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MEASURING POPULIST ATTITUDES – PSYCHOMETRIC CARACTRERISTICS OF THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL SCALE

Abstract:

To address the issue of the growing need for measuring populist attitudes, researchers have proposed several instruments with different theoretical backgrounds in conceptualizing the construct. This study aimed to verify the psychometric properties of the recently developed Three-dimensional populist scale by Shultz and her associates. As opposed to scales which define populist attitudes as uni-dimensional constructs, this one is based on the presumption that it is a latent higher-order construct with three distinct first-order dimensions.

The convenient sample was comprised of ***535*** *participants, all ethnic Macedonians (53.1% women) from 25 urban (52.6% from the capital city) and 15 rural areas of the country, with average age M = 36.2 (SD = 12.4) and mostly (65%) with completed high school. All participants voluntarily answered the set of selected instruments which included two populist attitudes scales, several other scales the measure related variables and demographic data.*

The psychometric characteristics of the instrument in this particular cultural context were explored by performing item-analysis, factor analysis and testing the proposed hypotheses generated on the basis of previous relevant research. Results confirmed the three-dimensional structure of the Shultz's scale with excellent fit indicators, while the Alpha coefficients showed acceptable reliability of the scale and its subscales. The construct dimensions exhibit significant associations with other measures expected to be related to populist attitudes endorsement.

It was concluded that the Shultz et al. three-dimensional scale on populist attitudes translated in Macedonian is adequate to be used as a measure of this variable and that its efficacy for predicting electoral choices should be further scrutinized.

Keywords: *populist attitudes, psychometric characteristics*

Introduction

Measuring populist attitudes

Being perceived both as a corrective to democracy embedded in the idea that people should be given power to make decisions through a direct expression of their will, and as a threat to the established democratic institutions (Mudde and Rovira-Kaltwasser, 2012), populism presents itself in many different, sometimes contradictory appearances and beliefs. Central part of most definitions of populism is that it contains at least two identifiable core characteristics – it emphasizes the central role of 'the people' in politics, who are believed to be inherently good and alike, and the antagonism towards 'the elites', who are frequently seen as evil and corrupt and non-responsive (Mudde, 2004). In addition, populist views frequently are accompanied with support the idea that 'ordinary' people, who have common sense and similar interests should be at the centre of politics and political decisions. Thus, the third component of populism is popular sovereignty where the ideal of direct citizens' direct participation is a crucial political value.

Over the last few years, survey research to examine how populist citizens are and what are the related factors of this attitude is growing. This interest is quite understandable if considered the rapid growth of populism of many different faces have emerged in the electoral arenas and the political life. In parallel with the existing need to understand this phenomenon, researchers have developed several instruments aimed to capture the endorsement of a set of beliefs characterized by seeing politics as a struggle between 'the good people' and 'the dishonest establishment'. One of the earliest attempts was made by Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove (2014) who proposed one-dimensional conceptualization of populist attitudes and developed a six-item scale which until recently, was the most frequently used instrument. The same approach was used in the newly launched Van Hauwaert et al.'s scale (2020). In arguing why populist attitudes should be measured as a threefold, rather than as a single-dimension construct, Shultz et al. (2018), explain that by conceptualizing it as a three-dimensional construct, it is possible to measure the varying degrees of the three aspects on individual level. Since the one-dimensional instruments are not sensitive to these differences, they make no distinction between different views on politics, generated by the various degrees of endorsement of anti-elitist views and demand for people's sovereignty. By allowing the researcher to detect these different attitude patterns, a three-dimensional measurement should also be more precise in predicting specific political choices or behaviours.

Castahano Silva et al. (2019) identified seven frequently used scales: Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove (2014); Castanho Silva et al. (2018); Elchardus and Spruyt (2016); Oliver and Rahn (2016); Schulz et al. (2018); Stanley (2011); and the Hobolt et al's CSES module (2016) and evaluated their psychometric properties. None of the scales, at least on their dataset, appeared to have excellent performances in regards to internal coherence, external validity, cross-national validity, and

conceptual breath. Piterová & Kováčová Holevová (2022) on the other hand, after scrutinizing the psychometric characteristics of four populist attitudes scales, find the one proposed by Schulz et al. and Van Hauwaert et al. (2020), having the most suitable psychometric properties for researching populist attitudes in Slovakia.

