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Relationship between Political Ideology and Need for Closure: Seizing and Freezing

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Abstract

The primary outcome of this study was to explore the correlations between political ideology and seizing and freezing regarding political and non-political topics. The secondary outcome of this study was to investigate the correlation between the NFC subscales and political ideology. Additionally, we were interested in the relationship between the NFC subscales with seizing and freezing concerning political and non-political topics. Results suggest that individuals are more likely to freeze and seize in their decision-making process when they have a right-wing political ideology. This effect was stronger for political than for non-political decisions. Secondly, it was found that people were more right-winged when asked indirectly, rather than when measured by self-report. Thirdly, results show a negative correlation for seizing and mixed results for freezing. Overall the results were most of the time insignificant. This might suggest that the behavioral measures were not capturing seizing and freezing very well. It could also be the case that self-report seizing and freezing is not correlated with behavioral equivalents.

Keywords: Political Ideology, Need for Closure, Seizing, Freezing, Decision-making, Political and Non-political

Relationship between Political Ideology and Need for Closure: Seizing and Freezing

For decades theorists have been interested in finding the relationship between political ideology and personality dispositions. Many studies have found individual differences in personality that influences both prejudices as well as political orientations (Altemeyer, 1998; Duckitt & Sibley, 2010; Heaven & Bucci, 2000; Sibley & Duckitt, 2008; Wilson, 1973). By combining the study of personality with political psychology researchers have found how personality differences can influence political behavior. For example, Caprara and Zimbardo (2004) reported that individual characteristics have become a crucial and decisive role in the political choices that voters make. Modern political psychology therefore studies the influence of personality on political decision-making and attempts to predict which political ideology individuals are likely to support. In this article, political ideology is defined as ‘an individual’s position on a single left-right dimensions’ (Jost, Nosek, & Gosling, 2008). The key elements in this dimension are defending versus resisting social change and rejecting versus accepting inequality (Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009).

History - Personality and Political Ideology

There are many researchers who have studied the effects of personality differences on political behavior. One of the classics in this field is *The Authoritarian Personality* written by Adorno and his colleagues (Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). This theory provided a major contribution to the study of ideological dispositions, on which it is focused (Taylor, 1960). The researchers (Adorno et al., 1950) proposed that there exists a direct link between personality and prejudices (Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). This implies that certain individual differences can influence the political behavior of

people (Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004). The empirical investigation from Adorno and his colleagues (1950) had a lasting major impact on social sciences and political psychology (Duckitt & Sibley, 2010). After wielding great influence in the field of political psychology for many years, interest in the concept of *The Authoritarian Personality* largely declined, chiefly because of theoretical and methodological weaknesses (Martin, 2001).

Despite the fact that researchers lost interest in *The Authoritarian Personality*, it was nevertheless instrumental in inaugurating an important discussion on whether the preference for a certain political ideology is linked to the differences in cognitive functioning and personality (Kimmelmeier, 1997). More recent research has examined this question and has found that the Big Five personality traits are indeed linked to political ideology. Caprara, Schawrtz, Capanna, Vecchione and Barbaranelli (2006) found that center-left voters scored higher on traits of Friendliness and Openness, while center-right voters scored higher on Extraversion and Conscientiousness. The results of another study by Carney, Jost, Gosling, and Potter (2008) indicated that of the Big Five personality traits, Openness is the strongest in predicting the political ideology of individuals. However, in addition to these Big-Five personality traits there are other psychological differences in needs, motives and social worldviews which can help to explain decision-making in politics, as well as explaining why certain individuals support particular political ideologies (Jost et al., 2008).

