was performed. Participants who had not completed both parts of the study or whose completion time was less than 10 minutes were excluded. Moreover, results where more than 10% of trials were less than 300ms in the 1st part of the study (i.e., the IPC) were automatically excluded. Disqualified participants were not reimbursed, and the assignment was automatically transferred to someone else. Repeated submissions were prevented by tracking

[12] The URL link for the IPC measure can be found in Appendix 1.

participants' profile IDs provided by their recruitment platforms.

4.2.2 Main Study

The plan was to use a representative sample to ensure that the findings of the study would be more broadly applicable. However, the fact that the study was in English meant that using a representative sample of the Czech population would have compromised the generalizability of the results. Instead, a representative sample of the US population was to be used. A power analysis showed that the minimum sample for the hypothesized effects to be observed was 312 participants. All participants were to be recruited through the platform Prolific. The representative sample would be based on the US Census Bureau data and divided into subgroups across the age, sex, and ethnicity demographics (i.e., stratified sampling method). During recruitment, participants would be informed that they would complete a study about political correctness.

Like in the pilot studies, the study was to be divided into two parts: the 1st part of the study was to be composed of the measurement tool of the normative dimension of PC (IPC), whereas the 2nd part was to be composed of measurements of the behavioral dimension (EPC), social desirability (SD), psychological reactance (PR), political orientation (PO), and demography. Prior to accessing the 2nd part of the study, participants would be asked to give their consent to have their data from the study used. The reason why the informed consent was to be put at the beginning of the 2nd part rather than at the beginning of the study is because of the challenge of programming a survey into the website hosting the implicit association test (IPC). Any participants not consenting to participate in the study would have their results from the 1st part erased.

Sadly, after careful evaluation of the pilot study results and the available resources, it was decided that a main study would not be performed. The main reason for this decision was the absence of sufficient funds for the study. For results to be conclusive and generalizable to the general population, a representative sample would need to have been used, which significantly increased the forecasted costs of the study.

As the study was to have a quasi-experimental design, participants would have been divided into three groups. A challenge was sharing the correct group scenarios with each participant, as the recruitment platform did not offer the option of sharing multiple URL links. However, this challenge was successfully resolved by creating an algorithm on the website hosting the first part of the study that would automatically redirect participants to their respective groups.

Despite overcoming some of these challenges, the biggest challenge was finding the funds for the study. I was not successful in this pursuit, which led to constraints in the planned scale of the research. This is ultimately why the main study did not happen.

4.3 Variables Operationalization

What follows is an overview of variables in their respective order of distribution in the study.

4.3.1 Normative PC (Implicit PC – IPC)

The normative dimension of PC was captured using an adapted version of the Implicit Association Test (IAT) (Greenwald et al., 1998). Because of the accessibility of the IAT (it is available online and free), many researchers have used this measurement tool and tested its validity (e.g., Greenwald et al., 2009; Nosek & Smyth, 2007). The test can thus be considered

as an established (implicit) measure of various attitudes. As for the relationship between implicit and explicit measures of attitudes, while some research suggests that they are related but distinct constructs (Nosek & Smyth, 2007; Schnabel et al., 2008), other studies suggest no correlation at all (Karpinski & Hilton, 2001, as cited in Nosek & Smyth, 2007). The present research naturally hypothesized the former.

The IAT captures implicit attitudes by making participants categorize the dependent variable along positive or negative terms and then measures the performance differences between positive and negative pairings, with the goal of evaluating the level of automatic appraisal of that particular variable (Greenwald et al., 1998). The underlying assumption of the IAT is that people with stronger automatic appraisal will respond faster when the categories and attributes are congruent (e.g., PC + Positive) compared to incongruent (e.g., PC + Negative) conditions.

Note: A visual representation of the IPC measurement tool

Although it has so far not been used to measure PC, Dickson (2017) developed a measure that was inspired by the IAT. This PC measure was composed of word pairings where the participant was instructed to select the word that sounded "most natural" to them (Dickson, 2017, p. 17). In contrast to Dickson's measure, the IPC tool did not aim to measure

participants' selections of PC word pairings but actual implicit attitudes. The exact version of the test used was the Single-Target Implicit Association Test (ST-IAT). The test was developed in Notepad++ and deployed through a website made for this purpose. The ST-IAT was performed using text stimuli for PC (Diversity, Social Justice, Affirmative Action, Speech Code, Safe Space, Microaggression, Equality, Inclusivity), which were then distributed alongside positive (Lovely, Pleasant, Right, Positive, Valuable, Excellent, Beneficial, Desirable) and negative word pairings (Horrible, Bothersome, Wrong, Harmful, Awful, Unacceptable, Distressing, Damaging). Scoring of the PC instrument was based on response latencies.

4.3.2 Behavioral PC (Explicit PC – EPC)

The explicit dimension of PC was measured as self-reported, explicit attitudes toward PC through a survey developed for this purpose. Since behaviors as such could not be fully captured in an online study, self-reports on these behaviors were operationalized as the behavioral dimension of PC.

The measurement tool initially contained 23 statement-type questions that captured the PC phenomenon as outlined in the previous pages – self-reported attitudes about PC norms, policies, and language sensitivity (i.e., PC activism). Answer options were presented on a 7-item Likert scale. Seven items from the survey were taken from Andary-Brophy's measure of PC (2015), and the rest were based on an overview of theoretical and empirical literature about PC.[13]

Additionally, in the unrealized main study, groups A and B were to be presented with

[13] Other measures consulted were Plant and Devine's 1998 scales of *Internal and External Motivation to Respond Without Prejudice (IMS and EMS),* Strauts at Blanton's 2015 *Concern for PC scale (CPC),* and Levin's 2003 *PC Scale*.

priming scenarios as an introduction to the EPC measurement tool. These scenarios were meant to induce social desirability and psychological reactance, respectively.

4.3.3 Social Desirability (SD)

Social desirability was captured by using a version of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS) (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The MCSDS enjoys widespread use as a measure of social desirability (Gignac, 2013; Hart et al., 2015; Stober et al., 2002). However, as its original length was not appropriate for this research, a shortened version was used instead. The 13-item MCSDS was developed by Reynolds (1982) while retaining the original scale's reliability and validity (Reynolds, 1982; Ii and Sipps, 1985, as cited in Tan et al., 2022).

The scale was composed of 11 statement-type items rated on a True/False scale. Although a dichotomous format is most commonly used for versions of the MCSD scale, Greenwald and Satow (1970, as cited in Tan et al., 2022) posited that 7-point Likert-type scales are better in identifying social desirability compared to the dichotomous format as they are less likely to result in extreme scores (as cited in Tan et al., 2022). This view was supported by Stober et al. (2002, as cited in ibid). Therefore, the present research distributed answer options along the 7-point Likert scale to keep them consistent with other measures.

4.3.4 Psychological Reactance (PR)

Psychological reactance was measured with the 11-item version of the Hong Psychological Reactance Scale (HPRS Scale) developed by Hong (1989; 1996). After

consulting several scales, the Hong scale was selected due to its frequent use in research (De las Cuevas et al., 2014; Shen & Dillard, 2005; Stehlíková et al., 2020; Waris et al., 2021), but also because of its relative shortness and simplicity: its format is a set of general statements rated on a (5-item) Likert scale, similarly to other measures used in the study.

4.3.5 Political Orientation (PO)

The choice of the appropriate measurement tool for political orientation was not as straightforward. Most studies treat political orientation as a one-dimensional construct composed of "left" and "right" ends (Choma et al., 2010; Demel et al., 2023). Moreover, the liberal-conservative scale in Anglo-American contexts is considered the equivalent of the left-right scale in European settings and practically often treated as the same (Fuchs & Klingemann, 1990, p. 204; Huber, 1989, p. 601; Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976, p. 244; Neundorf, 2011, p. 233; Poole & Rosenthal, 2007; Stokes, 1963, p. 368, as cited in Bauer et al., 2017).

However, some scholars point to the simplification of this construct in empirical research (Bauer et al., 2017; Choma et al., 2010; Demel et al., 2023) and suggest the existence of two separate dimensions – economic and social (Choma et al., 2010; Grünhage & Reuter, 2022).

The present scale followed this claim. Hence, the first two questions represented the economic dimension, whereas the final question represented the social dimension. In line with the other measures, the answers were distributed on a 7-point Likert scale, where higher scores indicate conservatism.

4.3.6 Demography

A total of 6 questions measuring age, sex, gender, race, education level, and employment status were distributed to the participants.

4.4 Scoring

All surveys (besides the IPC and demography) had answers distributed along a Likert scale. This scale was chosen as it is widely accepted and used in social science research, particularly in studies involving attitudes. The decision to use an odd-number scale in the EPC was made in order to include a midpoint. Although it was posited that all respondents would be familiar with PC, including a neutral response option (as opposed to forcing a choice) was nevertheless expected to provide more accurate responses. Additionally, it needs to be highlighted that all Likert scales were treated as interval data so as to simplify the analysis, i.e., allow for a fuller range of statistical techniques to be used. This was achieved by numbering all response options (e.g., 1 – Strongly Disagree, 7 – Strongly Agree). Although there is still disagreement over whether the Likert scale should be understood as ordinal or interval data, it has become a common practice in research to treat Likert-type categories as interval-level measurements (Jamieson, 2004). Moreover, considerable argumentation has been made, and compelling evidence has been collected to confirm that parametric tests can be used with Likert data (e.g., Carifio & Perla, 2008; Norman, 2010; Pell, 2005).

For all measures besides the IPC, continuous scoring was applied to analyze respondents' answers. Any reverse-scored items were scored by subtracting the maximum score number increased by one from the score in question (e.g., for a reverse score of 5 on a

7-item Likert scale: (7+1) - 5 = 3).

Finally, all scores were standardized. IPC results were turned into d-scores. The d-score is a standard score for implicit association tests; it is calculated as the difference between the average response latencies of contrasted trials (convergent vs. inconvergent) divided by the standard deviation of response latencies of those trials. All the remaining measures used z-scores. These were calculated as subtractions of means from individual scores divided by the standard deviation of the data set.

4.5 Analytical Techniques

To assess the reliability of EPC, internal consistency was tested by calculating Cronbach's alpha and the item-total correlations. Moreover, an exploratory factor analysis was performed. As preparation for this factor analysis, inter-item correlations were calculated. Next, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olking measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were performed.

To assess the validity of both PC measures, a series of Pearson's correlation analyses were performed. Similarly, Pearson's correlation analyses were used to assess the hypothesized correlations between the two PC dimensions and social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation. In preparation for this, the normal distribution of variables was assessed by performing the Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Shapiro-Wilk, and Anderson-Darling statistical tests. Moreover, the data was also assessed visually via histograms.

The gap between PC's two dimensions was examined by performing a paired sample t-test. Finally, correlations between the variables were assessed by running Pearson's correlation analyses which were accompanied by scatter plots.

Additionally, the main study was supposed to perform an ANOVA to test differences between the participant groups and a regression analysis to examine the influence of social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation on the gap between PC's normative and behavioral dimension.

5. RESULTS

A total of three pilot studies were conducted in order to assess the reliability and validity of the two PC measures (implicit PC (IPC) and explicit PC (EPC), as well as to test some of the hypotheses that were planned to be examined in more depth in the main study. As these hypotheses (i.e., specifically the correlations between the two PC dimensions and social desirability & psychological reactance) have not been thoroughly established in previous research, it was deemed necessary to assess them in a pilot study to ensure that the efforts in the main study would not be in vain.

Below is an overview of the findings from each pilot study. Studies 2 and 3 were motivated by the findings from the previous studies (i.e., 1 and 2, respectively).

5.1 Pilot Study 1

The first pilot study (n = 35) was conducted primarily to assess the validity and reliability of the new IPC and EPC measurement tools. The detailed analyses are presented in Appendix 2.

The following measures were distributed to the participants:

1. Implicit PC (IPC)

2. Explicit PC (EPC)

3. Multicultural ideology (MCI)

4. Social-dominance orientation (SDO)

5. Social desirability (SD)

6. Psychological reactance (PR)

7. Demography & political orientation (PO)

First, it is important to stress that the pilot study was designed with the assumption of concurrent validity between IPC and EPC[14]. On the basis of this assumption, the construct validity of both measures was supposed to be assessed in parallel (i.e., using the same measures). This assumption has proven false, as the results of Pearson's correlation analysis showed a negative relationship between EPC and IPC scores ($r = -0.23$, $p = 0.19$).

Even though these results were not statistically significant, it was deemed necessary to run another pilot study where some of the instructions in the IPC measure were to be updated for clarity purposes, and the IPC measure would be distributed twice instead of once. This decision was based on a review of the relevant literature where other implicit association tests (IATs) were used and distributed multiple times in one session (Bluemke & Friese, 2008; Carpenter et al., 2022), as well as the descriptive statistics of IPC. Due to the structure of the

[14] The decision to establish concurrent validity by using both measures was made due to the absence of other widely established measures of PC.

IPC measure being somewhat “unusual” for the average test-taker, it was hypothesized that participants would have more “practice” trials, and that their scores on the second IPC test would thus be more reliable.

The reliability of IPC was assessed. As the implicit association test (IAT) forms involve response times and pairings that are not necessarily interrelated, internal consistency (i.e., Cronbach’s alpha) was not the appropriate measure of reliability. Instead, test-retest reliability, assessing consistency across repeated administrations over time, and split-half reliability, assessing consistency across different test portions, are commonly used. Since the participants of this pilot study could not retake the same test over time, split-half reliability was the only type of reliability assessed for IPC. Even though the results ($r = 0.3$, $p = <0.001$) did not meet the optimal value in IATs (Greenwald et al., 2003, as cited in Carpenter et al., 2022), they are within the range of results obtained in other studies (e.g., Bluemke & Friese, 2008; Nosek et al., 2007) and as such, satisfactory.

Due to problems with establishing the concurrent validity of EPC, it was decided that the full reliability analysis of EPC would also be conducted in the 2nd pilot study by joining the samples from the 1st and the 2nd pilot study.

Still, it was possible to confirm EPC’s convergent and divergent validity immediately – results suggested a high positive correlation between PC and MCI ($r = 0.64$, $p = <0.001$) and a high negative correlation between PC and SDO ($r = - 0.55$, $p = 0.001$), consistent with what was hypothesized.

Again, the assumption of concurrent validity of EPC was not confirmed (due to its negative correlation with IPC). As a result, it was decided that the second pilot study would also need to include another PC measure (by Strauts & Blanton, 2015) to guarantee the assessment of EPC’s concurrent validity. This measure has already been used in another study (Dickson, 2017) to establish the validity of another PC measure.

Finally, the results of the tested associations between EPC & IPC and SD & PR & PO were discouraging, not confirming any of the hypothesized correlations apart from the positive correlation between EPC and PO (r = 0.76, p = <.001). This is another reason why another pilot study had to be conducted.

		EPC	SD	PR	PO	IPC
EPC	**Correlation**	1	-0.11	-0.06	0.76	-0.26
	p		.53	.74	<.001	.133
SD	**Correlation**	-0.11	1	-0.29	-0.15	-0.12
	p	.53		.099	.402	.507
PR	**Correlation**	-0.06	-0.29	1	0.05	-0.13
	p	.74	.099		.79	.449
PO	**Correlation**	0.76	-0.15	0.05	1	-0.06
	p	<.001	.402	.79		.741
IPC	**Correlation**	-0.26	-0.12	-0.13	-0.06	1
	p	.133	.507	.449	.741	

Figure 1: Correlation coefficients between EPC, IPC, SD, PR, and PO in pilot study 1 (source: DATAtab)

5.2 Pilot Study 2

In the 2nd pilot study (n = 46), the following measures were used:

1. Implicit PC (IPC) – two rounds (IPC1 and IPC2), two d-scores (D-IAT1 and D-IAT2)

2. Explicit PC (EPC)

3. Concern for PC (CPC)

4. Social desirability (SD)

5. Psychological reactance (PR)

6. Political orientation (PO)

This study evaluated the reliability of the EPC measure, as well as EPC's and IPC's concurrent validity. Moreover, the correlations between IPC & EPC and SD & PR & PO were examined again.