Description ofthe Three-dimensional Schulz et al.'s populist attitude scale

Based on the findings from previous research on populism as construct that incorporates three main political beliefs Anne Shultz and her colleagues proposed that populist attitudes could be successfully measured as a second-order factor made up of three distinct sub-dimensions that are first-order factors (Schulz et al., 2018). These sub-dimensions are: 1) strong anti-elitism attitudes, 2) a strong support of unrestricted popular sovereignty, and 3) an understanding of the "ordinary" people as homogeneous and virtuous. The authors generated a larger pool of items assumed to reflect the three dimensions, which were either taken from previous studies or produced based on a relevant literature review. After performing both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, the authors proposed an inventory of 12 items, which supports the idea of populism as comprised of three sub-dimensions: *anti-elitist attitudes*, demand for *popular sovereignty*, and *belief in the homogeneity* and virtuousness of the people. To further support the model of three dimensions, the authors compared it with other two one-dimensional models of populist attitudes – the one comprised in Ackerman's populism scale (Ackerman et al., 2014) and the one-dimensional model with a set of their own 12- item set and concluded that the trifold hierarchical multidimensional model was better fitted than the one-dimensional models.

The goodness of fit of the scale into the theoretical model was also confirmed in the study of Castanho Silva et al. (2019) where the psychometric properties of seven different populist attitudes scales were tested by using online data collected from nine countries in Europe and the Americas, with around 250 participants per country. Moreover, in comparison with the other scales, only the scale by Schulz et al. has shown good fit on all fit indices.

Considering that the proposed inventory is a rather recent one, only few cross-cultural validation studies were available. The before mentioned study, evaluates the scale as high in external validity, yet low on cross-national validity. As mentioned earlier, it was translated into Slovak language and with some modifications, adapted for use on this population (Piterová & Kováčová Holevová et al., 2022).

The aim of this study was to provide translation of the Shultz's three-dimensional scale from English to Macedonian language, along with empirical data on the questionnaire's internal consistency, validity, and goodness of fit with the suggested three-dimensional conceptualization of populist beliefs.

Analyses planned within this study

An internal criterion (correlations with the subscale) will be used to identify the discriminability of the items of the scale, after reporting the averages for the items, as well as for the three subscales derived by the authors. The reliability is to be determined by calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The comparison of the internal structureofthe scale with the model offered by the authors of the instrument will be performed by confirmatory factor analysis.

In line with previous research (e.g.,Piterová & Kováčová Holevová, 2022), the following hypothesis that aimed to support the convergent validity of the instrument will be tested: Both the overall attitude score and the dimensions on the Shultz's et al. scale, positively correlate with the overall score and the respective dimensions of Castanho Silva et al. scale(*hypothesis 1*). The exception of this expected mutual inter-correlations is expected only for the *Manichean outlook* subscaleof Castanho Silva scale, which is based on the general "us" versus "them" political dichotomies rather than on how populists framed elites vs. ordinary people into two antagonistic groups. Thus, the expected outcome is that this dimension is not correlated to either *anti-elitism* or *demand for sovereignty* from Shultz et al. scale, while it negatively correlates to the dimension *homogeneity of people*.

It has been argued that populism is a response to a prolonged weak democratic governance, and high level of unsanctioned corruption, especially when performed by politicians. In a context of widespread and prolonged corruption, citizens ("us") feel unfairly treated by the elites ("them") and distrust the functioning of democracy (Kriesi, 2014). That is exactly why the link between distrust in democratic institutions and populism has been both theoretically assumed (Dalton, 2004) and empirically confirmed (Rechica et al., 2022; Rooduijn et al., 2016; Van Kessel et al., 2021) as a correlate of populist attitudes. Along these lines, it is expected that both the overall attitude score and all dimensions on the Shultz's et al. scale are negatively correlated with trust in institutions (*hypothesis 3*).