Social scientists have tried to understand how individual differences in personality and cognition can influence political orientations and decision-making (Rokeach, 1960; Tetlock, 1983). Researchers have therefor investigated the question of why some

individuals preserve attachments to political ideas and decisions and even more importantly, what their original motivations were in reaching certain kinds of judgments, opinions and persuasions. Jost and his colleagues found in their meta-analytic review evidence which suggests that relational, existential and especially epistemic motives play an important role in this process of ideological preferences (Jost et al., 2009). The core aspects of epistemic motives are: the drive to reduce or eliminate uncertainty, complexity or ambiguity, and a cognitive preference for certainty, structure, order, and/or closure (Jost et al., 2009). The core aspects of the epistemic motives are also related to numerous conservative attitudes and right-wing political orientations (Jost et al., 2003). Aspects such as an intolerance of ambiguity, and the personal need for order, structure and closure were mainly positively related with conservatism (Jost et al., 2009), while openness to new experiences, cognitive complexity and a tolerance to uncertain situations or states of mind were positively correlated with liberalism (Jost et al., 2009).

Need for Closure

Individual differences in the epistemic motivation for the need for closure (NFC) has also been investigated in relation to political ideology (Jost et al., 2003). Research has already demonstrated (Kruglanski, Dechesne, Orehek, & Pierro, 2009) that many constructions of information-processing are, both on the intrapersonal and interpersonal level, affected by the NFC. The NFC is defined as an ‘individuals’ desire for a firm answer to a question and an aversion to ambiguity’ (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). The NFC can be also divided into five subscales: the desire for predictability, the preference for order and structure, an aversion and corresponding discomfort over ambiguity, decisiveness and close-mindedness. Furthermore it varies along a continuum with a

strong need for closure at one end and a strong need to avoid closure at the other (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996).

The NFC is described as a personality trait and is therefore a stable individual difference, which can lead to a simplistic cognitive style of interpreting information (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994). Thus, according to Kruglanski and Webster (1996), having a high NFC means that individuals not only have the desire to over-utilize early evidence to receive closure quickly during information processing, but also to maintain this closure. The NFC can be raised under certain circumstances and time constraints is one example that is often used in studies (Chirumbolo, Livi, Mannetti, Pierro, & Kruglanski, 2003; Kruglanski & Freund, 1982).

Consequences of the Need for Closure

According to Kruglanski and Webster (1996) does the NFC posit two general tendencies: urgency tendency and permanence tendency. When an individual is motivated to reach closure as soon as possible, this refers to the *urgency tendency*, which can also be called ‘*seizing*’. Maintaining the closure for as long possible refers to the *permanence tendency* and this can be described as ‘*freezing*’ (Webster & Kruglanski, 1996). For example, when developing certain political preferences most individuals want these preferences to reflect and support the view of the social world they already have. These individuals are then motivated to *seize* quickly upon information they have received about political preferences that fits their social view of the world. They also *freeze* on this preference that they have developed without necessarily processing too much information. Becoming intransigent with their beliefs and refusing alternative options can however lead to biased judgments (Webster & Kruglanski, 1998).

These *seizing* and *freezing* consequences of NFC can affect information processes when individuals want to construct knowledge (Webster & Kruglanski, 1998). Individuals with a high NFC will, for example, process less and different amounts of information and will also have more confidence in their own judgments (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). Furthermore, previous research demonstrates that individuals with a high NFC rely more on stereotypes (Dijksterhuis, Knippenberg, Kruglanski, & Schaper, 1996) and also tend to disfavor out-groups (Shah, Kruglanski, & Tompson, 1998). The consequences of the NFC leads to a different, but also to a more limited type of information processing which can consequently influence the decision-making of individuals (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). This means that certain individuals are motivated to narrow their focus of attention down to specific sources of information and opinion only, in an attempt to filter out what they feel are erroneous or misleading factors.

The Need for Closure and Political Ideology

For these reasons many researchers began to study the relationship between NFC and political orientation and found that individuals with a high NFC are more likely to support right-wing political ideology (Chirumbolo, 2002; Kimmelmeier, 1997; Meloen, 1993). Jost and his colleagues (2003) showed that the epistemic motives like the NFC indeed support politically conservative attitudes and orientations. A study by Chirumbolo, Areni and Sensales (2004) also suggested that individuals who scored high on the NFC have attitudes that are positively correlated with conservative attitudes. Examples of the conservative attitudes are stronger anti-immigrant attitudes, nationalistic, preference for autocratic leadership and a centralized form of political power. High NFCs also scored lower on pluralism and multiculturalism, which are more related to liberal attitudes

(Chirumbolo et al., 2004).