Reliability analysis for EPC was done by joining the samples from both pilot studies (n = 81). Initial Cronbach's alpha was 0.95. Six items were eliminated due to unsatisfactory item-total correlations (i.e., outside the 0.2 – 0.8 range). Next, a correlation matrix was created to examine the average inter-item correlations. As a result, two more items were eliminated (due to falling outside the 0.15 – 0.5 acceptable range). The resulting 15-item scale (α = 0.91) was subjected to an exploratory factor analysis, which demonstrated satisfactory communalities and factor loadings and a 3-factor structure. However, Factor 3 did not meet the minimum 3-item threshold (Costello & Osborne, 2005) – it had three items, but one of them was a cross-loading. A review of Cronbach's alphas and item-total correlations for all factors implied that Factor 3 (and its two loadings) should be eliminated from the scale (α = 0.59). The remaining item from Factor 3 (i.e., cross-loading) was moved to Factor 1. A new factor analysis was then performed, and the two-factor structure of the final 13-item scale was confirmed, with the final two factors (A*ctivism & policies* → eight items, α = 0.89; *Language sensitivity & diversity* → five items, α = 0.84) meeting all the criteria and demonstrating theoretical meaningfulness. All the subsequent analyses took into consideration only the z-scores from the final scale form of the EPC measure.

Next, the concurrent validity of EPC and IPC was tested by comparing them to the Concern for PC (CPC) scale. The results showed that there is a highly positive correlation between both PC measures and CPC (EPC vs. CPC → r = 0.79, p = <.001; IPC1 vs. CPC → r = 0.42, p = 0.003; IPC2 vs. CPC → r = 0.39, p = 0.007), providing evidence of their concurrent validity.

Furthermore, this time, the hypothesized positive relationship between EPC and IPC was also confirmed (EPC vs. IPC1 → r = 0.45, p = 0.002; EPC vs. IPC2 → r = 0.48, p = <.001).

However, evidence for the hypothesized higher mean of EPC in relation to IPC was not found. A paired samples t-test did not reveal any statistically significant differences (IPC → M = 0.2, SD = 0.3, EPC → M = 0, SD = 1.01; t(45) = 1.47, p = 0.149; 95% Confidence interval [-0.07, 0.47]; d = 0.22).

Finally, considering the discouraging results regarding IPC & EPC's correlation with SD, PR, and PO, these correlations were tested again with a new sample. This time, a positive correlation between both PC dimensions and PO was established (EPC vs. PO → r = 0.8, p = <.001; IPC1 vs. PO → r = 0.5, p = <.001, IPC2 vs. PO → r = 0.38, p = 0.009).

The correlations between IPC & EPC and PR were, albeit trending in the hypothesized (i.e., negative) direction, still statistically insignificant (EPC vs. PR → r = -0.08, p = 0.609; IPC1 vs. PR → r = -0.05, p = 0.743; IPC2 vs. PR → r = -0.2, p = 0.183).

Surprisingly, a negative correlation between EPC and SD was observed (r = - 0.29, p = 0.05). No such correlation was found between IPC and SD (IPC1 → r = -0.11, p = 0.447; IPC2 → r = -0.14, p = 0.348). As the negative correlation between EPC and SD was in opposition to what was hypothesized, it was decided that an alternative measure of social desirability was to be found and tested in a 3rd pilot study.

5.3 Pilot Study 3

The 3rd pilot study (*n* = 41) featured the following measures:

1. Explicit PC (EPC) – correlations were calculated both for the initial scale and the final (13-item) scale (*EPC_final*)

2. Psychological reactance (PR)

3. Self-presentation (SP)

4. Marlowe-Crowne social desirability (SD_MC)

5. Social desirability (SD_original)

The purpose of this pilot study was to test two alternative measures of social desirability (SP and SD_MC) to verify if the hypothesized positive correlation between EPC and SD could be observed.

Since it was hypothesized that there is no correlation between IPC and SD, it was decided that the IPC measure would not be included in this pilot study to save on time and finances.

The SD_MC scale is the most widely established social desirability measure in research, but it was initially ignored due to its length. However, after finding a short form of the scale (13 items) that has good reliability and validity (Andrews & Meyer, 2003; Paolo & Ryan, 1991), this scale was reconsidered and included in the set of measures. Secondly, the SP scale was included as a measure of impression management, one of the two components of social desirability (Paulhus, 1984).[15] Finally, the original SD scale was included as well to compare all of the correlation coefficients.

It was also decided that both SD measures were going to be introduced to participants via a short introductory scenario. This instruction was added after reviewing the results from the previous pilot studies, where it was confirmed that participants might have felt disconnected from the need to act socially desirably in an online (anonymous) setting (Buchanan, 2000; Gnambs & Kaspar, 2015, as cited in Lanz et al., 2022), and without any context as to the benefits and costs of such behavior. Therefore, a scenario was introduced

[15] It was hypothesized that if EPC had the greatest positive association with SP, the hypotheses including social desirability would then be modified to include impression management only.

whereby participants should imagine themselves taking the test as part of an interviewing process. This addition was meant to mimic an average real-life situation in which people are motivated to act in a socially desirable way.

As for PR, after additional research for alternative measures, it was decided that no other measure would be considered for the study, as the Hong scale is by far the most established measure of reactance and is comparable to the rest of the measures in length and style. Even though the correlation coefficients from pilot studies 1 and 2 (and 3, as can be seen below) between IPC & EPC and PR were low and statistically insignificant, this relationship was (unlike social desirability) generally trending in the hypothesized (i.e., negative) direction.

Sadly, the results of the 3rd pilot study were disappointing. Neither of the two new SD measures showed significant correlations with EPC nor IPC, even with the addition of the introductory scenario. Moreover, no significant correlation was again observed between EPC and PR.

		EPC	PR	SP	SD_MC	SD_original
EPC	**Correlation**	1	0.1	0.18	0.21	-0.11
	p		.526	.261	.185	.503
PR	**Correlation**	0.1	1	0.28	-0.24	-0.19
	p	.526		.073	.125	.241
SP	**Correlation**	0.18	0.28	1	0.04	-0.11
	p	.261	.073		.825	.513
SD_MC	**Correlation**	0.21	-0.24	0.04	1	0.76
	p	.185	.125	.825		<.001
SD_original	**Correlation**	-0.11	-0.19	-0.11	0.76	1
	p	.503	.241	.513	<.001	

Figure 2: Correlation coefficients between all variables in pilot study 3 (source: DATAtab)

5.4 Key Takeaways

The pilot studies were a partial success.

Firstly, the reliability of the behavioral PC (EPC) measure was established. This was done by measuring the internal consistency and performing an exploratory factor analysis, which uncovered a 2-factor structure of the final, 13-item scale.

Secondly, the reliability of the normative PC (IPC) measure was partially assessed. Due to the nature of the test, split-half and test-retest reliability were the only appropriate tests of reliability. Due to time and financial constraints, only split-half reliability was assessed. Even though the result was not optimal, it was within the range of results observed in other studies and, as such, accepted as satisfactory.

Thirdly, the criterion validity of both PC measures was assessed. Considering again the constraints of the study (i.e., it not having a longitudinal design), assessing predictive validity was not possible. Instead, the concurrent validity of both measures was evaluated by distributing an existing measure of PC (Concern for PC (CPC) scale) to participants. The results showed a moderate positive correlation between CPC and IPC ($r = 0.39$, $p = 0.007$) – this value was judged as acceptable. Moreover, a highly positive correlation between CPC and EPC was found ($r = 0.79$, $p = <.001$). Despite the high correlation coefficient, the EPC measure still seems to be providing additional information beyond the established criterion.

Fourthly, the construct validity of the EPC measure was assessed. For measuring convergent validity, the Multicultural Ideology (MCI) scale was used. The results were satisfactory ($r = 0.64$, $p = <.001$). Moreover, divergent validity was established by using the Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) scale ($r = -0.55$, $p = 0.001$).

Sadly, the construct validity of IPC was not established, as none of the relationships were statistically significant.

Similarly, the content validity of neither of the two PC measures was demonstrated, as I did not have access to experts in the relevant field, in this case, that of psychology, to review the materials.

Overall, the results obtained offer promising evidence of EPC and IPC's reliability and validity and provide a solid foundation upon which future research can build. The goal of developing a measurement tool for both PC dimensions at the individual level was effectively achieved.

As for the correlation between IPC and EPC, after making some adjustments after the first pilot study, a moderate positive correlation between the two was observed in the second pilot study ($r = 0.48$, $p = <0.001$). However, the hypothesized difference in means was not established even after uniting samples from pilot studies 1 and 2 (EPC → $M = 0$, $SD = 1$; IPC → $M = 0.19$, $SD = 0.3$; $t(80) = -1.75$, $p = .084$; 95% Confidence interval [-0.41, 0.03]; $d = 0.19$). A possible reason for this is the generally small sample size, which cannot detect smaller effect sizes.

As for the other hypotheses, i.e., the correlations between the two PC measures and social desirability (SD), psychological reactance (PR), and political orientation (PO), they were partially supported.

Positive correlations between EPC and PO ($r = 0.8$, $p = <.001$) and IPC and PO ($r = 0.38$, $p = 0.009$) were found. This offers evidence to support the hypothesis by Norris and Inglehart, according to which opposition to PC is a decisively conservative phenomenon (2019).

As for PR, analyses have not found significant correlations with either of the two PC dimensions.

Moreover, even after two unsuccessful evaluations and a subsequent search for alternative measures of social desirability, the existence of the hypothesized positive

correlation between EPC and SD was not established. Instead, a negative correlation was observed in the second pilot study ($r = -0.29$, $p = 0.05$). Of course, these results might simply suggest that individuals who exhibit higher levels of behavioral PC are less concerned with conforming to societal expectations in their responses. However, another possible reason for such a result could lie in the nature of the conditions in which the test was taken. The items were supposed to induce participants to answer in a socially desirable way by presenting questions to which an "honest" response would generally be viewed as socially unacceptable or unfavorable (e.g., "I sometimes tell lies if I have to.") However, considering that the test was taken in an online, anonymous setting, respondents might have judged honesty to *be* the socially desirable response. Honesty is a quality that is often highly regarded in social interactions (e.g., see Kant et al., 2002). Therefore, individuals might have opted for more honest responses, especially in a situation where talk was cheap. In any case, this finding was interesting as it goes against claims and evidence that associate PC with socially desirable behavior (e.g., Andary-Brophy, 2015; Barker, 1994).

As for the descriptive statistics, they were generally appropriate for z-score analyses, and even though some of the data across studies deviated from the normal distribution, this fact was overlooked due to the small sample sizes in the studies. Nevertheless, it is seen as a limitation that compromises the reliability of some of the results.

Moreover, the fact that three separate studies were performed instead of only one is another limitation of the research. These studies were not identical, meaning that some of the results had no chance of being replicated or compared across studies. Similarly, integrating the scattered results across studies is quite unfortunate, considering that the studies were not perfectly aligned in terms of their content and objectives.

Lastly, despite performing three studies, the samples in all of them were quite small (40 on average) and, as such, not generalizable. Although some of the results were replicated across multiple studies (e.g., the positive correlation between EPC and PO), most were not.

Even so, the results obtained in the pilot studies were promising, considering the available resources. Some evidence was found to support the majority of the hypotheses.

The hypotheses that have not been supported, such as the correlations between the two dimensions of PC and both SD and PR and the influence of SD, PR, and PO on the gap, warrant further investigation. Future research with a larger sample size may provide the necessary evidence to substantiate these relationships.

Overall, it is hoped that the two PC measurement tools developed for this study can continue to be validated in future research, although it is also recognized how unlikely this is, considering the very limited number of people the present research will reach.

6. CONCLUSION

This thesis conducted a comprehensive analysis of the concept of political correctness (PC), combining a constructivist perspective with insights from psychology, sociology, and linguistics, and complementing them with empirical research.

This pursuit began with a historical overview of PC that traced its evolution from a term designating the official party line to an element of social activism in the pursuit of civil and political rights. It was discovered that the roots of PC were seeded, somewhat surprisingly, in totalitarian societies. Inspiration with Soviet and Maoist ideologies led PC to become intertwined with 1960s social justice movements in the US, whose goal was to

challenge established power structures. As such, PC's growing salience in the following decades is a reflection of the "silent revolution" (Norris & Inglehart, 2019) that has shifted social values toward self-expression and inclusivity. At the same time, it has signified a backlash among "traditional" identities. With this in mind, the thesis argued that it is identity struggles, or identity politics, that lie at the core of the current debates about PC.

The analysis then moved into reviewing the definitions and measurement tools of PC, highlighting PC's contextual fluidity and the challenges this fluidity presents in terms of external manifestations of PC. As such, central to this thesis was the development of a conceptual framework of PC. It was argued that PC is comprised of two primary dimensions: a normative dimension, defined as adherence to social norms and values, and a behavioral dimension, involving the prescription of specific behaviors as expressions of these norms and values. This model served as the basis for further theoretical and empirical exploration of PC.

The theoretical deliberations then focused on examining the key elements of PC's two dimensions and factors that hinder their perfect alignment. In this pursuit, Wendt's theory of the social construction of meanings and identities was applied to analyze the nature of the disagreements over PC and understand how PC can simultaneously exist as a subjective belief and as an objective social phenomenon generating specific outcomes. In this context, it was argued that the fundamental reason for disagreements over PC stems from the diverse social identities that are continuously reconstituted through the social construction of knowledge. Moreover, it was posited that this multitude of identities leads to varying interpretations of the norms and values associated with PC, which then generate a gap between the normative bases of PC and their behavioral manifestations.

The thesis argued that this gap is not only present at the level of individual beliefs but is also deeply ingrained in the collective knowledge that defines group identities. As such, it was proposed that a possible solution could be the development of a collective identity in

relation to PC. It was argued that this identity would be based on a specific brand of social justice that emphasizes equity, non-discrimination, diversity, and inclusivity. However, the difficulty of growing a collective identity and of applying Wendt's theory to the concept of PC were recognized as limitations to this hypothesis.

Another goal of the thesis was to develop two new measurement tools of PC at the individual level. These tools, designed to capture PC's two dimensions, were tested and refined across three pilot studies. The studies were instrumental in validating the tools' effectiveness and providing data on the relationships between the two dimensions of PC and the variables of social desirability, psychological reactance, and political orientation. However, the main study, which aimed to fully examine the gap between the normative and behavioral dimensions of PC, did not occur. This fact is recognized as a significant weakness of the thesis.

Nevertheless, it is posited that the empirical findings from the pilot studies still offer valuable insights into the dynamics of PC. Firstly, they validate the proposed dual model of PC and provide a starting point for further refinement of a new measurement tool of PC. Secondly, by addressing some of the arguments from existing literature, such as PC's connection to reputational concerns, political orientation, and threats to freedom, they contribute to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms underpinning adherence to and resistance against PC-related principles. This understanding can have practical implications for communication and policy-making. Indeed, being aware of the factors that influence adherence to PC norms can affect actors' strategies, mitigate disagreements on sensitive policy issues, and promote constructive dialogue in ideologically charged contexts.

However, the research comes with certain limitations. Firstly, the application of Wendt's theory to individual behavior has its challenges, contained primarily in the macro-level nature of the analysis. Consequently, Wendt's theory may not be able to account for the

subtleties of individual interpretations and behaviors in relation to PC. Moreover, the sample size of the pilot studies limits the generalizability of the findings. Future research should aim to reproduce these studies with larger and more representative samples.

Other possible avenues of future research include exploring the impact of external constraints, such as social desirability, on PC attitudes in non-anonymous settings. Such data could provide valuable insights into the dynamics of PC in everyday interactions. Moreover, examining PC in various cultural contexts, such as in the context of the East vs. West divide, could inform the understandings of how different cultural contexts shape PC knowledge and patterns of behavior. Finally, one of the most entertaining experiences in the process of writing this thesis was learning how PC is employed in the rhetoric of prominent political figures. Consequently, research mapping the evolution of PC discourses, primarily in Western countries, could shed light on the strategic employments of the term and the effects these employments may have on public opinion and voting patterns. The discourses analyzed do not have to be restricted to individual figures; they can also include an overview of the evolution of the use of PC in organizations such as the United Nations.

Ultimately, this thesis has tried to shed some light on the complex dynamics of PC and offer insights into its dual nature and the factors influencing its configurations. It is hoped that this effort has made a meaningful contribution to the ongoing debate and has provided a possible direction for future empirical and theoretical explorations of PC.

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8. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – STUDY MATERIALS

1. Explicit PC (EPC) – initial scale

23 statements (Likert items) measuring self-reported attitudes towards PC beliefs and norms, PC language, and PC policies/activism. Statements highlighted in orange were taken from Andary-Brophy's PC scale. Others were inspired by theoretical literature on the PC phenomenon and the debate about it.

What follows is a series of statements commonly associated with the phenomenon of political correctness (PC). Please rate the degree to which you agree with the statements on a scale ranging from "Totally Disagree" to "Totally Agree". Please read the statements carefully and respond truthfully - there are no right and wrong answers. Your responses are anonymous.

1. Language has the power to offend.

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Moderately Disagree

3 - Slightly Disagree

4 - Neither Agree nor Disagree

5 - Slightly Agree

6 - Moderately Agree

7 - Strongly Agree

2. I am mindful of the way I address, engage with, and talk about other people so as to not offend them. Note: This includes using gender-neutral language, avoiding racial and ethnic slurs, and refraining from using language that is perceived as derogatory or marginalizing.