Research suggest that vulnerable positions make people prone to populist beliefs. The vulnerability might stem from perceived or real threats like low socio-economic status, lower education, age, and dissociation from different groups in power. Interpreted as a response to the unmet promises of democratic political systems to provide inclusiveness (Mény and Surel, 2002), it is expected that populist standpoint attracts the attention of the groups who feel being less integrated and more discontent (Anduiza et al, 2019;Spruyt et al., 2016). It has been found that populist attitudes are more present among less educated (Elchardus and Spruyt, 2016; Rechica et al, 2022; Piterová & Kováčová Holevová, 2022, Rovira Kaltwasser & Van Hauwaert, 2020) and older citizens (Piterová & Kováčová Holevová, 2022; Rechica et al, 2022; Rovira Kaltwasser & Van Hauwaert, 2020). Therefore,

hypotheses 4 states that populist attitude is higher among the less educated, older and those who are not included in any political party.

Higher acceptance of populist attitudes should result towards favouring populist-oriented political candidates, or candidates that present themselves as "wo/men of people" (e.g. Ackerman et al., 2014, Piterová & Kováčová Holevová, 2022; Schulz et al., 2018). Along these lines, it was proposed that that the score of the populist attitude scale could predict the preference of "man of people" political candidates (*hypothesis 5*).

METHOD

Participants

The convenient sample consisted of 535 participants (53.1% women), all ethnic Macedonians who live in 25 different urban (52.6% from the capital of Skopje) and 15 rural areas across the country. The average age was M = 36.2 (*SD* = 12.4), and the largest proportion (65.5%) have completed secondary school, 29.3% have higher education whereas 5.2% hold graduate or doctoral degree. Vast majority of the participants declared that they are not members of any political party (78.7%), only 5.7% are active members, whereas the rest stated that their membership is only formal.

Participation was voluntary, anonymous, and not compensated. The recruitment of participants was facilitated by the students at the Institute of Psychology at the Faculty of Philosophy ("Ss. Cyril and Methodius" University in Skopje), who after having specific training in how to administer the instruments, were also engaged in the data gathering process.

Measures used to test the validity of the scale

The scale of Castanho Silva et al. (2018) - for measuring populist attitudes is also based on the idea that the construct is three-dimensional. It is composed of nine items divided into three sub-scales, each comprising three items: (1) *anti-elitism (e.g., "The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves"), (2) people's centrism (e.g., "Politicians should always listen closely to the problems of the people"), and (3) Manichean outlook (e.g.,"The people I disagree with politically are just politically misinformed").* For this sample, the internal consistency coefficients for anti-elitism were α = .51, for subscale of centrism α = .53, whereas the Manichean outlook had the most problematic reliability with α=.40. These coefficients were quite lower to the coefficients reported in the previous studies, which is very unusual since the instrument has been quite well confirmed as cross-culturally valid (Jungkuntz, 2021).

Electoral preference was measured by asking respondents to choose between two candidates who through their short biographies were described as "politician

of a career" or a newcomer in politics who is more "one of the people"[1]. This approach was preferred over asking respondents who would they vote for in the next elections, or whom they voted for in the previous because it is a less obtrusive way to get information on something that is considered to be a sensitive issue.

Conspiracy thinking was measured using the 15-item Generic Conspiracist Beliefs (GCB) scaleintroduced by Brotherton et al. (2013). It addresses five aspects of an overall conspiracy belief: *1.Government malfeasance* (e.g. "The government permits or perpetrates acts of terrorism on its own soil, disguising its involvement"), 2. *Malevolent global conspiracies* (e.g. "A small, secret group of people is responsible for making all major world decisions, such as going to war"), 3. *Extra-terrestrial cover-up* (e.g. "Evidence of alien contact is being concealed from the public"), 4. *Personal well-being* (e.g. "Technology with mind-control capacities is used on people without their knowledge"), and 5. *Control of information* (e.g. "Groups of scientists manipulate, fabricate, or suppress evidence in order to deceive the public"). Respondents indicated the extent to which they consider that the statements are true, on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1=completely not true to 5=completely true. The internal consistency of the whole scale was α=.88.

Trust in institutions was measured by asking respondents to determine the degree to which they trust the government, parliament, army, police, and the local self-government, on a ten-point scale from 1=not at all to 10=completely trust. The coefficient of reliability for this scale was α=.80.

The Ethnocentrism scale-ES 2-6 (Bizumic, 2020) which consists of six items (three reverse-coded) on a 9-point scale is the shortened version of the original 58-item inventory. The author argues that despite its brevity, this version efficiently captures the construct. Another advantage of this instrument is that it was developed as generic – by not using names of any specific ethnic groups, it enables measuring the ethnocentrism in relation to all, and not several predefined ethnic outgroups. The second-order confirmatory factor analysis identified two levels at which the scores can be calculated. In addition to the aggregate score, the scale provides information on intergroup and intragroup ethnocentrism scores. For this particular sample, the internal consistency of the whole scale was rather poor α=.58.

