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Predicting support for welfare policies: The impact of attributions and beliefs about inequality

Abstract

This study assessed the relationship between attributions for wealth and poverty, beliefs about income inequality and support for progressive and restrictive welfare policies. An updated scale was developed to measure attributions for poverty. "Culture of poverty" items and new structural items loaded strongly, contributing to the development of a more contemporary scale for measuring attributions for poverty. Support for progressive welfare policies was predicted by structural attributions for poverty, dissatisfaction with income inequality, and attributing wealth to privilege, whereas restrictive welfare policies were predicted by individualistic attributions for poverty and wealth. Strategies for building support for progressive welfare policies are discussed.

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