3. Sexist, racially-insensitive, and other derogatory terms are a product of historical inequalities.

4. Using respectful language when engaging with or talking about different groups of people leads to a larger awareness and sensitivity toward their struggles.

5. Racial slurs and derogatory language that describe racial, ethnic, sexual, religious, or other minorities can be considered hate speech.

6. Literature courses that examine only the "great books" of Western culture should be updated by including authors from different backgrounds, especially those that confront issues relating to ethnicity, race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

7. Older books that use terms that could now be regarded as racist or otherwise deeply offensive should either be revised or should not be taught in schools at all.

8. Government and international bodies should strive to revise their documentation, so as to make sure that its wording is gender-neutral whenever possible.

9. There should be laws in place to fight hate speech (e.g., open denial of the WW2 genocide should be punishable by law).

10. Social inequalities exist, and certain groups of people are at a historical disadvantage that prevents them from achieving the same quality of life as the rest.

11. Ethnic, racial, gender and other diversity in the workplace and academia is synonymous with a wider range of ideas.

12. Prejudice and stereotypes have a negative effect on the quality of life of their target groups, and overall prevent social progress.

13. People have a right to be offended.

14. The white race is responsible for most of the atrocities in human history.

15. There are no biologically based differences in personality, talent, and ability to reason, between racial groups.

16. As a society, we should strive towards correcting historical inequalities in order to achieve social justice and equality for all people.

17. People who use discriminatory speech and behavior should be called out.

18. Those who do not adhere to common standards of social justice and equality should be ostracized and punished.

19. The largest responsibility in tackling climate change should fall upon the shoulders of rich Western countries, as they are the ones that have profited from global warming.

20. Brands, media and streaming companies such as Netflix should strive towards a more diverse representation and positive portrayal of different minorities.

21. Racial, ethnic, and gender quotas should exist in education and employment to ensure equality where there has historically been a large inequality.

22. Research articles investigating the existence of differences (e.g., in intelligence or personality) as a consequence of gender, race, or ethnicity should not be published.

23. All intimate contact, including touching and kissing, should be agreed upon explicitly before initiation.

2. Explicit PC (EPC) – final scale + priming scenarios (SD and PR)

The final list is a result of a reliability analysis of the original measure that included measuring internal consistency and performing an exploratory factor analysis.

Original numbering of questions has been preserved.

Listed below are also the introductory, priming scenarios for GROUP 1 (social desirability) and GROUP 2 (psychological reactance) for the main study.

GROUP 1 - SD SCENARIO

Note: This scenario was inspired by real-life practices of similar "values alignment" assessments in (primarily US) companies.

Imagine it's your first day on the job. As part of the onboarding process, the HR manager hands you a survey to assess your culture fit with the team, taking into account your attitudes towards respectful and inclusive language, non-discrimination, social appropriateness, and inclusivity.

Imagining yourself in this scenario, please answer the following questions.

GROUP 2 - PR SCENARIO

Note: This scenario was inspired by Shen and Dillard's studies (2005) measuring psychological reactance, where they provided similarly phrased "threat to freedom" messages.

We should all strive for social justice and correct any inequalities preventing people from receiving the same opportunities and quality of life as the rest. It's not a matter of choice; it's a necessity that any reasonable person recognizes.

Furthermore, building an inclusive and diverse environment where all races, genders, and sexualities are represented is synonymous with a developed, progressive society.

As such, it is every person's responsibility to refuse derogatory and insensitive language and treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Failing to embrace these values and goals perpetuates discrimination and prevents social progress.

So if you're already using respectful language and are committed to fighting for social justice, continue doing so. And if you're not, you are part of the problem. You should check

your privilege and acknowledge that it comes with the responsibility to actively contribute to dismantling systemic inequalities.

Note: EPC scale starts below.

Please rate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

1. Language has the power to offend.

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Moderately Disagree

3 - Slightly Disagree

4 - Neither Agree nor Disagree

5 - Slightly Agree

6 - Moderately Agree

7 - Strongly Agree

2. I am mindful of the way I address, engage with, and talk about other people so as to not offend them. Note: This includes using gender-neutral language, avoiding racial and ethnic slurs, and refraining from using language that is perceived as derogatory or marginalizing.

3. Using respectful language when engaging with or talking about different groups of people leads to a larger awareness and sensitivity toward their struggles.

4. Racial slurs and derogatory language that describe racial, ethnic, sexual, religious, or other minorities can be considered hate speech.

5. Literature courses that examine only the "great books" of Western culture should be updated by including authors from different backgrounds, especially those that confront issues relating to ethnicity, race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

6. Older books that use terms that could now be regarded as racist or otherwise deeply offensive should either be revised or should not be taught in schools at all.

7. Government and international bodies should strive to revise their documentation, so as to make sure that its wording is gender-neutral whenever possible.

8. There should be laws in place to fight hate speech (e.g., open denial of the WW2 genocide should be punishable by law).

9. Ethnic, racial, gender and other diversity in the workplace and academia is synonymous with a wider range of ideas.

10. The white race is responsible for most of the atrocities in human history.

11. Those who do not adhere to common standards of social justice and equality should be ostracized and punished.

12. The largest responsibility in tackling climate change should fall upon the shoulders of rich Western countries, as they are the ones that have profited from global warming.

13. Research articles investigating the existence of differences (e.g., in intelligence or personality) as a consequence of gender, race, or ethnicity should not be published.

3. Concern for Political Correctness Scale (CPC)

Developed by Strauts & Blanton, the CPC scale was designed to assess the concern that people feel for language that is politically correct. The scale uses a 7-point bipolar rating ranging from -3 (Disagree Extremely) to 3 (Agree Extremely), with 0 (Neutral) in the middle. It is composed of two sub-scales but will be used in its entirety (as it is measuring a single construct) to test concurrent validity of the EPC measure.

Political Correctness - Emotion sub-scale

1. I get anxious when I hear someone use politically incorrect language.

Disagree extremely

Disagree quite a bit

Disagree slightly

Neutral

Agree slightly

Agree quite a bit

Agree extremely

2. I feel angry when a person says something politically incorrect.

3. The use of politically incorrect language around me makes me very uncomfortable.

4. I get mad when I hear someone use politically incorrect language.

Political Correctness - Activism sub-scale

5. When a person uses politically incorrect words, I point it out to them to help educate them about the issues.

6. Even if no harm was intended, I correct people if they say something that is politically incorrect.

7. When people show political ignorance in their choice of words, I call this to their attention.

8. I try to educate people around me about the political meaning of their words.

9. I will educate people about the political issues when their choice of words reveals a misunderstanding.

4. Multicultural Ideology Scale (MCI)

Responses are recorded on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree). All original items are included, but wording has been updated wherever there was mention of a specific country, in order to make the statement more adaptable to the present context.

The following statements concern your attitudes towards a culturally plural society. Please read the statements carefully and answer the degree to which you agree with them on a 7-item scale from 1 - Strongly Disagree to 7 - Strongly Agree. Please answer truthfully, as there are no right or wrong answers. Your responses are anonymous.

1. It is good that many different groups with different cultural backgrounds live in my country.

2. Ethnic minorities should preserve their ethnic heritage in my country.

3. It would be best if all people forget their background as soon as possible. (reverse-scored)

4. A society that has a variety of cultural groups is more able to tackle new problems as they occur.

5. The unity of the country is weakened by people who are not native to the country. (reverse-scored)

6. If immigrants want to keep their own cultures they should keep to themselves. (reverse-scored)

7. Native people should do more to learn about the customs and traditions of the other cultural groups.

8. Immigrant parents must encourage their children to retain the culture and traditions of their homeland.

9. Immigrants to my country should change their behavior to be more like the native people. (reverse-scored)

10. A society made up of many cultural groups has greater difficulty retaining its national identity compared to a society made up of one or two cultural groups. (reverse-scored)

5. Social Dominance Orientation Scale (SDO)

What follows is a series of statements related to perceptions of social dominance. Please read the statements carefully and answer the degree to which you agree with them on a scale ranging from 1 - Strongly Disagree to 7 - Strongly Agree. Please answer truthfully, as there are no right or wrong answers. Your responses are anonymous.

1. Some groups of people must be kept in their place.

2. It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.

3. An ideal society requires some groups to be on top and others to be on the bottom.

4. Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.

5. *Groups at the bottom are just as deserving as groups at the top.* (reverse-scored)

6. No one group should dominate in society. (reverse-scored)

7. Groups at the bottom should not have to stay in their place. (reverse-scored)

8. Group dominance is a poor principle. (reverse-scored)

9. We should not push for group equality.

10. We shouldn't try to guarantee that every group has the same quality of life.

11. It is unjust to try to make groups equal.

12. Group equality should not be our primary goal.

13. We should work to give all groups an equal chance to succeed. (reverse-scored)

14. We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups. (reverse-scored)

15. No matter how much effort it takes, we ought to strive to ensure that all groups have the same chance in life. (reverse-scored)

16. Group equality should be our ideal. (reverse-scored)

6. The Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding Short Form – BIDR-16 (Social Desirability – SD)

This is a shortened version of the BIDR-40 scale by Paulhus (1991). The survey contains 16 statements with a Likert-type (7-item) scale. The numbering as presented here has been preserved from the original version (respondents received the survey with 1-16 numbering).

The following statements concern your attitudes towards social desirability. Please read the statements carefully and answer the degree to which you agree with them on a 7-item scale presented below. Please answer truthfully, as there are no right or wrong answers. Your responses are anonymous.

Please report your agreement with the statements using the following scale:

+_____+_____+_____+_____+_____+_____+

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not true somewhat very true

_____ *4. I have not always been honest with myself.* (reverse-scored)

_____ *5. I always know why I like things.*

_____ *10. It's hard for me to shut off a disturbing thought.* (reverse-scored)

_____ *11. I never regret my decisions.*

_____ *12. I sometimes lose out on things because I can't make up my mind soon enough.* (reverse-scored)

_____ *15. I am a completely rational person.*

_____ *17. I am very confident of my judgments.*

_____ *18. I have sometimes doubted my ability as a lover.* (reverse-scored)

_____ *21. I sometimes tell lies if I have to.* (reverse-scored)

_____ *22. I never cover up my mistakes.*

_____ *23. There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone.* (reverse-scored)

_____ *25. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.* (reverse-scored)

_____ *27. I have said something bad about a friend behind his or her back.* (reverse-scored)

_____ *28. When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening.*

_____ *36. I never take things that don't belong to me.*

_____ *40. I don't gossip about other people's business.*

7. Reynolds Short Form C of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Social Desirability – SD_MC)

The original Marlowe-Crowne SD Scale (MCSD) was developed in 1960 and is widely used as a measure of social desirability bias. Numerous short versions have been created also, with one of the more prominent ones being the 3 Reynold's short form. Form C has been selected due to having the largest reliability out of the 3 (Reynolds, 1982; Ii and Sipps, 1985, as cited in Tan et al., 2022).

The item numbers correspond to their position in the full MC scale. All items are rated on a True/False scale. Although a dichotomous format is most commonly used for versions of the MCSD scale, Greenwald and Satow (1970, as cited in Tan et al., 2022) posited that 7-point Likert-type scales are better in identifying social desirability compared to the dichotomous format as they are less likely to result in extreme scores (as cited in Tan et al., 2022). This view was supported by Stober et al. (2002, as cited in ibid). Therefore, the items will be distributed using the 7-point Likert scale, similarly to the EPC measure.

1. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Moderately Disagree

3 - Slightly Disagree

4 - Neither Agree nor Disagree

5 - Slightly Agree

6 - Moderately Agree

7 - Strongly Agree

2. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.

3. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.

4. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.

5. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener. (reverse-scored)

6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.

7. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake. (reverse-scored)

8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.

9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable. (reverse-scored)

10. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own. (reverse-scored)

11. There have times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.

12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.

13. *I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings. (reverse-scored)*

8. Revised 18-item Self-Monitoring Scale (Self-Presentation – SP)

The 25-item Self-Monitoring Scale was developed by Snyder, with several original items that had poor discrimination between high and low scorers being subsequently eliminated by the author (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986).

Keying is given by either T (true) or F (false) in parentheses. High self-monitoring individuals tend to answer in the keyed direction; low self-monitoring individuals tend to answer in the alternative direction.

1. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people. (F)

2. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like. (F)

3. I can only argue for ideas which I already believe. (F)

4. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information. (T)

5. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain others. (T)

6. I would probably make a good actor. (T)

7. In a group of people I am rarely the center of attention. (F)

8. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons. (T)

9. I am not particularly good at making other people like me. (F)

10. I'm not always the person I appear to be. (T)

11. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone or win their favor. (F)

12. I have considered being an entertainer. (T)

13. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting. (F)

14. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations. (F)

15. At a party I let others keep the jokes and stories going. (F)

16. I feel a bit awkward in public and do not show up quite as well as I should. (F)

17. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a right end). (T)

18. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them. (T)

9. Hong Psychological Reactance Scale (Psychological Reactance – PR)

This is the 11-item version of the Hong Psychological Reactance Scale (HPRS Scale) developed by Hong (1989; 1996). Each item is presented with a 5-point Likert-type scale.

Please read the following statements carefully and answer the degree to which you agree with them on a 5-item scale ranging from 1- Completely Disagree to 5 - Completely Agree.

1. Regulations trigger a sense of resistance in me.

1 - Completely Disagree

2 - Somewhat Disagree

3 - Neither Disagree nor Agree

4 - Somewhat Agree

5 - Completely Agree

2. I find contradicting others stimulating.

3. When something is prohibited, I usually think, "That's exactly what I am going to do."

4. I consider advice from others to be an intrusion.

5. I become frustrated when I am unable to make free and independent decisions.

6. It irritates me when someone points out things which are obvious to me.

7. I become angry when my freedom of choice is restricted.

8. Advice and recommendations usually induce me to do just the opposite.

9. I resist the attempts of others to influence me.

10. It makes me angry when another person is held up as a role model for me to follow.

11. When someone forces me to do something, I feel like doing the opposite.

10. Political Orientation Scale (PO)

Most studies treat political orientation as a one-dimensional construct composed of "left" and "right" ends (Choma et al., 2010; Demel et al., 2023). Moreover, the liberal-conservative scale in Anglo-American contexts is considered the equivalent of the left-right scale in European settings, and practically often treated as the same (Fuchs & Klingemann, 1990, p. 204; Huber, 1989, p. 601; Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976, p. 244; Neundorf, 2011, p. 233; Poole & Rosenthal, 2007; Stokes, 1963, p. 368, as cited in Bauer et al., 2017).

However, some scholars point to the simplification of this construct in empirical research (Bauer et al., 2017; Choma et al., 2010; Demel et al., 2023), and suggest the existence of two separate dimensions – economic and social (Choma et al., 2010; Grünhage & Reuter, 2022).

The present scale follows this claim. Hence, the first two questions represent the economic dimension, whereas the final question represents the social dimension. In line with the other measures, the answers are distributed on a 7-point Likert scale, where higher scores indicate conservatism.

In political matters, people often refer to "liberals" and "conservatives." Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements.

1. I support lower taxes, less regulation, and a free-market approach to the economy.

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Moderately Disagree

3 - Slightly Disagree

4 - Neither Agree nor Disagree

5 - Slightly Agree

6 - Moderately Agree

7 - Strongly Agree

2. The government has a responsibility to support disadvantaged individuals and promote social welfare. (reverse-scored)

3. I support policies that protect individual rights and freedoms, including reproductive rights, LGBT rights, and equal protection under the law. (reverse-scored)

11. Demography

What follows is a set of demographic questions. Your responses are anonymous.

1. What is your age?

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65 and over

2. What is your sex?

Female

Male

Intersex

3. What is your gender identity?

Woman

Man

Transgender

A gender identity not listed here

4. What is your race/ethnicity? (multiple answer)

Asian

Black

Caucasian

Hispanic or Latino

Native American

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Other (please specify)

5. What is the highest level of education you obtained?

Elementary school

High school

Associate's degree

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Doctorate degree

Other (please specify)

6. What is your current employment status?

Employed Full-Time

Employed Part-Time

Self-Employed / Entrepreneur

Unemployed

Student

Homemaker

Retired

Other (please specify)

12. Formal Consent for Participation in the Study

Thank you for considering participation in this research study. Before you proceed, it is important that you read and understand the information provided below and provide your consent. This study consists of two parts. The first part involves a short experiment, and the second part includes classic survey forms assessing your attitudes. The topic of the study is political correctness. As such, some questions might be related to sensitive social issues. Moreover, at the end of the survey, you will be asked to provide some demographic information.