The primary purpose in this study is to investigate relationship between political ideology and seizing and freezing regarding political and non-political topics. The effect on the seizing and freezing for both political and non-political topics is included in order to explore the question of whether a particular domain makes any difference, or if there is a general need for closure tendency that encompasses a broader range of topics.

Additionally, we are also interested in the relationship between the NFC subscales with political ideology and also seizing and freezing concerning political and non-political topics. Effect of political ideology on seizing and freezing will be investigated with a behavioral measurement and compared with self-reported NFC of the individuals. This will allow us to see if seizing and freezing in decision-making is consistent with the self-reported claims individuals make about their NFC. In this study we expect that participants with a right-wing political ideology are more likely to seize and freeze in decision-making processes. We will also explore whether or not this becomes more likely for politically relevant topics.

Method

Participants

One hundred seventy students from Tilburg University (115 women, 50 men, $M_{age} = 20.21$, age range: 18-34 years) enrolled to participate in the present study. Due to missing data the final sample comprised 165 participants. They either received eight euros or one psychology research credit for their participation. The only inclusion criterion was that they were Dutch speaking students.

Pre-measurement

Before conducting the study a pre-measurement was carried out at the campus from Tilburg University. This pre-measurement was conducted to generate content for the present study. During this pre-measurement a female experimenter approached forty students with the request to fill in a survey. In this survey the students ($N = 40$; 50% women; M age = 21 years) answered six questions concerning political and non-political topics. Categories with regard to political topics included least-liked social groups, political policy proposals and political parties. Categories pertaining to non-political topics encompassed favorite drink, favorite actor/actress and favorite vacation destination. For all of the categories the participants were asked to list their top five preferences (e.g. 'List your top five-favor vacation destinations').

Procedure

For the present study it was important to have a controlled experimental setting with test leaders. Therefore, we invited the participants in the ESP lab of Tilburg University. In this lab they were requested to complete a computerized questionnaire. This questionnaire comprised several components which will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

1. Seizing

A final list with options regarding political and non-political topics was provided to the participants. These options were attained as a result of the top five preferences gathered during the pre-measurement. The first dependent variable of the current study is *seizing*. We aimed to measure this variable by calculating the reaction time of participants with regard to their decision-making concerning three political and three non-political

topics. The participants were also offered with the same six categories that were used in pre-measurement (least-liked social groups, political policy proposals, political parties for political relevant and favorite drink, favorite actor/actress and favorite vacation destination for political irrelevant).

2.Sorting Task

The subject received a sorting task, because they had to be distracted from the previous choices they made regarding their preference on political and non-political topics. In this filler sorting task they were asked three times to rank ten objects (pillow, light bulb, phone, bottle of water, watermelon, shoe, book, Tupperware box, teapot and a baseball). They had to sort these objects based on volume from small to large, weight from lightest to heaviest and at last practical use from most useful to the most useless objects.

3.Freezing

Once participants completed the ranking task they received the same six provided political and non-political lists and had to choose again an option. However, the options in the categories were they could choose from this time were all new except for the chosen option from the first round. This option was still available in the lists. This is a crucial part of the experiment, because this allowed us to see how often the participants changed their mind or hold on to their political and non-political preferences. How often the participants actually will changed their mind is the measurement of our second dependent variable *freezing*.

4.Scales

In the last part of the study participants received a complete measurement of their

NFC and political ideology. The NFC and political ideology was measured with the Need for Closure Scale and the Social policies and Economic policies Scale

4.1 Need for Closure Scale

Webster and Kruglanski (1994) developed the NFC assessment instrument to measure individual differences in the need for closure. However, the participants in this study completed the Need for Closure Scale that was translated into Dutch. The scale included 20-items and the item responses were assessed on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The NFC scale can be divided into five subscales that each consist of four items: the desire for predictability ($\alpha = 0.633$), preference for order and structure ($\alpha = 0.836$), discomfort for ambiguity ($\alpha = 0.655$), decisiveness ($\alpha = 0.762$) and close-mindedness ($\alpha = 0.467$).