Procedure of translating and administering the instruments

The instruments were translated from English into Macedonian by a professional interpreter. Afterwards, this version was translated back to English by another independent translator. The two versions were then compared and found to be

[1] This approach, with somewhat more extensive "biographies" of the proposed candidates, was used in the research by Bliznakovski et al. (2021) on the public opinion of citizens' political demands, and later, in the study on predictors of populist leaders support in the Republic of North Macedonia by Rechica et al. (2022).

sufficiently similar to each other. One item (HMG_4) from Shultz et al. scale needed to be adjusted to fit the particular context.

All included instrument along with the demographic questions were administered in person, individually, by contacting the potential respondents and after explaining the purpose of the research, the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study without foreseen negative consequences. The data collection process was taking place in December 2022.

Statistical analysis

With the exception of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), which was performed by using JASP 16, statistical analyses were completed by using the SPSS-26 statistical package. The standard criteria for goodness of fit were considered in interpreting the model fit:RMSEA values of.01, .05 and .08 indicate excellent, good, and mediocre fit respectively, while CFI/GFI values greater than .90 excellent and from .80 to .90, marginal fit.

Findings

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the Shultz et al.'s subscales (dimensions) along with the aggregated score. In comparison to the available averages from other studies (Shultz et al., 2018; Piterová & Kováčová Holevová et al., 2022) these ones are noticeably higher which to a certain extend corresponds with the findings from a previous study carried out in North Macedonia, where it has been concluded that populist ideas are widely accepted (Rechica et al., 2022). The Alpha coefficients of the sub-scales and the overall instrument are on the other hand somewhat lower that those reported in the validation study of the authors of the instrument, yet within the range of being considered as adequate.

Table 1.

Descriptive data and reliability of the Shultz et al. subscales

Populist attitudes dimensions	**n**	**Min.**	**Max**	***M****	***SD***	**Kurt****	**Skw*****	***α***
ANTIEL-Anti-elitist attitudes	4	1	5	4.37	.70	3.23	-1.64	.69
PPL –Demand for popular sovereignty	4	1.5	5	4.36	.68	2.09	-1.38	.69
HMG – Belief in homogeneity of people	4	1	5	3.32	.88	-.62	-.09	.65
TOTAL	12	2.17	5	4.02	.50	.78	-.75	.67

*M was computed by adding the scores of the items of each subscale and then by dividing the total with the number of items (1–5-point scale),
**SE = .211
***SE = .106

The results of the analysis of items are presented at Table 2. All item-to-scale and item to sub-scale correlations were statistically significant, ranging between *r*=.24 and *r*=.78. In congruence with the previous finding, regarding the averages on the subscales, all item averages are higher than those reported in the other studies. This table also shows that excluding one item (HMG_1) from the scale improves the value of Cronbach's alpha if deleted, suggesting that it might need further refinements in translation.

Table 2.
Descriptive statistics of the Shultz et al. items (total and across gender)

Items	r_{sub}	r_{tot}	α if item deleted	M_f (SD)	M_m (SD)	M_{all} (SD)
ANTIEL - Anti-elitism						
1. MPs in Parliament very quickly lose touch with ...	.64**	.29**	.61	4.11 (1.06)	4.28 (.91)	4.19 (1.00)
2. The differences between ordinary people and the ruling elite are much greater than the differences…	.60**	.33**	.58	4.26 (1.11)	4.52 (.84)	4.38 (1.00)
3. People like me have no influence on what the government ...	.51**	.33**	.61	4.24 (1.14)	4.31 (1.13)	4.27 (1.15)
4. Politicians talk too much and take too little action.	.46**	.24**	.65	4.66 (.70)	4.64 (.74)	4.64 (.74)
PPL– Demand for popular sovereignty						
1. The people should have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on ….	.62**	.49**	.62	4.28 (1.12)	4.36 (.96)	4.32 (1.04)
2. The people should be asked whenever important decisions ...	57**	.39**	.57	4.63 (.76)	4.35 (.97)	4.50 (.88)
3. The people, not the politicians, should make our most important ...	48**	.27**	.63	4.03 (1.05)	3.90 (1.15)	3.97 (1.10)
4. The politicians in Parliament need to follow the will of ...	.52**	.40**	.67	4.70 (.70)	4.65 (.73)	4.68 (.72)
HMG - Belief in the homogeneity of people						