ALL OF YOUR ANSWERS ARE ANONYMOUS AND WILL NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE OTHER THAN THE PRESENT STUDY.

1. I have read the above information, and I understand that participation in this study is entirely voluntary.

2. I understand that my data from the experiment will only be used if I choose to complete the entire study by participating in both the experiment and surveys.

3. I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point.

4. I understand that all information collected during this study will be kept confidential, and my identity will be protected.

By clicking "I agree" or proceeding with the study, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the information provided above, and I consent to participate in the study.

13. Single Target Implicit Association Test (ST-IAT) (Implicit PC – IPC)

link to the test -->	http://eliskaspcstudy.atwebpages.com/ST-IAT/

Category	**Items**
Good	Lovely, Pleasant, Right, Positive, Valuable, Excellent, Beneficial, Desirable
Bad	Horrible, Bothersome, Wrong, Harmful, Awful, Unacceptable, Distressing, Damaging
Political Correctness	Diversity, Social justice, Affirmative action, Speech code, Safe space, Microaggression, Equality, Inclusivity

The items in red were removed after feedback from pilot studies. The item "Microaggression" was described by multiple participants as ambiguous because of its proximity to the word "aggression," which holds strictly negative connotations. Similarly, the item "Affirmative Action" was removed as the word "affirmative" is strongly associated with positivity. To maintain the same number of items in all stimuli categories, two items were also removed from the categories "Good" and "Bad." Below is the final proposed list of items across categories.

Two rounds of a single-target implicit association test (ST-IAT) are suggested. D-score2 (i.e., results of the 2nd test) should be the only score used.

round 1	Good/Bad - test trial

round 2	PC on either Good/Bad - test trial
round 3	PC on either Good/Bad
round 4	PC on either Good/Bad (opposite side) - test trial
round 5	PC on either Good/Bad (opposite side)

Note2: code for the test and for d-scores is attached as a separate document (*IPC_(ST-IAT)_code*)

APPENDIX 2 – PILOT STUDY ANALYSES

Pilot study 1

The first pilot study (n = 35) was conducted primarily to assess the **validity and reliability of the new IPC and EPC measures.**

The following measures were distributed to the participants:

Implicit PC (IPC)

Explicit PC (EPC)

Multicultural ideology (MCI)

Social-dominance orientation (SDO)

Social desirability (SD)

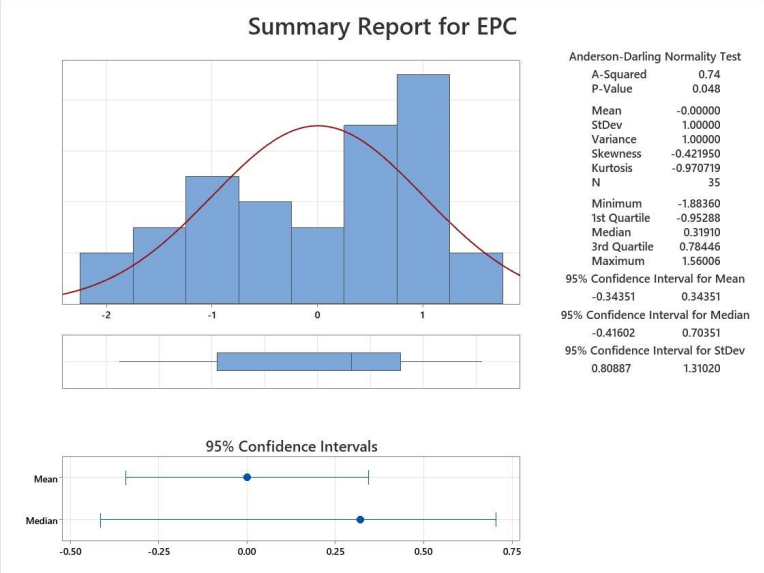
Psychological reactance (PR)

Demography & political orientation (PO)

Descriptive statistics	EPC	IPC	MCI	SDO	SD	PR	IPC
Mean	0	0.19	0	0	0	0	0
Std. Deviation	1	0.3	1	1	1	1	1
Variance	1	0.09	1	1	1	1	1
Minimum	-1.88	-0.53	-2.72	-1.21	-1.73	-2.76	-1.67
Maximum	1.56	0.81	1.69	2.48	2.14	1.8	1.38
Range	3.44	1.34	4.41	3.69	3.87	4.55	3.06
Skew	-0.42	-0.48	-0.5	0.62	0.1	-0.75	0.04
Kurtosis	-0.97	0.61	0.28	-0.45	-0.51	0.7	-1.42

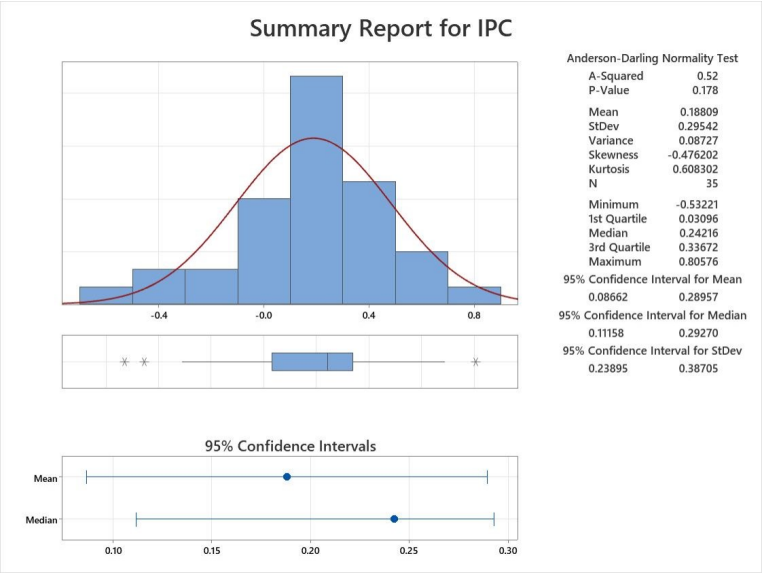
Values are based on z-scores. All measures besides IPC have the expected mean of 0 and sd of 1, with IPC suggesting a small positive bias, and a low degree of variability. Moreover, the skewness/kurtosis of all measures is within the acceptable range.

Normal distribution tests

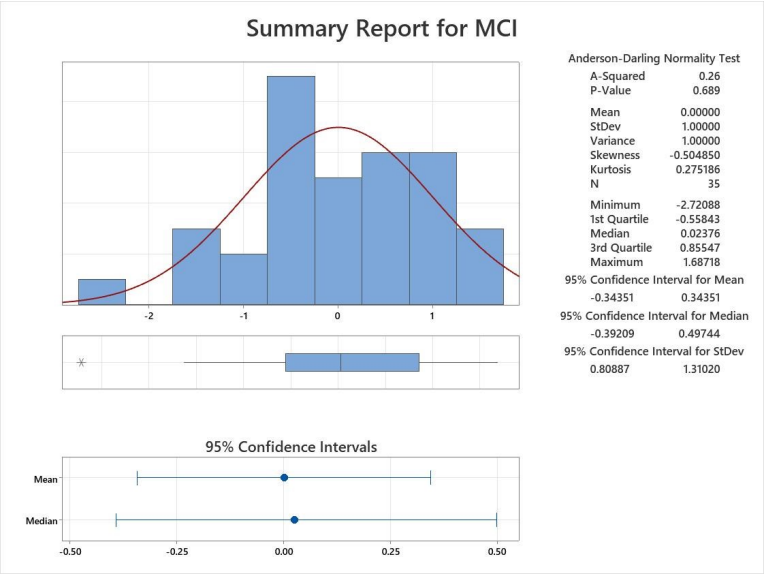


EPC	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.14	0.463
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.14	0.083

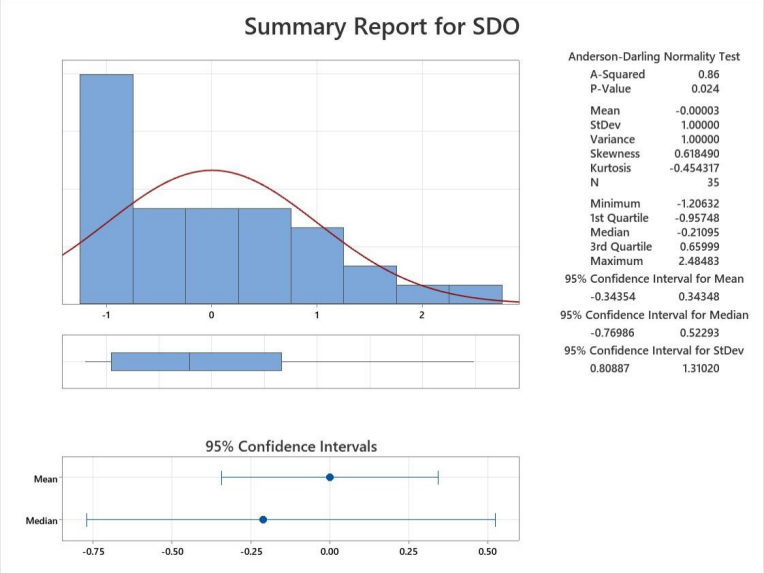
Shapiro-Wilk	0.94	0.05



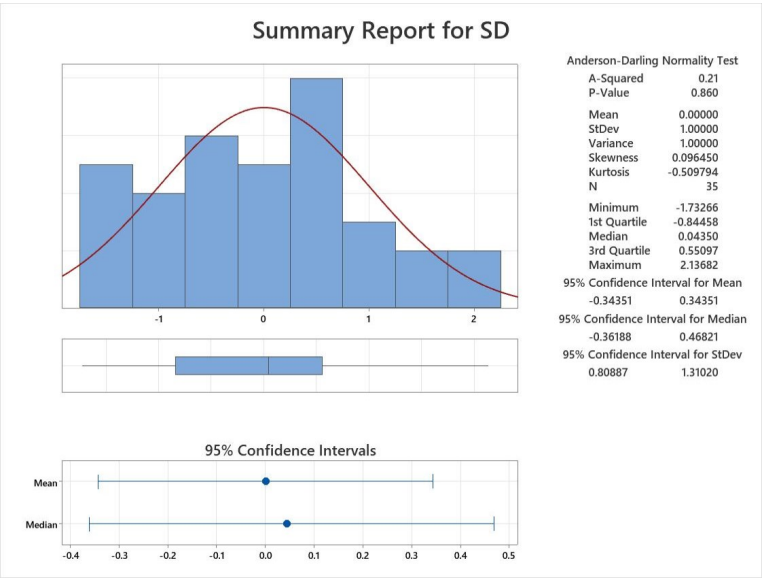
IPC	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.11	0.688
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.11	0.258
Shapiro-Wilk	0.97	0.307



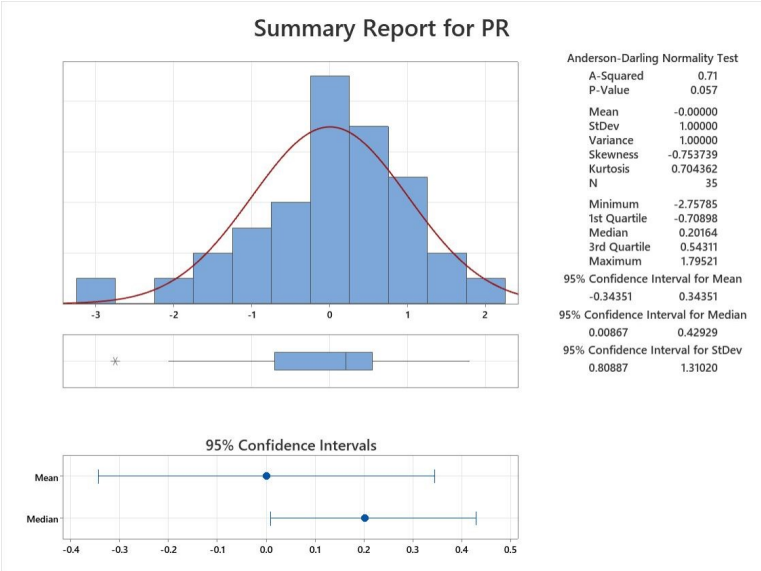
MCI	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.09	0.921
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.09	0.689
Shapiro-Wilk	0.97	0.524



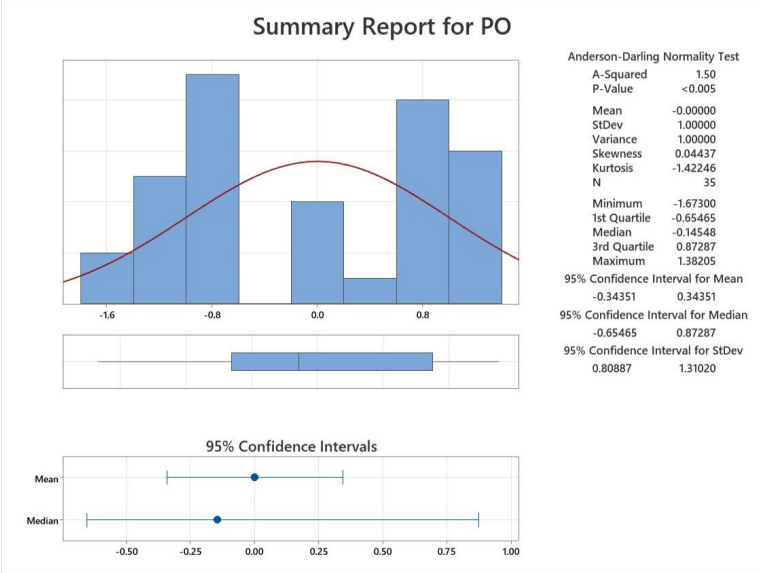
SDO	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.14	0.454
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.14	0.078
Shapiro-Wilk	0.92	0.015



SD	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.06	0.998
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.06	0.222
Shapiro-Wilk	0.98	0.693



PR	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.19	0.132
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.19	0.002
Shapiro-Wilk	0.95	0.126



PO	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.48	<.001
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.48	<.001
Shapiro-Wilk	0.45	<.001

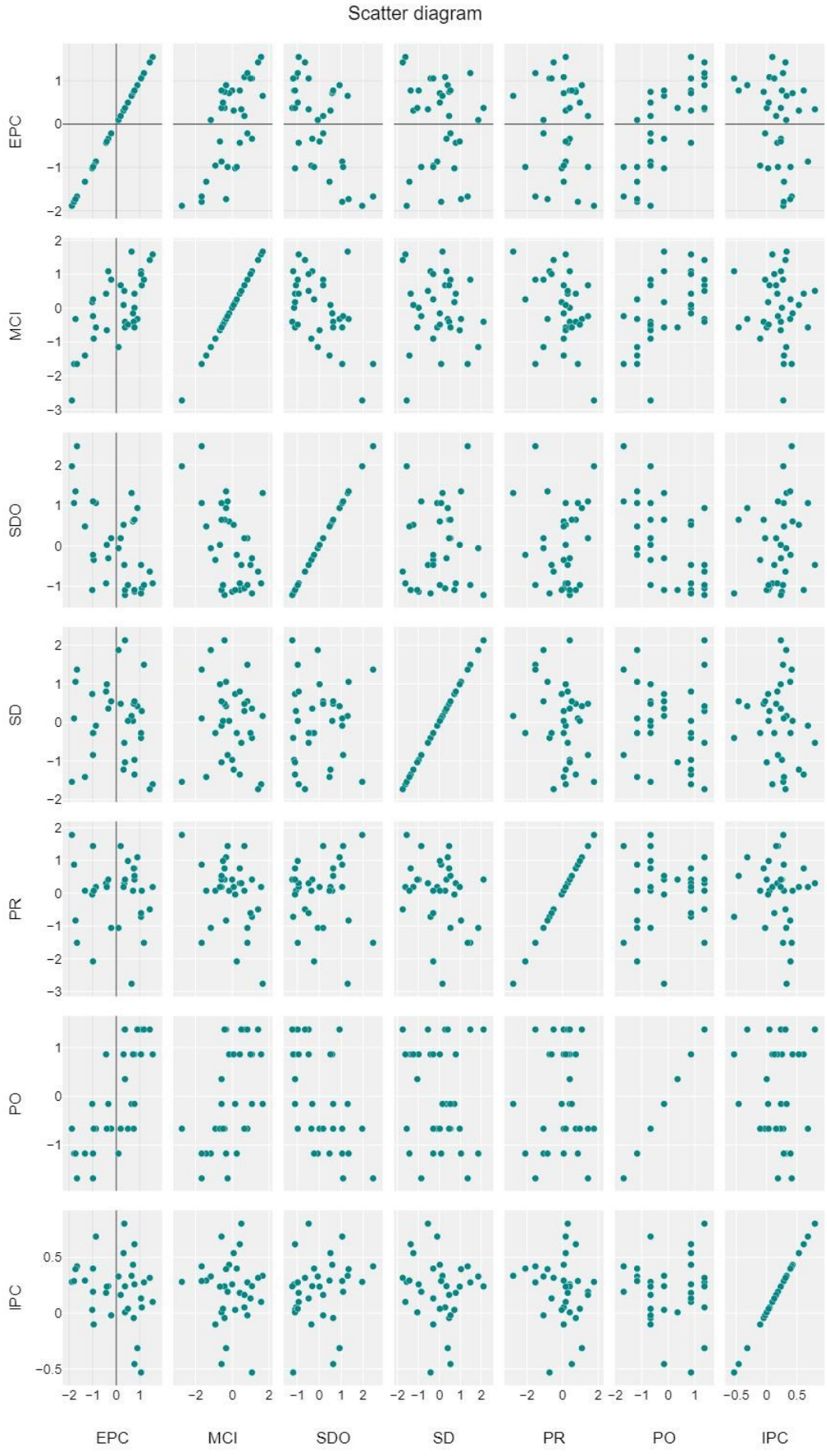
Due to the sample size, it was assumed that the assumption of normality was not violated (i.e., that the data can be considered as normally distributed), even though some of the results of the normal distribution tests and visual data suggest otherwise.

