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Personality Traits and Common Ingroup Identity: Support for Refugee Policies Among Host Members

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ABSTRACT

Türkiye, which has hosted the largest number of refugees in recent years, requires remedial intervention programs to facilitate adaptation and coexistence. The irony of harmony studies that guide these interventions seem incomplete due to limited sample characteristics and a lack of attention to personality traits. Hence, we aimed to explore relationships between personality traits, identification with common ingroup identity, and support for social policies toward refugees by sampling the advantaged majority and the disadvantaged largest minority in Türkiye across two correlational studies (N_{total} = 772). In Study 1, agreeableness, extraversion, openness, narcissism, and psychopathy were associated with support for positive social policies. On the other hand, neuroticism was linked with support for negative social policies. However, when identification with common ingroup identity was included in the model, the significance of personality traits in almost all models disappeared, indicating that only the prediction of identification with common ingroup identity remained. The findings of Study 2 replicated and extended the previous result by sampling

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disadvantaged group members. We suggest that it may be more effective to focus on intergroup variables rather than personality traits to strengthen support for refugee policies, as the overall findings pointed out.

Introduction

The global mobilization that began with the Arab Spring has given way to a refugee movement the likes of which modern history has never seen. This unexpected contact between communities has motivated social psychologists to investigate the social psychological factors enabling groups to live harmoniously. The researchers believed that exploring intergroup cohesion, conflict management, and resolution in this way would be more effective. In parallel with this purpose, this research aims to explore personality traits and the potential predictive effect of identification with the common ingroup identity (CII) that may underlie attitudes of support for various social policies toward Syrian refugees living in Türkiye.

More than a decade of civil war in Syria has forced dozens of civilians to seek refuge in neighboring regions. The exodus was so large that refugees sought asylum across the ocean in countries such as Canada and the United States. The United Nations has described this migration as the largest collective forced movement in recent centuries. As a northern neighbor, Türkiye hosts approximately four million registered Syrian refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2023), which is about five percent of the total population. Together with unregistered refugees, this figure is thought to be much higher.

Such a demographic change, which brought about unexpected intergroup contact in a rather short period, also brought about intergroup conflicts. Hosts in Türkiye quickly adopted negative attitudes toward Syrian refugees (Çakal & Husnu, 2023). In fact, this finding is not specific to Türkiye. White Americans report fewer positive feelings toward immigrants overall when they receive information that immigration is increasing. This effect appears to be independent of whether the immigration policy is positive or negative (Huo et al., 2018). Similarly, in cities with low intergroup contact, perceptions of demographic change are associated with white respondents' support for relatively negative immigration policies (Arora, 2020). National financial difficulties, along with demographic change, negatively affect host people's attitudes toward

refugees (Wilkes et al., 2008). These attitudes are often reflected in national media. Media studies showed that negative discourses against refugees rapidly accumulated (Seo & Kavakli, 2023). Mass media, in particular, has a significant negative impact on public opinion and policymakers by presenting a negative frame of Syrian refugees (Salas, 2023). News coverage of refugees often focuses on the voices of Western politicians and experts, while the personal stories and perspectives of refugees are often left in the background. Refugees are often represented through numerical data and statistics, ignoring their humanity and individuality (Xu, 2021).

Moreover, Syrian refugees have become a source of realistic and symbolic threat (Çoksan et al., 2023). These findings are also observed in different cultures. For example, children of Jordanian parents with discriminatory attitudes exhibit more negative attitudes toward their Syrian peers (Barron et al., 2023). Germans, who have a high perception of security threats, show more negative attitudes toward refugees (Igarashi, 2021). Similarly, not only the politically powerful Turks in Türkiye, but also the Kurds began to say that Syrian refugees would disrupt local culture and take away their jobs (Çoksan et al., 2023). The rapid growth of these problems has pushed social scientists to explore the source of the issues and find solutions. As part of this effort, this study focuses on the predictive effect of personality traits and identification with CII in supporting social policies toward Syrian refugees.

Irony of Harmony and Common Ingroup Identification

Intergroup contact theory is a powerful guide in studies focusing on attitudes and behaviors between advantaged and disadvantaged groups (Hodson & Hewstone, 2012; Vezzali & Stathi, 2016). Positive direct or indirect contact makes host communities' attitudes and behaviors toward Syrian refugees relatively positive (Özkan & Ergün, 2023). On the other hand, over the last decade, there has been debate about the possible negative effects of contact. Accordingly, members who have contact with their outgroup are less likely to demand change in their favor (Saguy et al., 2009, 2016) and less likely to intend to participate in collective action to bring about such change (Hässler et al., 2021). They also perceive outgroup members as fairer and attach less importance to inequality (Saguy & Chernyak-Hai, 2012). This concept, called the irony of harmony by Saguy (2008; see also Çakal et al., 2011), refers to the fact that, while acknowledging the positive aspects of positive contact with the outgroup, members hold themselves back from social change in their favor.

Although studies provide slightly different explanations for how the concept works, the basic premise is that contact leads members, particularly those from disadvantaged groups, to classify themselves under a common identity with advantaged group members. In this way, members now identify themselves in a higher and common ingroup with their "former" outgroup members. An ingroup refers to a collective where individuals feel a strong sense of belonging, united by shared identity, values, norms, and beliefs. An outgroup is characterized as a set of individuals perceived as separate or different from one's own group, often resulting in a sense of detachment or rivalry, particularly when contrasted with the identity, norms, and values upheld by the ingroup.

These definitions elucidate how individuals perceive their social worlds and how these perceptions influence behavior within the frameworks of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and group dynamics (Reicher et al., 2010).