1. Ordinary people all pull together.	.72**	.35**	.72	4.04 (1.23)	3.85 (1.22)	3.96 (1.25)
2. Ordinary people are of good and honest character.	.55**	.48**	.48	3.30 (1.22)	3.22 (1.15)	3.27 (1.20)
3. Ordinary people share the same values and interests.	.51**	.51**	.51	3.29 (1.05)	3.27 (1.36)	3.27 (1.15)
4. Although Macedonians are very different from each other, when it comes...	.58**	.51**	.58	2.82 (1.36)	2.74 (1.34)	2.78 (1.35)

r_{sub}= item-to-sub-scale correlation, r_{tot}= item-to-scale correlation, α=Cronbach alpha if item deleted, Mf=M of female participants, Mm=M of male participants, M_{all}=M of all participants

Construct validity

As proposed in the validation study, CFA was run with an assumption that the factors are correlated. Populist attitudes were treated as a second-order factor with three distinct dimensions. The tested model corresponds to the version with three dimensions, with good data fit (χ^2= 112.509, *df* =51, *p*<.001, GFI =.946, RMSEA = 0.048, SRMR = .042).

Three items had factor loadings < .50> .30. Although this is an acceptable value, yet it is somewhat lower than the lowest presented in the original validation study. These items are: "The people should be asked whenever important decisions are taken ", "Ordinary people share the same values and interests"and "Ordinary people are of good and honest character"[2]. The standardized factor loadings of the other items are within the range from .570 and .923.
The correlations between the factors are not completely in line with the expected associations between the sub-scales. *Demand for popular sovereignty* is correlated with both *Anti-elitism* at *r*=0.34 (p<.01) and with *Belief in homogeneity of people* (*r*=0.28, *p*<.01). The latter dimension and *Anti-elitism* do not correlate.

Convergent validity

The findings regarding the tested associations between the Shultz et al aggregate score and its dimensions with the expected correlates suggest that Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 seems to find support in our results. The correlation coefficients however, are lower than those in the previous studies (e.g., Castanho Silva et

[2]If these three items are removed from the model, the overall goodness of fit does not improve significantly (See similar results inCastanho Silva et al., 2019).

al, 2019 or Piterová & Kováčová Holevová, 2022), especially for the aggregated scores. All correlation coefficients are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.
Relationships of populist attitudes with known correlates

	Castanho Silva et al.						
Shultz et al.	ANTIEL	PPL	MAN	Total	TRUST	CONS	ETHN
ANTIEL-Anti-elitist attitudes	.42**	.23**	-.03	.35**	-.37**	.30**	.08
PPL –Demand for popular sovereignty	.16**	.42**	-.01	.32**	-.07	.22**	.04
HMG – Belief in homogeneity of people	-.11**	.17**	-.12**	.10*	.16**	.04	.15*
Total	.21**	.40**	.05	.38**	-10*	.26**	.14*

**p <.01 *p < .05

MAN – Manichean outlook, TRUST – Trust in institutions, CONS – Conspiracist beliefs, ETHN - Ethnocentrism

Intergroup differences

Table 5 provides the averages across the comparison groups. The analysis of the t-test for independent groups showed statistically significant differences in populist attitudes in different age groups ($t_{antiel}(530) = -3.52$, $p<.01$; $t_{ppl}(530) = -2.90$, $p<.01$; $t_{hmg}(529) = -3.19$, $p<.01$; $t_{tot}(530) = -4.66$, $p<.01$). For the other comparison groups, the ANOVA Fs were statistically insignificant. Results indicate that Hypothesis 4 could be partially accepted, since only the assumption that older respondents have stronger populist attitudes compared to younger ones has been supported.

Table 5.