Correlations

		EPC	MCI	SDO	SD	PR	PO	IPC
EPC	Correlation		0.64	-0.55	-0.1	-0.05	0.76	-0.23
	p (2-tailed)		<.001	0.001	0.552	0.784	<.001	0.19
MCI	Correlation	0.64		-0.53	-0.11	-0.37	0.51	-0.11
	p (2-tailed)	<.001		0.001	0.538	0.028	0.002	0.535
SDO	Correlation	-0.55	-0.53		0.08	0	-0.57	0.21

	p (2-tailed)	0.001	0.001		0.66	0.985	<.001	0.215
SD	Correlation	-0.1	-0.11	0.08		-0.27	-0.14	-0.09
	p (2-tailed)	0.552	0.538	0.66		0.111	0.43	0.608
PR	Correlation	-0.05	-0.37	0	-0.27		0.06	-0.09
	p (2-tailed)	0.784	0.028	0.985	0.111		0.728	0.596
PO	Correlation	0.76	0.51	-0.57	-0.14	0.06		-0.02
	p (2-tailed)	<.001	0.002	<.001	0.43	0.728		0.893
IPC	Correlation	-0.23	-0.11	0.21	-0.09	-0.09	-0.02	
	p (2-tailed)	0.19	0.535	0.215	0.608	0.596	0.893	

Blue-colored fields represent all the statistically significant relationships (< .05). Furthermore, orange-colored fields show the ***discouraging results of association assessment between IPC& EPC and SD & PR****. As such, more data had to be collected.*


Scatter diagram
EPC
MCI
SDO
SD
PR
PO
IPC

Reliability - IPC

As the implicit association test (IAT) forms involve response times and pairings that are not necessarily interrelated, internal consistency (i.e., Cronbach's alpha) was not the appropriate measure of reliability. Instead, test-retest reliability, assessing consistency across repeated administrations over time, and split-half reliability, assessing consistency across different test portions, are commonly used. Since the participants of this study could not retake the same test over time, split-half reliability was the only assessed type of reliability of IPC.

Split-half reliability	Number of Items	p
0.3	35	<0.001

Results of a one-tailed Pearson's correlation analysis (null hypothesis – no or negative correlation; level of significance 0.05).

Even though the correlation coefficient is low compared to the expected value in IATs (Greenwald et al, 2003, cited in Carpenter et al., 2022), it is within the range of results obtained in other studies (e.g., Nosek et al., 2007; Bluemke & Friese, 2008) and as such, satisfactory.

Pilot study 2

In the 2nd pilot study (n = 46), the following measures were used:

Implicit PC (IPC) - two rounds (IPC1 and IPC2) resulting in two d-scores (D-IAT1 and D-IAT2)

Explicit PC (EPC)

Concern for PC (CPC)

Social desirability (SD)

Psychological reactance (PR)

Political orientation (PO)

This study evaluated the **reliability of the EPC and IPC measures, as well as their concurrent validity.** The **means of EPC and IPC** were compared. Moreover, the **correlations between IPC & EPC and SD & PR** were examined again.

Reliability analysis - EPC

INTERNAL CONSISTENCY analysis 1	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
	0.95	23
Item	**Corrected Item-Total Correlation**	**Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted**
1. Language has the power to offend.	0.4	0.95
2. I am mindful of the way I address, engage with, and talk about other people so as to not offend them. Note: This includes using gender-neutral language, avoiding racial and ethnic slurs, and refraining from using language that is perceived as derogatory or marginalizing.	0.63	0.95
3. Sexist, racially-insensitive, and other derogatory terms are a product of historical inequalities.	0.76	0.95
4. Using respectful language when engaging with or talking about different groups of people leads to a larger awareness and sensitivity toward their struggles.	0.72	0.95
5. Racial slurs and derogatory language that describe racial, ethnic, sexual, religious, or other minorities can be considered hate speech.	0.73	0.95
6. Literature courses that examine only the "great books" of Western culture should be updated by including authors from different backgrounds, especially those that confront issues relating to ethnicity, race, religion, gender, and sexual	0.74	0.95

orientation.		
7. Older books that use terms that could now be regarded as racist or otherwise deeply offensive should either be revised or should not be taught in schools at all.	0.46	0.95
8. Government and international bodies should strive to revise their documentation, so as to make sure that its wording is gender-neutral whenever possible.	0.73	0.95
9. There should be laws in place to fight hate speech (e.g., open denial of the WW2 genocide should be punishable by law).	0.7	0.95
11. Ethnic, racial, gender and other diversity in the workplace and academia is synonymous with a wider range of ideas.	0.68	0.95
13. People have a right to be offended. Note: This refers to being offended by what someone does, says, or believes in.	0.28	0.96
14. The white race is responsible for most of the atrocities in human history.	0.74	0.95
15. There are no biologically based differences in personality, talent, and ability to reason, between racial groups.	0.5	0.95
18. Those who do not adhere to common standards of social justice and equality should be ostracized and punished.	0.76	0.95
19. The largest responsibility in tackling climate change should fall upon the shoulders of rich Western countries, as they are the ones that have profited from global warming.	0.73	0.95
21. Racial, ethnic, and gender quotas should exist in education and employment to ensure equality where there has historically been a large inequality.	0.78	0.95
22. Research articles investigating the existence of differences (e.g., in intelligence or personality) as a consequence of gender, race, or ethnicity should not be published.	0.44	0.95
10. Social inequalities exist, and certain groups of people are at a historical disadvantage that prevents them from achieving the same quality of life as the rest.	0.86	0.95

12. Prejudice and stereotypes have a negative effect on the quality of life of their target groups, and overall prevent social progress.	0.81	0.95
16. As a society, we should strive towards correcting historical inequalities in order to achieve social justice and equality for all people.	0.88	0.95
17. People who use discriminatory speech and behavior should be called out.	0.87	0.95
20. Brands, media and streaming companies such as Netflix should strive towards a more diverse representation and positive portrayal of different minorities.	0.86	0.95
23. All intimate contact, including touching and kissing, should be agreed upon explicitly before initiation.	0.19	0.96

Items with correlations in red were eliminated due to having values outside the 0.2 - 0.8 range.

INTERNAL CONSISTENCY analysis 2	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**Number of Items**
	0.93	17

Item	**Corrected Item-Total Correlation**	**Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted**
1. Language has the power to offend.	0.38	0.93
2. I am mindful of the way I address, engage with, and talk about other people so as to not offend them. Note: This includes using gender-neutral language, avoiding racial and ethnic slurs, and refraining from using language that is perceived as derogatory or marginalizing.	0.61	0.93
3. Sexist, racially-insensitive, and other derogatory terms are a product of historical inequalities.	0.75	0.92
4. Using respectful language when engaging with or talking about different groups of people leads to a larger awareness and sensitivity toward their struggles.	0.67	0.93

5. Racial slurs and derogatory language that describe racial, ethnic, sexual, religious, or other minorities can be considered hate speech.	0.7	0.92
6. Literature courses that examine only the "great books" of Western culture should be updated by including authors from different backgrounds, especially those that confront issues relating to ethnicity, race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.	0.72	0.92
7. Older books that use terms that could now be regarded as racist or otherwise deeply offensive should either be revised or should not be taught in schools at all.	0.51	0.93
8. Government and international bodies should strive to revise their documentation, so as to make sure that its wording is gender-neutral whenever possible.	0.71	0.92
9. There should be laws in place to fight hate speech (e.g., open denial of the WW2 genocide should be punishable by law).	0.69	0.92
11. Ethnic, racial, gender and other diversity in the workplace and academia is synonymous with a wider range of ideas.	0.65	0.93
14. The white race is responsible for most of the atrocities in human history.	0.74	0.92
15. There are no biologically based differences in personality, talent, and ability to reason, between racial groups.	0.49	0.93
18. Those who do not adhere to common standards of social justice and equality should be ostracized and punished.	0.76	0.92
19. The largest responsibility in tackling climate change should fall upon the shoulders of rich Western countries, as they are the ones that have profited from global warming.	0.74	0.92
21. Racial, ethnic, and gender quotas should exist in education and employment to ensure equality where there has historically been a large inequality.	0.79	0.92
22. Research articles investigating the existence of differences (e.g., in intelligence or personality) as a consequence of gender, race, or ethnicity should not be published.	0.46	0.93

Correlation matrix

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11
1		0.53	0.34	0.42	0.51	0.25	0.04	0.17	0.22	0.35
2	0.53		0.51	0.71	0.59	0.47	0.23	0.34	0.41	0.4
3	0.34	0.51		0.57	0.6	0.63	0.36	0.63	0.46	0.56
4	0.42	0.71	0.57		0.63	0.61	0.18	0.42	0.49	0.48
5	0.51	0.59	0.6	0.63		0.5	0.29	0.43	0.63	0.54
6	0.25	0.47	0.63	0.61	0.5		0.43	0.57	0.43	0.46
7	0.04	0.23	0.36	0.18	0.29	0.43		0.48	0.43	0.27
8	0.17	0.34	0.63	0.42	0.43	0.57	0.48		0.58	0.49
9	0.22	0.41	0.46	0.49	0.63	0.43	0.43	0.58		0.6
11	0.35	0.4	0.56	0.48	0.54	0.46	0.27	0.49	0.6	
13	0.19	0.18	0.38	0.35	0.24	0.32	-0.16	0.2	0.12	0.34
14	0.36	0.41	0.6	0.46	0.49	0.53	0.48	0.58	0.47	0.53
15	0.27	0.33	0.39	0.35	0.37	0.33	0.16	0.36	0.33	0.43
18	0.16	0.51	0.56	0.54	0.59	0.54	0.42	0.54	0.64	0.48
19	0.27	0.41	0.64	0.49	0.52	0.62	0.33	0.61	0.46	0.5
21	0.31	0.47	0.61	0.51	0.48	0.76	0.63	0.68	0.57	0.47
22	-0.07	0.24	0.26	0.28	0.32	0.25	0.5	0.34	0.48	0.25
Average inter-item correlation	**0.27**	**0.42125**	**0.50625**	**0.468125**	**0.483125**	**0.48125**	**0.316875**	**0.46375**	**0.4575**	**0.446875**

13	14	15	18	19	21	22
0.19	0.36	0.27	0.16	0.27	0.31	-0.07
0.18	0.41	0.33	0.51	0.41	0.47	0.24
0.38	0.6	0.39	0.56	0.64	0.61	0.26
0.35	0.46	0.35	0.54	0.49	0.51	0.28
0.24	0.49	0.37	0.59	0.52	0.48	0.32
0.32	0.53	0.33	0.54	0.62	0.76	0.25
-0.16	0.48	0.16	0.42	0.33	0.63	0.5
0.2	0.58	0.36	0.54	0.61	0.68	0.34
0.12	0.47	0.33	0.64	0.46	0.57	0.48
0.34	0.53	0.43	0.48	0.5	0.47	0.25
	0.17	0.2	0.13	0.15	0.15	-0.07
0.17		0.41	0.64	0.66	0.62	0.44
0.2	0.41		0.38	0.47	0.39	0.19
0.13	0.64	0.38		0.64	0.61	0.53
0.15	0.66	0.47	0.64		0.61	0.32
0.15	0.62	0.39	0.61	0.61		0.38
-0.07	0.44	0.19	0.53	0.32	0.38	
0.180625	**0.490625**	**0.335**	**0.494375**	**0.48125**	**0.515625**	**0.29**

Items with correlations in red were eliminated due to falling outside the 0.15 - 0.5 range.

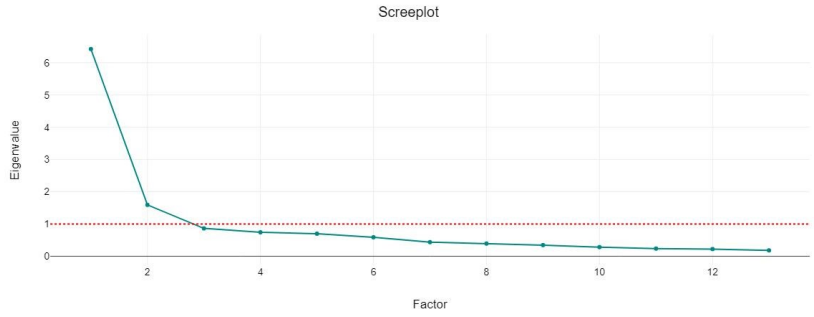
Assumptions for factor analysis

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.88
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	594.4
	df	78
	Significance according Bartlett	0

	P										
DF	**0.995**	**0.975**	**0.20**	**0.10**	**0.05**	**0.025**	**0.02**	**0.01**	**0.005**	**0.002**	**0.001**
61	36.301	41.303	70.049	75.514	80.232	84.476	85.767	89.591	93.186	97.665	100.888
62	37.068	42.126	71.125	76.630	81.381	85.654	86.953	90.802	94.419	98.925	102.166
63	37.838	42.950	72.201	77.745	82.529	86.830	88.137	92.010	95.649	100.182	103.442
64	38.610	43.776	73.276	78.860	83.675	88.004	89.320	93.217	96.878	101.437	104.716
65	39.383	44.603	74.351	79.973	84.821	89.177	90.501	94.422	98.105	102.691	105.988
66	40.158	45.431	75.424	81.085	85.965	90.349	91.681	95.626	99.330	103.942	107.258
67	40.935	46.261	76.498	82.197	87.108	91.519	92.860	96.828	100.554	105.192	108.526
68	41.713	47.092	77.571	83.308	88.250	92.689	94.037	98.028	101.776	106.440	109.791
69	42.494	47.924	78.643	84.418	89.391	93.856	95.213	99.228	102.996	107.685	111.055
70	43.275	48.758	79.715	85.527	90.531	95.023	96.388	100.425	104.215	108.929	112.317
71	44.058	49.592	80.786	86.635	91.670	96.189	97.561	101.621	105.432	110.172	113.577
72	44.843	50.428	81.857	87.743	92.808	97.353	98.733	102.816	106.648	111.412	114.835
73	45.629	51.265	82.927	88.850	93.945	98.516	99.904	104.010	107.862	112.651	116.092
74	46.417	52.103	83.997	89.956	95.081	99.678	101.074	105.202	109.074	113.889	117.346
75	47.206	52.942	85.066	91.061	96.217	100.839	102.243	106.393	110.286	115.125	118.599
76	47.997	53.782	86.135	92.166	97.351	101.999	103.410	107.583	111.495	116.359	119.850
77	48.788	54.623	87.203	93.270	98.484	103.158	104.576	108.771	112.704	117.591	121.100
78	49.582	55.466	88.271	94.374	99.617	104.316	105.742	109.958	113.911	118.823	122.348
79	50.376	56.309	89.338	95.476	100.749	105.473	106.906	111.144	115.117	120.052	123.594
80	51.172	57.153	90.405	96.578	101.879	106.629	108.069	112.329	116.321	121.280	124.839

FACTOR ANALYSIS

Screeplot (3 factors above eigenvalue 1)



Explained total variance

Item	Total	% of variance	Accumulated %
1	6.77	45.13	45.13
2	1.77	11.77	56.9
3	1.05	7.03	63.93
4	0.85	5.63	69.56
5	0.79	5.24	74.8
6	0.7	4.65	79.45
7	0.57	3.78	83.23
8	0.52	3.49	86.73
9	0.4	2.64	89.37
10	0.39	2.59	91.95
11	0.32	2.16	94.11
12	0.26	1.72	95.84
13	0.24	1.57	97.41
14	0.21	1.39	98.8
15	0.18	1.2	100