4.2 Social policies and Economic policies Scale

Participants were given a list of thirteen policies and had to indicate their positive or negative attitude toward it on a slider scale of 0 to 100. The zero represented a very negative feeling and hundred a very positive feeling toward the policy. The thirteen policies used in this study were the first measurement of the political ideology of our participants. A higher score represented in this case a more right-wing political ideology. The policies used in this scale could be divided into two subscales namely a subscale of social policies (abortion, immigration, military and national security, religion, traditional marriage, traditional values, family unit and patriotism) and economic policies (welfare benefits, tax, limited government, fiscal responsibilities, business). The subscale of social policies was had a high internal consistency (8 items; $\alpha = .84$). However, the internal consistency of the economic subscale was much lower (5 items; $\alpha = .29$). Most of the

policies that were used in this scale to measure political ideology came from the Social and Economic Conservative Scale (SECS) developed by Jim Everett (2013).

5. Demographic Measures

In the last section of this survey participants received demographic questions. In the first three questions participants had to answer their age, gender and nationality. The participants received thereafter one question which was the second measurement of their political ideology. They had to indicate their political orientation on a seven-point Likert scale ('1' = 'Extreme left-wing' to '7' = 'Extreme right-wing').

Results

The primary outcome of this study was to explore the correlations between political ideology and seizing and freezing regarding political and non-political topics. Pearson correlation analyses were conducted to test the relationships. The final correlations are presented in table 1.

Table 1
Bivariate Correlations of Political Ideologies

	Political Ideology 1		Political Ideology 2
	Social Policies	Economic Policies	Self-reported
Seizing			
Political Topics	-.038	-.016	-.003
Non-political Topics	-.043	.001	-.035
Freezing			
Political Topics	.050	.161*	.048
Non-political Topics	.092	-.134	-.082

Note: Correlations marked with* have $p < .05$ and ** represents $p < .01$

Political ideology and seizing

We expected that the individuals with a more right-wing political ideology will be more likely to seize in their decision-making. However, we did not found significant

correlations with seizing on both scales of political ideology. More precisely, the results showed non-significant correlations between political ideology measured with social policies and seizing for political ($r = -.038, p = .633, N = 159$) and non-political ($r = -.043, p = .594, N = 159$) decision-making. The correlation between political ideology measured with economic policies and seizing was also non-significant for political ($r = -.016, p = .842, N = 161$) and non-political ($r = .001, p = .993, N = 161$) decision-making. Furthermore we found in the results that correlations between the self-reported political ideology and seizing was not significant for political ($r = -.003, p = .974, N = 165$) and non-political decision-making ($r = -.035, p = .660, N = 165$).

Since the correlation represents a ratio for the change in time taken to give an answer (in seconds) per additional question answered (*ceteris paribus*), $r = -.038$ can be interpreted as a lower reaction time of 3.8%. This means that it takes less time to make a decision. Overall, the results suggest that individuals who have a more right-wing political ideology will make faster decisions on political and non-political decision-making processes (table 1). However, it is not possible to make strong conclusions, because they are not significant.

Political ideology and freezing

The association between political ideology and freezing regarding political and non-political topics was also tested with Pearson correlation analyses. We expected that people with a more right-wing political ideology have a higher tendency to freeze on their decisions and preferences.

The results concerning political ideology measured with social policies and freezing showed non-significant correlations for political ($r = .05, p = .533, N = 159$) and

non-political ($r = .092, p = .248, N = 159$) decision-making. Since sticking to a decision was coded by 0 and a change in decision was coded by 1, an r of 0.05 represents a change of 5 %. Other results can be interpreted in similar fashion. However, the correlation between political ideology measured with economic policies and freezing did show a significant positive correlation for political decision-making $r(161) = .161, p < .05$, but a non-significant correlation for non-political decision-making ($r = -.134, p = .090, N = 161$). Furthermore, results between political ideology measured with a self-report scale was a non-significant correlation with freezing on political decisions ($r = .048, p = .540, N = 165$) and non-political decisions ($r = -.082, p = .297, N = 165$). The correlations between these variables are summarized in table 1.

