

# The Impact of Political Beliefs on Ethical Positions in Adults

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## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine and compare the relationship between political beliefs and ethical positions. A limitation found in current research is the generalizability of the participants concerning age.

## Introduction

- Republicans are 95% more conservative than the median Democrat, whereas Democrats are 97% more liberal than the median Republican (Pew Research Center, 2017).
- Republicans and Democrats express similar degrees of intolerance towards opposing ideologies (Brandt et al., 2014).
- There are issues and characteristics distinctive to conservatism (Everett, 2013; Thórisdóttir & Jost, 2011).
- Liberals express higher tolerance in complexity, flexibility, neophilia, and caringness (Jost et al., 2003; Haidt, 2012).
- Moderates constitute 38% of Democratic voters, which continues to decline (Gilberstadt & Daniller, 2020; Haidt, 2012).
- Libertarians' personalities are similar to Liberals with higher scores than Conservatives on questions regarding economic liberty (Haidt, 2012).

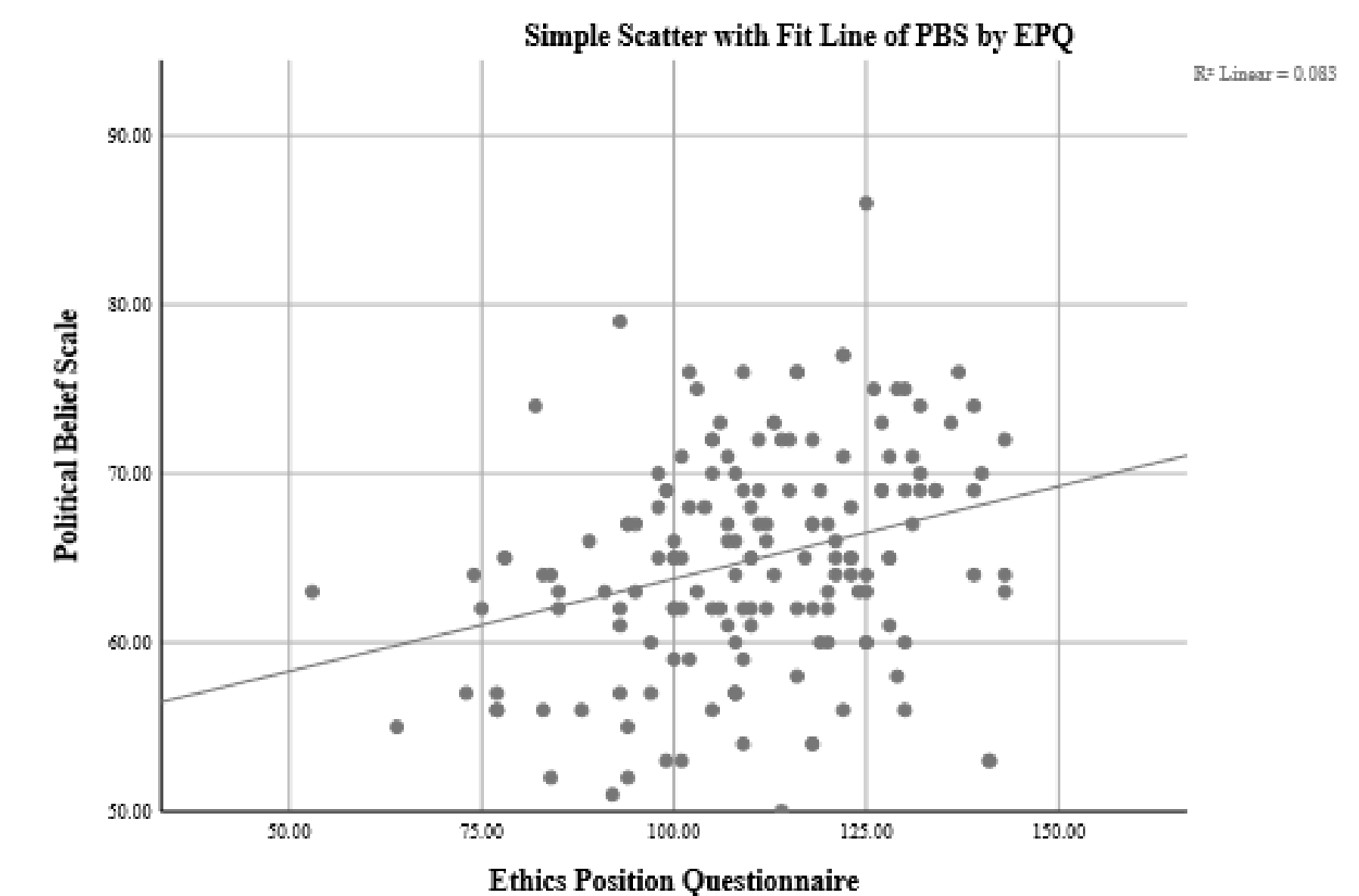
## Hypothesis

1. There will be a difference between levels of political beliefs and ethical positions within participants.
2. There will be no difference between levels of political beliefs and ethical positions within participants.

## Methods

- Participants included 164 participants. Participants responded to a questionnaire consisting of 3 sections:
  1. Demographic Information.
  2. Political Belief Scale (PBS)(Webber et al., 2018).
  3. Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ) (Forsyth, 1980).
- Participants' were given a score for the following variables: political party membership, birth year by generation (Dimock, 2019), PBS, and EPQ.

## Scatter Graph



## Discussion

- Age or generational differences may significantly influence political beliefs and ethical positions.
- Politicians may want to consider age and/or ethical differences when attempting to persuade voters.
- Because the study was conducted at a private Seventh-Day Adventist college in Collegedale, TN, it would be beneficial to conduct this study with non-religious institutions.
- Because the study's sample mostly consisted of college-age students, it would be beneficial to conduct this study more adult and elderly samples.

## Research Questions

Three research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are participants' average degree of political attitudes?
2. What are participants' average degree of ethical positions?
3. Are there political beliefs and ethical differences as a function of age?

## Results

- 46.5% of participants identified as Republican, 28.8% as Democrat, 2.9% as Libertarian, and *other* or *none* for the remaining.
- There was a significant difference in the political beliefs of participants when political party was a factor ( $F(4, 158) = 4.562, p = .002$ ). This analysis provides evidence that political party plays a role in one's political beliefs.
- The One-Way MANOVA showed a statistically significant difference between political beliefs and ethical positions with age as a factor ( $F(6) = 6.349, p < .01$ ). The analysis shows that age plays a significant role in the participants' political beliefs and ethical positions.

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