Communalities (3-factor analysis)

Item	Extraction
1	0.7
2	0.75

4	0.69
5	0.71
6	0.6
7	0.64
8	0.66
9	0.6
11	0.58
13	0.71
14	0.63
15	0.37
18	0.69
19	0.64
22	0.61

Rotated component matrix (Varimax)

	Component			
Item	**1**	**2**	**3**	**cross-loading**
1	-0.07	-0.83	0.11	
2	0.27	-0.82	0.04	
4	0.34	-0.7	0.3	
5	0.43	-0.7	0.16	
6	0.56	-0.32	0.43	
7	0.77	-0.03	-0.23	
8	0.72	-0.12	0.36	
9	0.68	-0.36	0.1	
11	0.47	-0.37	0.47	
13	-0.08	-0.15	0.83	
14	0.69	-0.31	0.25	
15	0.35	-0.26	0.43	
18	0.75	-0.34	0.14	
19	0.65	-0.28	0.37	
22	0.75	-0.04	-0.24	

The minimum acceptable factor loading is above 0.3 (Tavakol & Wetzel, 2020). For my sample size of 81, a value of 0.65 or higher is considered a significant loading (Hair et al., 2009). Therefore, a cross-loading should be a value of at least 0.65 on more than one factor. However, as I had an ***identical*** *value on two factors, there is one (albeit technically not significant) cross-loading.*

Factor categorization

1	*Activism & policies*
2	*Language sensitivity*
3	*Offense & biological differences*

Internal consistency of factors

Activism & policies (factor 1)

Cronbach's Alpha	**Number of Items**	
0.9	10	
Item	**Corrected Item-Total Correlation**	**Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted**
5	0.65	0.9
6	0.66	0.9
7	0.54	0.9
8	0.71	0.89
9	0.71	0.89
11	0.63	0.9
14	0.73	0.89
18	0.77	0.89
19	0.72	0.89
22	0.5	0.9

Language sensitivity (factor 2)

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	
0.78	3	
Item	**Corrected Item-Total Correlation**	**Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted**
1	0.51	0.83
2	0.75	0.56
4	0.67	0.67

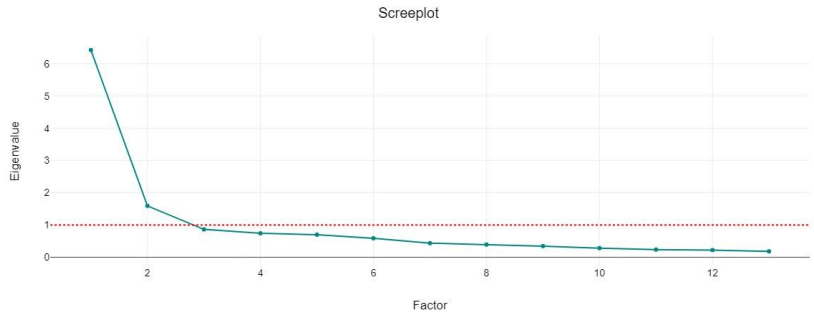
Offense & biological differences (factor 3)

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	
0.59	3	
Item	**Corrected Item-Total Correlation**	**Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted**
11	0.51	0.33
13	0.32	0.6
15	0.39	0.51

The cross-loaded item was used in internal consistency analyses for both factors (i.e., 1 and 3). Cronbach's Alpha in factor 3 is unsatisfactory (i.e., below the minimum required value of 0.6) and was thus eliminated. After the elimination, a new (2-factor) analysis was performed.

FACTOR ANALYSIS 2

Screeplot (2 factors above eigenvalue 1)



Explained total variance

Item	Total	% of variance	Accumulated %
1	6.42	49.41	49.41
2	1.59	12.25	61.66
3	0.86	6.64	68.3
4	0.74	5.7	74.01
5	0.7	5.37	79.38
6	0.59	4.52	83.9
7	0.44	3.36	87.25
8	0.39	3.02	90.27
9	0.34	2.64	92.92
10	0.28	2.17	95.09
11	0.24	1.82	96.91
12	0.22	1.71	98.61
13	0.18	1.39	100

Communalities (2-factor analysis)

Item	Extraction
1	0.67

2	0.66
4	0.69
5	0.68
6	0.55
7	0.57
8	0.6
9	0.6
11	0.51
14	0.63
18	0.69
19	0.59
22	0.57

Rotated component matrix (Varimax)

Item	Component	
	1	**2**
1	-0.13	-0.81
2	0.22	-0.78
4	0.32	-0.77
5	0.4	-0.72
6	0.55	-0.5
7	0.75	0.02
8	0.71	-0.3
9	0.66	-0.4
11	0.46	-0.55
14	0.67	-0.42
18	0.73	-0.4
19	0.61	-0.46
22	0.76	0.05

Factor categorization

1	*Activism & policies*
2	*Language sensitivity & diversity*

Internal consistency of factors

Activism & policies (factor 1)

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	
0.89	8	
Item	**Corrected Item-Total Correlation**	**Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted**
6	0.65	0.88
7	0.56	0.88
8	0.72	0.87
9	0.65	0.88
14	0.73	0.87
18	0.76	0.86
19	0.71	0.87
22	0.52	0.89

Language sensitivity & diversity (factor 2)

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	
0.84	5	
Item	**Corrected Item-Total Correlation**	**Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted**

1	0.55	0.83
2	0.7	0.79
4	0.72	0.78
5	0.72	0.78
11	0.55	0.83

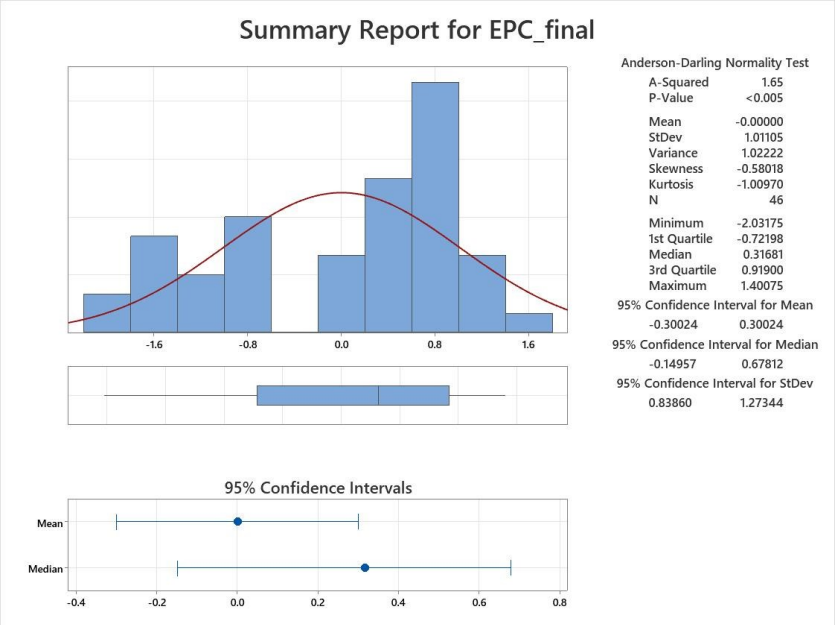
Final scale

1. Language has the power to offend.
2. I am mindful of the way I address, engage with, and talk about other people so as to not offend them. *Note: This includes using gender-neutral language, avoiding racial and ethnic slurs, and refraining from using language that is perceived as derogatory or marginalizing.*
4. Using respectful language when engaging with or talking about different groups of people leads to a larger awareness and sensitivity toward their struggles.
5. Racial slurs and derogatory language that describe racial, ethnic, sexual, religious, or other minorities can be considered hate speech.
6. Literature courses that examine only the "great books" of Western culture should be updated by including authors from different backgrounds, especially those that confront issues relating to ethnicity, race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.
7. Older books that use terms that could now be regarded as racist or otherwise deeply offensive should either be revised or should not be taught in schools at all.
8. Government and international bodies should strive to revise their documentation, so as to make sure that its wording is gender-neutral whenever possible.
9. There should be laws in place to fight hate speech (e.g., open denial of the WW2 genocide should be punishable by law).
11. Ethnic, racial, gender and other diversity in the workplace and academia is synonymous with a wider range of ideas.
14. The white race is responsible for most of the atrocities in human history.
18. Those who do not adhere to common standards of social justice and equality should be ostracized and punished.
19. The largest responsibility in tackling climate change should fall upon the shoulders of rich Western countries, as they are the ones that have profited from global warming.
22. Research articles investigating the existence of differences (e.g., in intelligence or personality) as

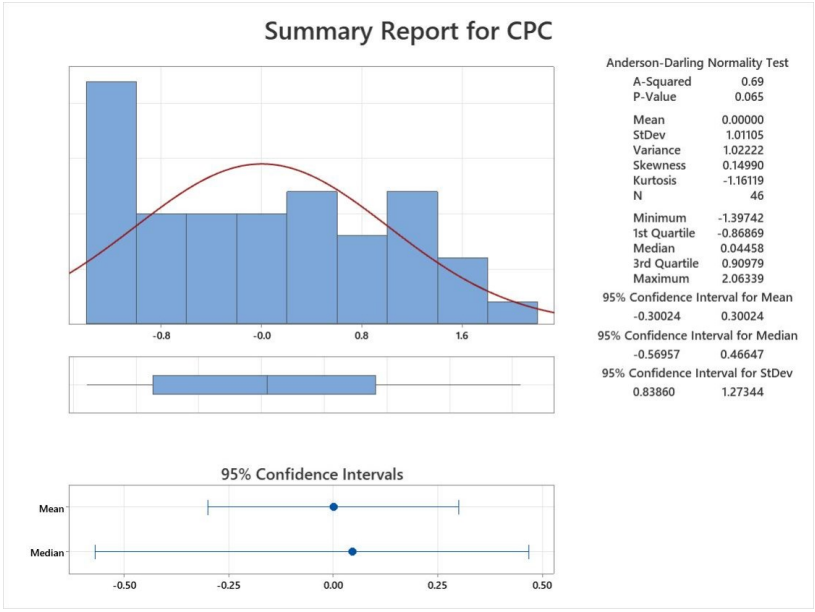
a consequence of gender, race, or ethnicity should not be published.

Items highlighted in yellow belong to factor 2 (language sensitivity & diversity). The rest belong to factor 1 (activism & policies).

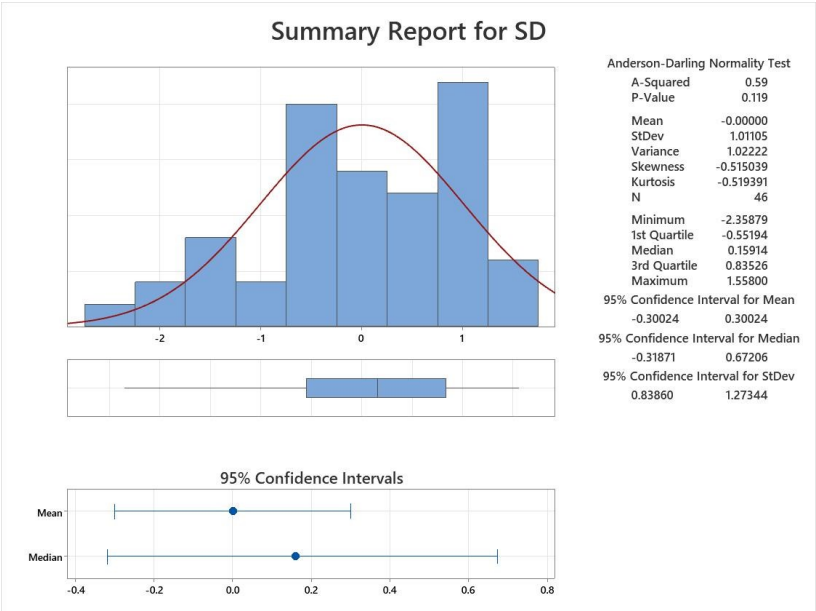
Normal distribution tests



EPC_final	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.17	0.144
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.17	0.003
Shapiro-Wilk	0.9	0.001

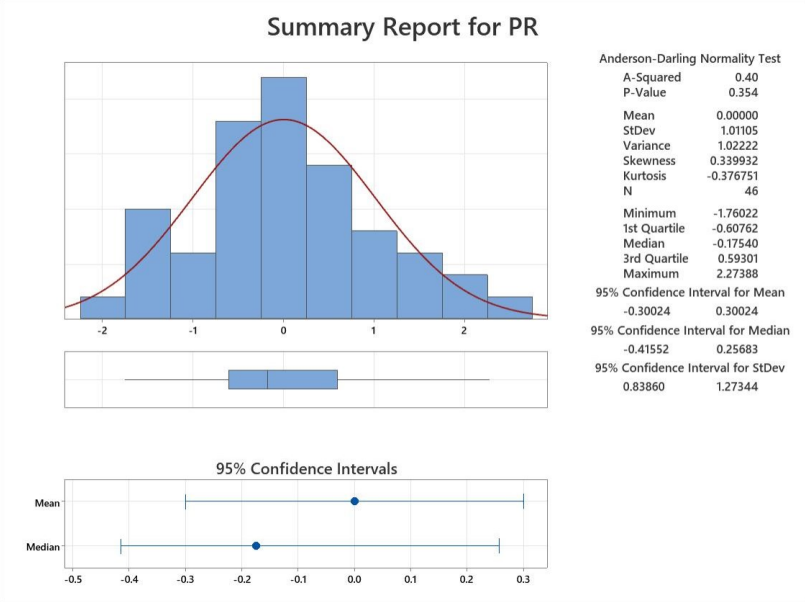


CPC	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.08	0.879
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.08	0.561
Shapiro-Wilk	0.94	0.028

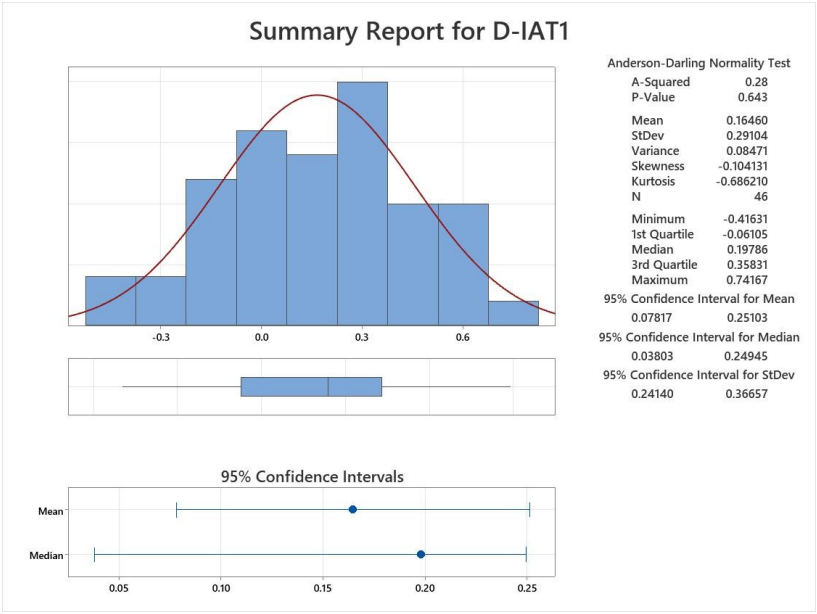


SD	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.12	0.523

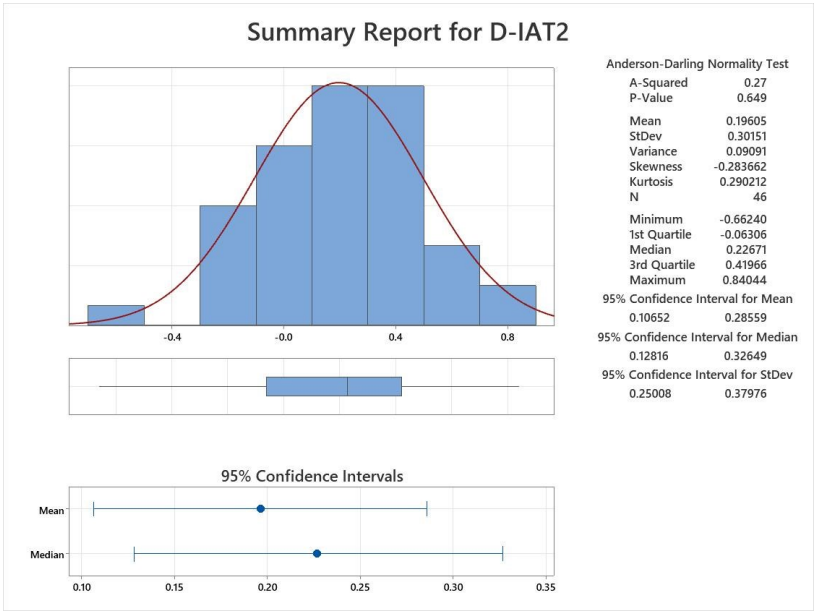
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.12	0.117
Shapiro-Wilk	0.96	0.087