Descriptive statistics for populist attitude across age groups, education and party affiliation, M (SD)

	AGE		EDUCATION			PARTY AFFILIATION		
Shultz et al.	18-35 *N*=229	36-65 *N*=306	Second. *N*=349	High *N*=156	MA/ PhD *N*=28	Yes *N*=33	Formal *N*=79	No *N*=422
ANTIEL Anti-elitist	4.25 (.71)	4.46 (.67)	4.35 (.71)	4.42 (.66)	4.25 (.63)	4.34 (.70)	4.34 (.65)	4.37 (.70)

PPL Demand for pop. sovereignty	4.27 (.75)	4.4 (.61)	4.33 (.70)	4.42 (.67)	4.47 (.47)	4.40 (.69)	4.38 (.58)	4.36 (.70)
HMG Belief in homogeny. of ppl	3.18 (.84)	3.42 (.86)	3.34 (.87)	3.28 (.86)	3.28 (.83)	3.53 (.90)	3.35 (.86)	3.29 (.86)
Total score	3.90 (.52)	4.10 (.48)	4.00 (.52)	4.04 (.45)	4.00 (.43)	4.09 (.46)	4.02 (.41)	4.00 (.52)

Predictive validity

The results of the binary logistic regression indicate that the populist attitudes measured by the Schulz et al.'s scale of allow prediction of declared electoral preferences. The logistic regression model was statistically significant, ($\chi^2(1)=5.89$, $p<.05$) *and it correctly classified 67.7% of cases. Participants who endorse stronger populist attitude were more likely to choose "the man of people" as their preferred candidate (*OR =1.562, 95% CI [1.1, 2.2]).

Discussion

The version of the Schulz et al.'s three-dimensional populist attitudes scale that was translated in Macedonian has acceptable performances from the perspective of its internal structure and to a certain extent, the internal coherence. All items from the original version fit well into the proposed structure, with no overlapping factor loadings. The striking difference in the model fit is that the dimensions *anti-elitism* and *homogeneity of people* were not correlated. The latter dimension is also "distinctive" from the perspective that it has the lowest averages (Table 1). These two features probably reflect the local socio-political context in which the respondents are situated, especially the prolonged divisions along ethnic lines in the country. Last, but not least, the homogeneity of this dimension might benefit from rephrasing the HMG_1 item.

The aggregated scale score, as well as the separate dimensions, were correlated with political trust (negatively) and conspiracy thinking and ethnocentrism (positively) in accordance with the expectations, although, more moderately than in previous studies (e.g., Erisen et al. 2021 or Castanho Silva et al. 2019). The expected positive correlations with populist attitudes as defined within Castanho Silva et al.'s scale were met.

It is not easy to offer any theoretically embedded explanation why the expected group differences, except for the age of the respondents have not been confirmed, especially in the case of education which was found to be a predictor of populist attitudes in several other studies, including the one carried out in the Republic of North Macedonia. The same applies to the failure of this study to find differences among participants based on their inclusion or exclusion from the political life through affiliation to political parties. It is very likely that in

both cases, the accumulation of the scores at the higher end of the distribution did not allow making finer differences based on the assumption of the status of inclusion (or privilege).

Finally, yet importantly, there are indications that the scale enables prediction of voting preference, at least within imagined scenario. The variety of outcomes regarding the ability of populist attitude scales to predict voting behaviour, has been supplemented with the finding of this research that the prediction could be improved by using the aggregate score as a predictor. Obviously, as discussed by Hawkins et al. (2017) the existence of populist ideas at the mass level necessarily imply that populist forces would necessarily receive public support, however they are a latent disposition that could be easily activated in some encouraging contexts. The results calls for future verification of the predictive validity of the instrument by using a more direct criterion than hypothetical scenarios, as well as in-depth analysis of the other potential contextual predictors.

In conclusion, this initial study provides evidence that the instrument might be used for research purposes in Macedonian language, although not without caution in relation to its capability to predict electoral preference or behaviour. It has satisfactory similar factor structure as in the one developed in the original language and acceptable internal reliability.

Limitations

This study has limitations that might have reflected on the results. In addition to the nature of the sample, the data was based only on self-report measures that might include considerable bias. The instrument that is in the focus does not include any reversed items,which could lead to acquiescence bias.The predictive validity test was not based on how populist attitudes are related to a real vote choice or specific party affiliation, which further make the concluding difficult. Thus, future research should find ways to collect this sensitive information, along with additional relevant socio-demographic data such as the economic status or similar indicators of social vulnerability.

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