The results indicate that individuals with a more right-wing political ideology cling more to their decisions in political decision-making. However, because again not all the correlations are significant it is not possible to make definite conclusions. With regard to the non-political decision-making they changed their mind more often.

Additional Analyses

The secondary outcome of this study was to investigate the correlation between the NFC subscales and political ideology. Additionally, we were interested in the relationship between the NFC subscales with seizing and freezing concerning political and non-political topics.

Table 2
Bivariate Correlations of Political Ideologies and NFC subscales

	Political Ideology 1		Political Ideology 2
	Social Policies	Economic Policies	Self-reported
NFC Subscales			
1. Preference for order and structure	.261**	.200*	-.024
2. Preference for predictability	.090	.078	-.001
3. Decisiveness	.065	.157*	.025
4. Discomfort with ambiguity	.048	-.007	-.118
5. Closed-mindedness	-.056	.040	.162*

Note: Correlations marked with* have $p < .05$ and ** represents $p < .01$

NFC subscales and political ideology

The expectation in this section of our research was that participants with a higher score on the NFC subscales will support a more right-wing political ideology. The results between NFC subscales and political ideology are presented in table 2.

The first NFC subscale is a preference for order and structure. The results show significant correlation between this subscale and political ideology measured by social policies $r(157) = .261, p < .01$ and economic policies $r(159) = .200, p < .05$. A higher r represents a higher score on the NFC subscales and in return also to a higher likelihood of being right-wing. However, the correlation with the self-reported political ideology is not significant. Thus, individuals who have a higher preference order and structure will also support a more right-wing political ideology when their political orientation is measured on social and economic policies. This effect is not found when a self-reported measurement of political ideology is used.

The second NFC subscale is a preference for predictability. The correlation between this subscale and political ideology measured by social policies ($r = -.090, p = .262, N = 158$), economic policies ($r = .078, p = .327, N = 160$) and self-reported political ideology ($r = 0.001, p = .992, N = 164$) was not significant. These correlations suggest that a higher preference for predictability makes individuals want to support a more right-wing political ideology. However, because these effects were no significant we need to be cautious in making conclusion.

The third NFC subscale was focused on measuring decisiveness. Significant correlation was only found between decisiveness and political ideology measured with economic policies $r(160) = .157, p < .05$. A higher score on decisiveness predicted a more

right-wing political ideology measured with economic policies. This was also the case for political ideology measured with self-report or social policies, but the results were not significant.

The fourth NFC subscale is a discomfort feeling with ambiguity. Results showed no significant correlations between discomfort with ambiguity and political ideology measured by social policies ($r = 0.048, p = .545, N = 159$) as well as economic policies ($r = -0.007, p = .928, N = 164$) and neither with the self-reported political ideology ($r = -0.118, p = .131, N = 165$). In some cases were the results even negative which suggest that a higher discomfort with ambiguity makes individuals want to support a more left-wing political ideology. This is inconsistent with our expectations.

The last NFC subscale measures closed-mindedness. A non-significant correlation is found between closed-mindedness and political ideology measured by social policies ($r = -.056, p = .484, N = 159$) and economic policies ($r = .040, p = .619, N = 161$). While a significant correlation is found between closed-mindedness and self-reported political ideology ($r = .162, p = .038, N = 165$). Concluding, this means that higher score on closed-mindedness does predict a more right-wing political ideology when this is measured with self-reported political ideology. The political ideology measured with economic policies shows the same but non-significant effect. A negative relation was found between political ideology measured with economic policies.

In general we can conclude that some of the NFC subscales do correspond with a more right political ideology. However, most of them are not significant. The strongest significant relationship between right-wing political ideology and NFC is found the preference for order and structure subscale. A conclusion based on these results will be

provided in the next chapter.