PR	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.09	0.843
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.09	0.483
Shapiro-Wilk	0.97	0.32

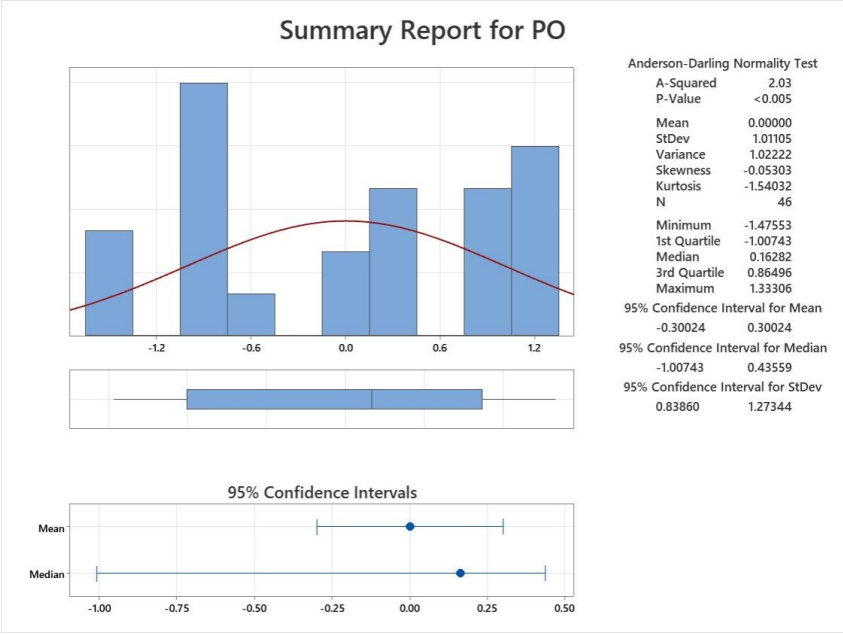


IPC1 (D-IAT1)	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.1	0.715
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.1	0.287
Shapiro-Wilk	0.98	0.548



IPC2 (D-IAT2)	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.08	0.93
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.08	0.703

Shapiro-Wilk	0.98	0.747



PO	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.21	.029
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.21	<.001
Shapiro-Wilk	0.88	<.001

Again, means, standard deviations, variance and skew/kurtosis are within satisfactory levels. The results between the two IPC tests are comparable; however, still worrisome is the ***low variability*** *of answers of IPC, which will hopefully be eliminated with a larger sample in the main study.*

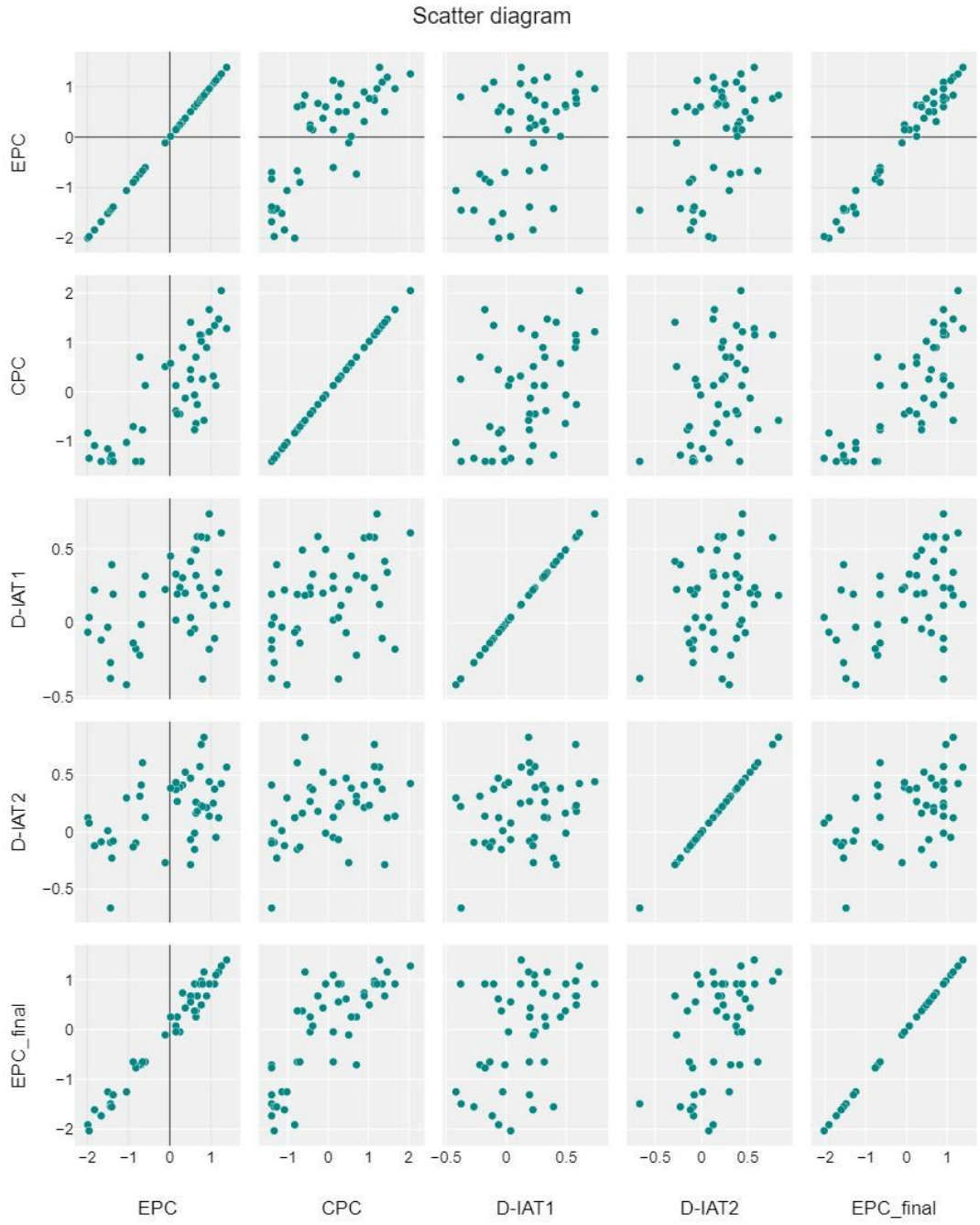
Descriptive statistics	**CPC**	**SD**	**PR**	**EPC_final**	**D-IAT1**	**D-IAT2**
Mean	0	0	0	0	0.16	0.2
Std. Deviation	1.01	1.01	1.01	1.01	0.29	0.3
Variance	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	0.08	0.09

Minimum	-1.4	-2.36	-1.76	-2.03	-0.42	-0.66
Maximum	2.06	1.56	2.27	1.4	0.74	0.84
Range	3.46	3.92	4.03	3.43	1.16	1.5
Skew	0.15	-0.52	0.34	-0.58	-0.1	-0.28
Kurtosis	-1.16	-0.52	-0.38	-1.01	-0.69	0.29

Concurrent validity (IPC)	**r**	**p (1-tailed)**
EPC and D-IAT1	0.44	0.001
EPC and D-IAT2	0.46	0.001
EPC_final and D-IAT1	0.45	0.001
EPC_final and D-IAT2	0.48	<.001
D-IAT1 and CPC	0.42	0.002
D-IAT2 and CPC	0.39	0.004

Concurrent validity (EPC)	**r**	**p (1-tailed)**
EPC and CPC	0.79	<.001
EPC_final and CPC	0.79	<.001

Results of one-tailed Pearson's correlation analyses (null hypothesis – no or negative correlation; level of significance 0.05).

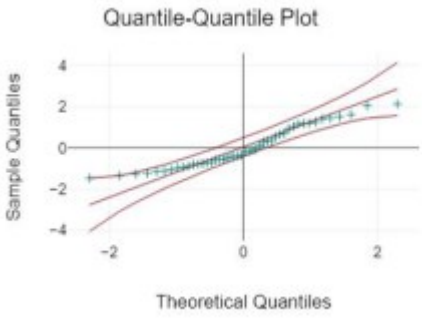


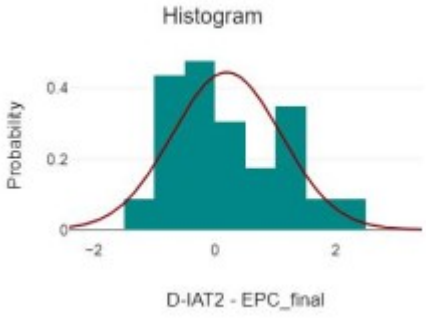
Assumptions for paired samples t-test (IPC vs. EPC)

Tests for normal distribution

IPC vs. EPC	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.14	.271

IPC vs. EPC	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.14	.018
Shapiro-Wilk	0.94	.013
Anderson-Darling	1.06	.009

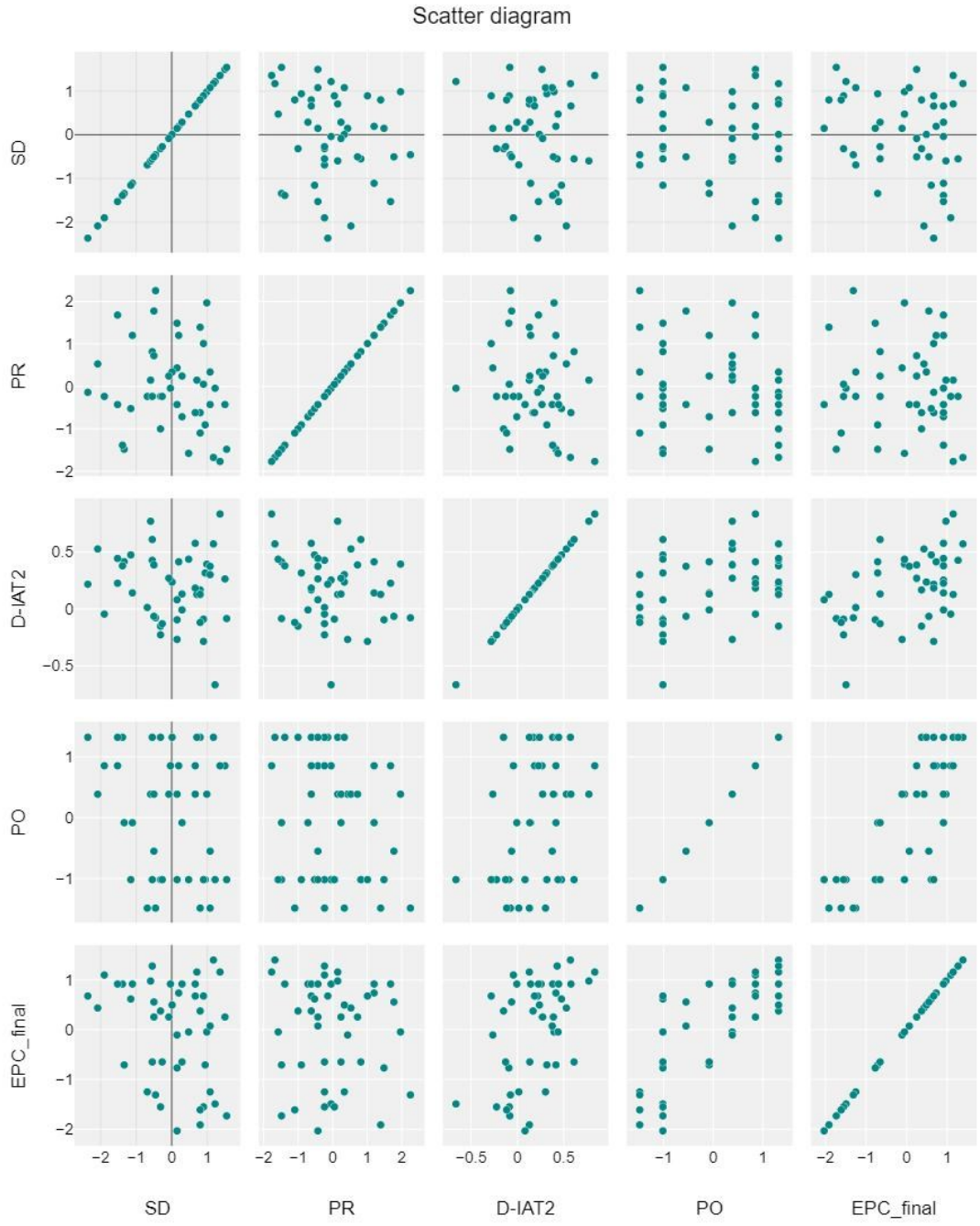




Other correlations

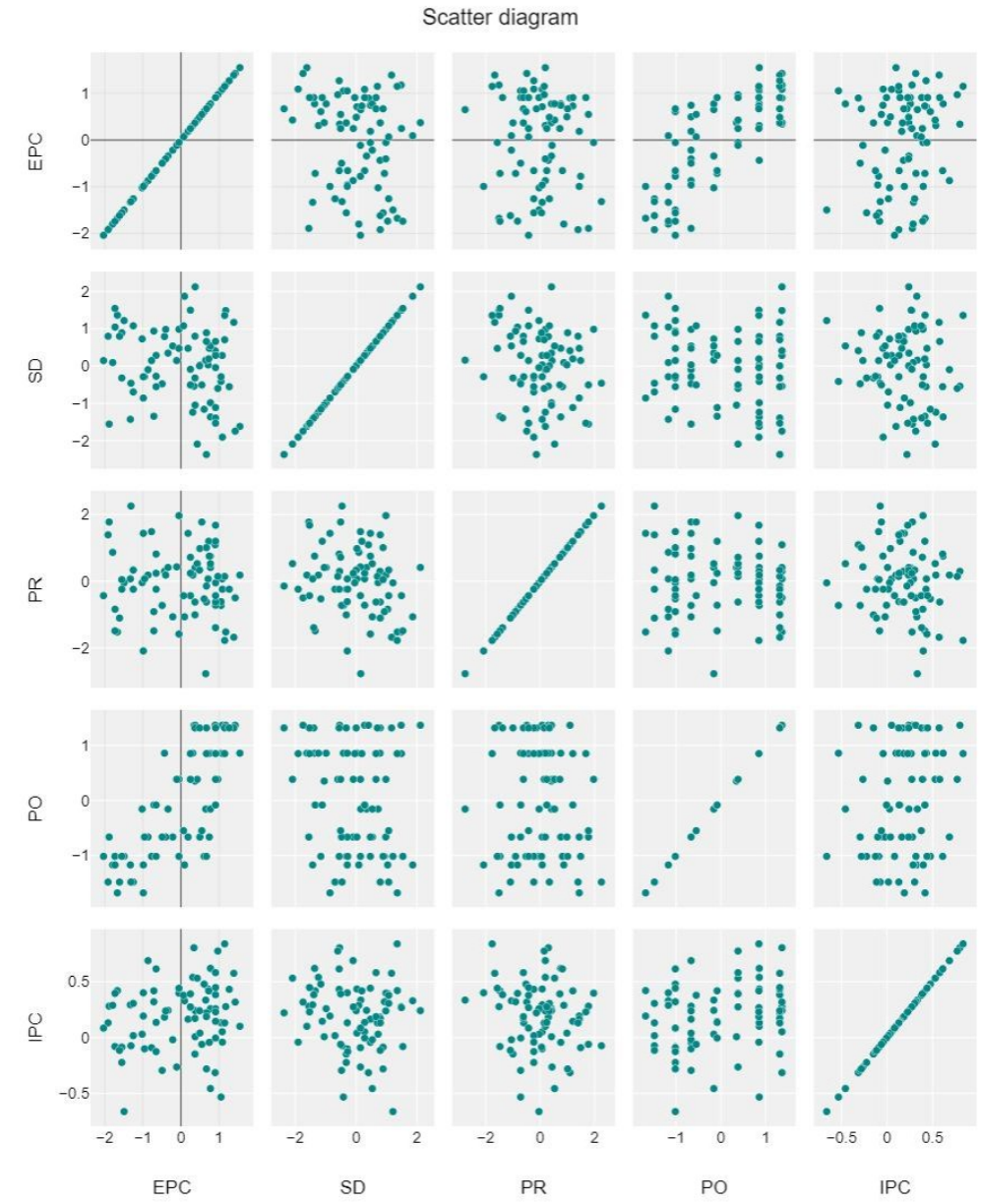
		EPC	CPC	SD	PR	D-IAT1	D-IAT2	PO	EPC_final
EPC	**Correlation**	1	0.79	-0.28	-0.09	0.44	0.46	0.83	0.98
	p		<.001	.059	.535	.002	.001	<.001	<.001
CPC	**Correlation**	0.79	1	-0.22	0.01	0.42	0.39	0.61	0.79
	p	<.001		.144	.968	.003	.007	<.001	<.001
SD	**Correlation**	-0.28	-0.22	1	-0.17	-0.11	-0.14	-0.25	-0.29
	p	.059	.144		.248	.447	.348	.096	.05
PR	**Correlation**	-0.09	0.01	-0.17	1	-0.05	-0.2	-0.17	-0.08
	p	.535	.968	.248		.743	.183	.247	.609
D-IAT1	**Correlation**	0.44	0.42	-0.11	-0.05	1	0.27	0.5	0.45
	p	.002	.003	.447	.743		.074	<.001	.002
D-IAT2	**Correlation**	0.46	0.39	-0.14	-0.2	0.27	1	0.38	0.48
	p	.001	.007	.348	.183	.074		.009	.001
PO	**Correlation**	0.83	0.61	-0.25	-0.17	0.5	0.38	1	0.8