NFC subscales with seizing and freezing

We expected in this last section of our analyses that a higher score on the NFC subscales would lead to more seizing and freezing. To ascertain this we compared the self-reported score on NFC with their actual behavioral measurement of seizing and freezing. The correlation for each variable is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

<i>Bivariate Correlations of Need for Closure</i>					
Subscales	Order and Structure	Predictability	Decisiveness	Ambiguity	Closed-Mindedness
Seizing					
Political	-.019	-.042	-.017	-.048	-.083
Non-political	-.071	-.019	-.181*	-.050	-.181*
Freezing					
Political	.023	-.065	.046	-.010	-.043
Non-political	.126	.175*	-.079	-.004	-.083

Note: Correlations marked with* have $p < .05$ and ** represents $p < .01$

Results showed that a higher score on preference for order and structure was non-significant on seizing and freezing for political and non-political decision-making. A higher preference for predictability could also not predict faster decision-making for political and non-political topics. With regard to the preference for predictability and freezing a significant effect was found on non-political decisions ($r = 0.175$, $p = 0.024$, $N = 165$), but not on the political ones. The decisiveness subscales had solely a significant negative correlation with non-political seizing ($r = -0.181$, $p = 0.020$, $N = 165$).

The last subscale of closed-mindedness is significantly correlated with seizing on non-political topics ($r = -.181$, $p = .020$, $N = 166$). Results show a negative correlation for seizing and mixed results for freezing. Overall the results were most of the time insignificant. This might suggest that the behavioral measures were not capturing seizing

and freezing very well. It could also be the cases that self-report seizing and freezing is not correlated with behavioral equivalents.

Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the correlations between political ideology and seizing and freezing regarding political and non-political topics. The effect of an individual's political orientation on the NFC and seizing and freezing has already been studied in the past. However, researchers have not investigated whether the behavioral measurement of the seizing and freezing corresponds with an individual's self-reported NFC. Neither are differences between political and non-political decisions explored. Therefor was the secondary outcome of this study the correlation between the NFC subscales and political ideology and the relationship between the NFC subscales with seizing and freezing concerning political and non-political topics.

We expected that individuals with a more right-wing political ideology will have a stronger tendency to seize and freeze during their decision-making processes. A part of the results regarding this research question did overlap with the former line of research. Individuals with a right-wing political ideology seized more on political and non-political decisions. However, these results were non-significant. The right-wing political ideology predicted as well more freezing on the political topics, but this was only significant for political ideology that was measured with economic policies.

Thus, these results are largely non-significant and also in some cases inconsistent with research that has been carried out in the past that showed the relationship between right-wing political orientation and higher scores on NFC and therefor also seizing and freezing (Chirumbolo, 2002; Jost et al., 2003). This suggests that the behavioral measures

were perhaps not adequately capturing seizing and freezing.

Concerning the second research question we found that preference for order and structure was correlated with more right-wing political ideology. A higher score on preference for predictability, decisiveness showed for a large part more right-wing political ideology, but the results are not significant. Discomfort with ambiguity revealed much diverse and non-significant findings. Lastly, the closed-minded subscale supported only the right-wing political ideology according to their self-reported political orientation.

The findings between the NFC subscale and political ideology in present study are partially corresponding with previous research. Many studies have found the relationship between right-wing political ideology and the NFC (Chirumbolo et al., 2004; Kemmelmeir, 1997). However, in the present study this was not case for all the NFC subscales, but for a large part on preference for order and structure, decisiveness and closed-mindedness measured with a particular political ideology.

At last we expected that a higher self-reported NFC would overlap with the behavioral measurement of seizing and freezing. The results of this study did show that higher score on all of the NFC subscales do lead to more seizing on political and non-political topics. However the relationships were only significant in the decisiveness and closed-minded subscale on non-political topics.

Concerning the NFC and freezing we found many different effects. The need for predictability revealed more freezing on non-political decisions. Despite some significant results do the remaining findings between the behavioral measurements of freezing not correspond with the self-reported NFC.

Webster and Kruglanski (1994) found in their research that NFC can have

consequences which are seizing and freezing during decision-making processes. In the results of the present study almost no significant correlations were revealed. It is possible that self-reported seizing and freezing are not similar to the behavioral measurement of individuals. However, it is also possible that the results are inconsistent with previous research.

Many results of the present study were not significant or inconsistent with previous research. This could imply that there are limitations and errors on different sections of this study. First of all, the sample of this research included only students (115 women, 50 men, $M_{age} = 20.21$, age range: 18-34 years) which could be a restriction. It is possible that these young students experienced difficulties with answering especially the political questions or choosing their political orientation. Research by Bettencourt, Vacha-Haase and Byrne (2011) even showed that young adults are less conservative than older adults. However, in the present study we were mainly interested in individuals with a more right-wing political ideology. Including older adults in the sample can lead to better and stronger results.

In this study a questionnaire was used that came originally from America. However, we had to translate the survey, because we were interested in how Dutch individuals would respond. Translating the survey perhaps not only changed the questions, but also the validity of the survey. To improve future research in this field it is recommended to develop an official Dutch questionnaire. Lee, More and Cotiwan (2011) showed, for example, in their study that researchers should be very cautious when translating a questionnaire because this can lead to many errors and a low internal validity. Sperber (2003) also revealed the validity problems in translated instruments and the crucial effects it can have on research findings.

Developing a Dutch questionnaire could be also very beneficial for this research, because it would remove the low reliability on the economic policies scales. The economic policies, for example, were used to predict the political ideology. However the policies used in this scale were more related to policies in America than the Netherlands. Thus, the participants were asked to indicate their feelings toward policies they were not familiar with. These problems in the economic policies scale had major consequences for the way political ideology was measured which was actually a crucial aspect in this study. The participants eventually completed the questionnaire in the ESP Lab from Tilburg University. This was a controlled setting with test leaders to prevent problems while participants were filling in the questionnaire. However, the participants had to complete multiple surveys on the computer prior to starting the questionnaire of this study. This could have caused motivation problems to carry out the research seriously. The participants were perhaps tired or not in the mood anymore to complete another survey.

Researchers who wanted to demonstrate the consequences of a high NFC often included time pressure in their studies (Chirumbolo et al., 2004; Kruglanski & Freund, 1983; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). By adding time pressure participants have different information processing before they make a decision. Time pressure makes individuals score higher on the NFC and achieve more confidence in their own judgments which leads to freezing (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). However, in this study we only calculated how much time the participants took to choose an option. The NFC was not manipulated to increase the effect which could be the reason why many effects in the present study are not significant or inconsistent with previous research.

According to Kruglanski (1980) are individuals more likely to freeze in their

judgments and preferences when they have a high need for structure. While a fear of invalidity leads to less freezing. It could be possible that the participants in the present study experienced the fear of validity because there was much time to think about the decisions they made. Participants did perhaps not attach to their preferences, because they had adverse feelings and were afraid of making invalid or personally costly decisions (Kruglanski & Freund, 1982). A higher fear of invalidity means not only less freezing, but also less NFC in individuals.

Besides that there are researchers who suggest that the NFC in political ideology is moderated by culture (Fu, Lee, Morris, Cao, Chiu, & Hong, 2007). The fact that this study is conducted in the Netherlands with only Dutch speaking students could perhaps explain that individuals in the Netherlands are influenced differently by the NFC. However, there is not much research that supports this which could be an aspect to include in the future.

Many limitations of this study can be improved in future research by taking first of all a different or broader sample. For example, including not only younger but also older students and investigate whether the culture aspects plays a role. A new questionnaire should be developed to prevent lower internal validity. It should contain better scales and correct policies to measure political ideology. If it is necessary to translate a survey it should be done by professionals and it is crucial to prevent that participants get too tired or lose motivation. Lastly is it possible to add time pressure and increase the need for structure. Higher NFC and therefor also seizing and freezing can improve the results of future studies.

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