		EPC	CPC	SD	PR	D-IAT1	D-IAT2	PO	EPC_final
	p	<.001	<.001	.096	.247	<.001	.009		<.001
EPC_final	**Correlation**	0.98	0.79	-0.29	-0.08	0.45	0.48	0.8	1
	p	<.001	<.001	.05	.609	.002	.001	<.001	

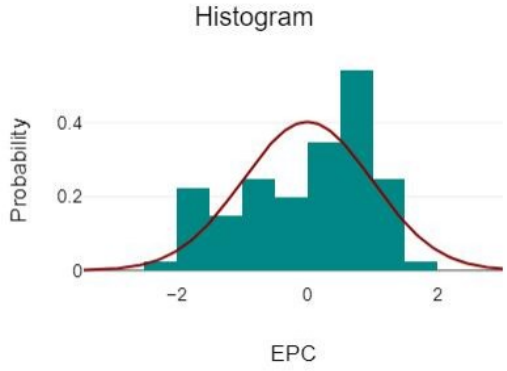


Pilot study 1 & 2 samples combined		EPC	SD	PR	PO	IPC
EPC	**Correlation**	1	-0.21	-0.06	0.78	0.18
	p		.058	.565	<.001	.108
SD	**Correlation**	-0.21	1	-0.22	-0.2	-0.12
	p	.058		.052	.071	.287
PR	**Correlation**	-0.06	-0.22	1	-0.07	-0.15
	p	.565	.052		.51	.168
PO	**Correlation**	0.78	-0.2	-0.07	1	0.21
	p	<.001	.071	.51		.061
IPC	**Correlation**	0.18	-0.12	-0.15	0.21	1
	p	.108	.287	.168	.061	

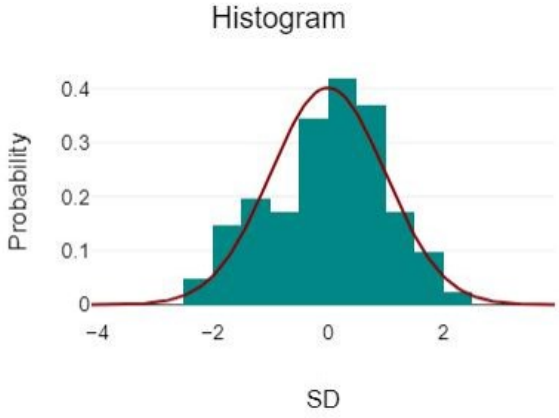
Results of two and one-tailed Pearson's correlation analyses (null hypothesis – no correlation; level of significance 0.05). The sample size here is 81 (samples from both pilot studies were combined). IPC variable combines the single d-scores from the first pilot study and d-score 2 from the second pilot study.


Scatter diagram
EPC
SD
PR
PO
IPC

Normal distribution tests & descriptive statistics of combined samples (pilot 1 & 2)

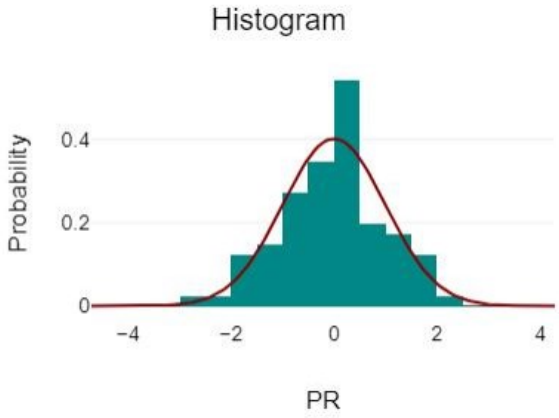


EPC	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.14	.061
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.14	<.001
Shapiro-Wilk	0.92	<.001
Anderson-Darling	2.2	<.001

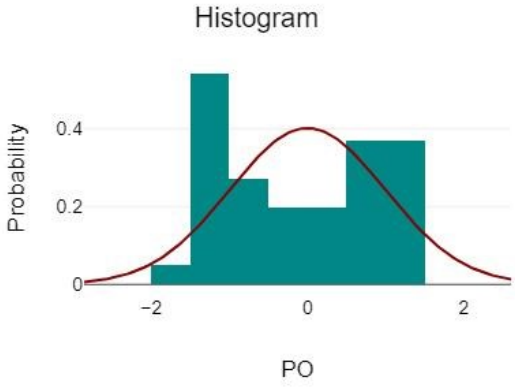


SD	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.06	.934
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.06	.688
Shapiro-Wilk	0.98	.385

SD	Statistics	p
Anderson-Darling	0.44	.285

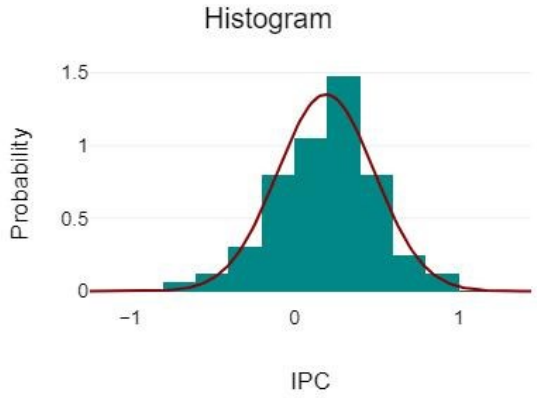


PR	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.07	.83
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.07	.441
Shapiro-Wilk	0.99	.875
Anderson-Darling	0.27	.675



PO	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.18	.011

PO	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.18	<.001
Shapiro-Wilk	0.9	<.001
Anderson-Darling	2.84	<.001



IPC	Statistics	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.07	.746
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.07	.316
Shapiro-Wilk	0.99	.539
Anderson-Darling	0.37	.43

Descriptive statistics	EPC	SD	PR	PO	IPC
Mean	0	0	0	0	0.19
Std. Deviation	1	1	1	1	0.3
Variance	1	1	1	1	0.09
Minimum	-2.03	-2.36	-2.76	-1.67	-0.66
Maximum	1.56	2.14	2.27	1.38	0.84
Range	3.59	4.5	5.03	3.06	1.5

Descriptive statistics	EPC	SD	PR	PO	IPC
Skew	-0.5	-0.25	-0.12	-0.01	-0.36
Kurtosis	-1.01	-0.56	-0.01	-1.47	0.32

Pilot study 3

The 3rd pilot study (n = 41) featured the following measures:

Explicit PC (EPC)

Psychological reactance (PR)

Self-presentation (SP)

Marlowe-Crowne social desirability (SD_MC)

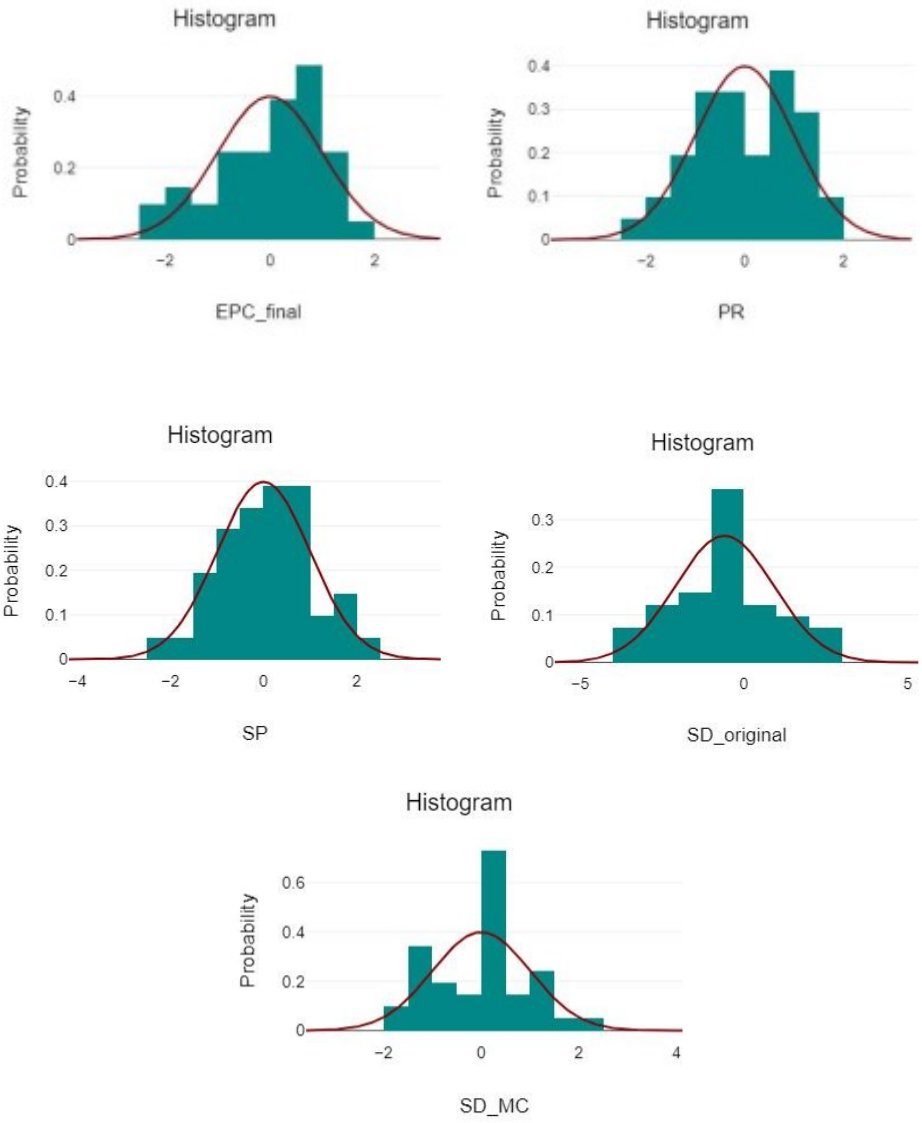
Social desirability (SD_original)

The purpose of this pilot study was to **assess two alternative measures of social desirability** (highlighted in yellow), as the original measure prove to be inadequate.

Normal distribution tests

	EPC		PR		SP		SD_MC		SD_original	
	Stat	p	Stat	p	Stat	p	Stat	p	Stat	p
Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS)	0.13	0.46	0.14	0.39	0.07	0.99	0.15	0.305	0.12	0.51
KS (Lilliefors Corr.)	0.13	0.08	0.14	0.05	0.07	0.01	0.15	0.025	0.12	0.11
Shapiro-	0.93	0.01	0.97	0.28	0.99	0.95	0.96	0.199	0.97	0.44

Wilk										
Anderson-Darling	1.10	0.01	0.53	0.18	0.17	0.94	0.75	0.051	0.40	0.36



Descriptive statistics

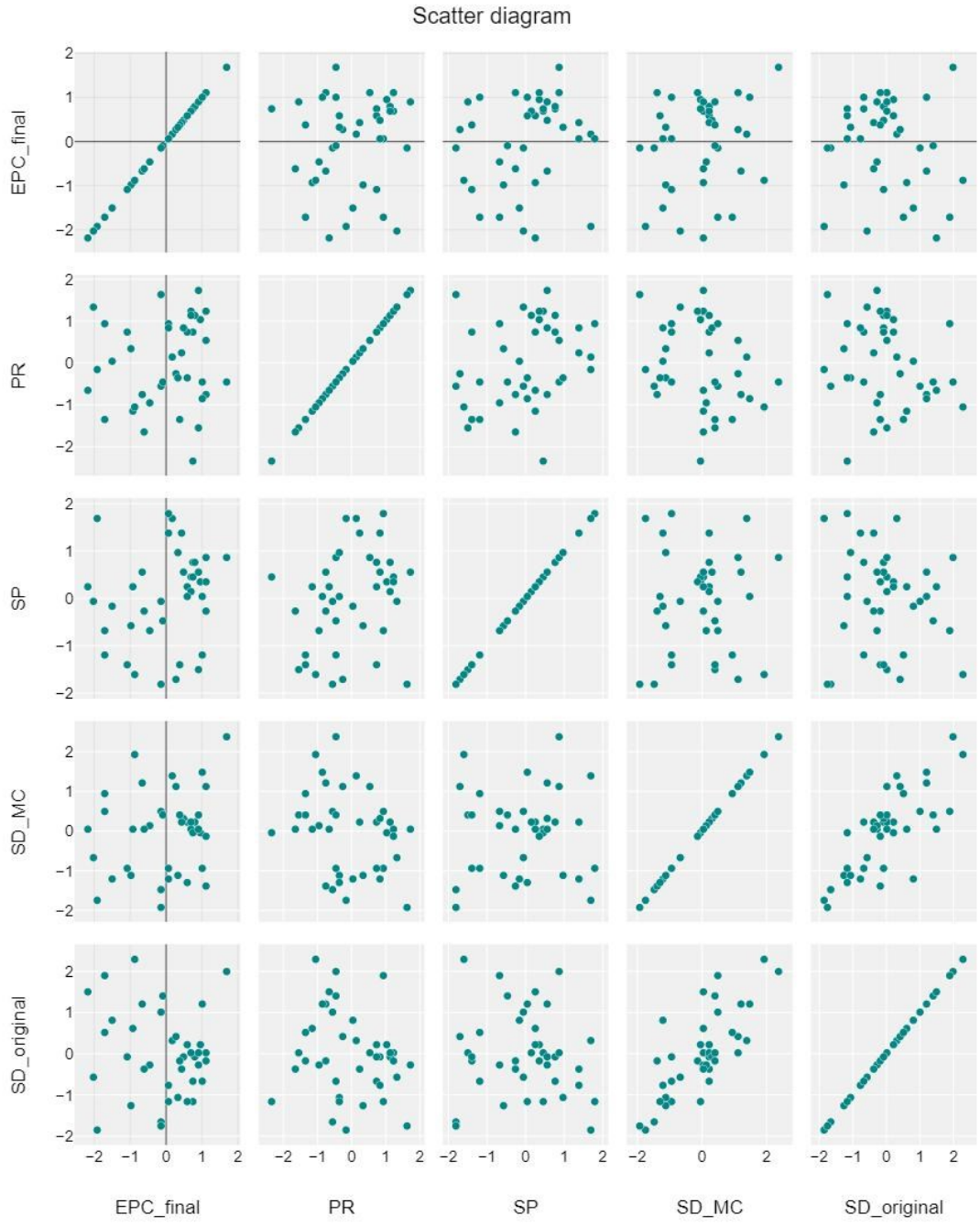
	EPC_final	PR	SP	SD_MC	SD_original

Mean	0	0	0	0	-0.59
Std. Deviation	1.01	1.01	1.01	1.01	1.52
Variance	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.03	2.3
Minimum	-2.18	-2.34	-2.45	-1.7	-3.36
Maximum	1.7	1.75	2.02	1.97	2.84
Range	3.88	4.08	4.47	3.67	6.21
Skew	-0.68	-0.17	-0.19	0.4	0.33
Kurtosis	-0.53	-0.82	-0.2	-0.59	-0.19

The skewness/kurtosis scores and the visual data suggest a relatively normal data distribution. All of the measures besides SD_original have expected mean/sd values.

Correlations	**r**	**p (1-tailed)**
EPC_final and SP	0.18	0.131
EPC_final and SD_MC	0.21	0.093
EPC_final and SD_original	-0.11	0.748
EPC_final and PR	0.1	0.737
SP and SD_MC	0.04	0.412
SP and SD_original	-0.11	0.744
SD_MC and SD_original	0.76	<.001

Results of one-tailed Pearson's correlation analyses (EPC vs. PR: null hypothesis – no or positive correlation; all others – no or negative correlation; level of significance 0.05). Correlations were calculated only for the final EPC scale (EPC_final).


Scatter diagram
EPC_final
PR
SP
SD_MC
SD_original