The irony of harmony states that the CII reduces participants' attention to their disadvantaged position and its associated variables (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). In other words, the CII suggests that when individuals define themselves under a broader and more inclusive group identity, prejudice and discrimination will decrease. This is possible when individuals from different groups unite within a larger group identity, and the sense of *we* is strengthened through this expanded identity. Group identity might be expanded by encouraging students from different ethnic backgrounds or social classes to work on joint projects (Dovidio et al., 2007).

Not only do studies in the contact literature, but also studies based on the social identity approach (Reicher et al., 2010) highlight that intergroup behavior is differentiated when individuals classify themselves in a common superordinate identity with the outgroup (Ufkes et al., 2012). One of the most important consequences of this process is that these members are less supportive of social policies targeting disadvantaged group members. For instance, Ufkes et al. (2016) showed through an experiment that when members see themselves sharing a common meta-identity with outgroup members, they are more likely to support social policies for disadvantaged groups. In their seminal study, they conducted two experiments. Their first experiment focused on university students, who reported lower intentions to engage in collective action, even if they were to gain an advantage, in the condition where shared ingroup identity was emphasized. These students also showed less group anger toward the outgroup. In addition, these students were less likely to believe that their ingroup could act effectively. Similar findings were replicated in their second experiment, which focused on a larger sample. This study suggests that shared ingroup identity, compared to dual identity, reduces intentions to engage in collective action and reduces perceptions of group-based inequality. This effect is referred to as the sedative effect on group members (Çakal et al., 2011).

Although this idea has been empirically tested predominantly for disadvantaged group members (e.g., Ufkes et al., 2016) and similar results have been obtained, relatively recent studies suggest that advantaged group members may also experience a similar cognitive process due to intergroup contact (Cocco, Vezzali, Stathi et al., 2024). For instance, Vezzali and colleagues (2017) showed a similar pattern regarding the relationship between CII and collective action among advantaged group members. However, since empirical studies mainly focus on disadvantaged group members, it is stated that new studies should concentrate on advantaged group members. In this research, we aimed to fill this population gap by sampling both the political and numerical majority, that is advantaged Turks, and the largest minority in Türkiye, namely Kurds, being disadvantaged compared to Turks but advantaged compared to the targeted outgroup of Syrian refugees, across two correlational studies (for similar conceptualizations, see Tropp et al., 2021; Ünver et al., 2022).

Similar findings are repeated in recent studies. For instance, Cocco, Vezzali, Kola-Daisi, & Çakal (2024) examined the relationship between shared ingroup identity

and social policy support. The study was conducted by considering two tribes with different statuses: a minority group (Edo tribe) and a majority group (Igbo tribe). The findings revealed how being perceived as a group affects collective action intentions by increasing moral beliefs and developing positive attitudes toward minority groups. Specifically, in the context of tribal conflict in Nigeria, identification with a common Nigerian identity was found to be positively associated with collective action intentions toward both advantaged and disadvantaged groups. Moral beliefs were found to mediate the relationship between this identity and collective action. However, this study only focuses on attitudes toward groups in different power positions (advantaged or disadvantaged) and not the participants themselves in these positions. In this study, we aim to present a more comprehensive narrative by focusing on both advantaged and disadvantaged group members.

Personality Traits and Support for Social Policies

In addition to the population gap, which is a shortcoming of these studies, the relationship between a priori characteristics of the individual, such as personality traits and attitudes toward social policies for disadvantaged group members, seems worth exploring. Research has predominantly addressed this irony of harmony at the group-level variables (Saguy et al., 2016). On the other hand, can personality traits influence these attitudes? To address this question, in this study, we examined the relationship between personality traits and common ingroup identification with attitudes toward social policies concerning Syrian refugees among host communities, specifically Turks and Kurds who interact with Syrian refugees in their everyday lives.

In psychology, personality refers to the relatively stable and distinctive patterns of an individual's thinking, feeling, and behavior. Personality encompasses an individual's characteristic traits, attitudes, temperaments, and emotional reactions. In psychology, personality is examined within the framework of various theories and approaches (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Personality trait, on the other hand, refers to the permanent behavior, thought, and emotional response tendencies that individuals consistently exhibit in certain situations. Personality traits are the basic components of an individual's general personality structure and have an important place in personality theories (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Recent studies examining the relationship between personality traits and attitudes toward refugees and support for social policies offer valuable insights into this topic. For instance, Medeiros et al. (2024) analyzed the effect of personality traits of politicians on their attitudes toward immigrants using the data from the 2010 Swedish Candidate Survey. Notably, traits such as extraversion and openness were linked to positive attitudes toward immigrants and greater support for social policies. Politicians who scored high on these traits tended to be more supportive of social policies. Furthermore, candidates higher in party rankings exhibited a stronger correlation between extraversion and positive attitudes toward immigrants. Similarly, Bakker et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between personality traits and political preferences in the Netherlands, Germany, and the USA using panel data

sets. The results indicated that there may be a bidirectional causality between these two variables. Additionally, traits like openness and conscientiousness showed significant direct relationships with political preferences. Conversely, right-leaning political preferences were associated with more closed personality traits, such as high conscientiousness and low openness.

Personality researchers aim to identify individuals' personality traits by observing the behaviors individuals show in situations and categorizing these behaviors. Analyses conducted in this direction have shown that five traits are primarily observed among people with many personality traits (McCrae & Costa, 1985), which is called the Big Five. These five personality traits are neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness to experience. Generally speaking, extraverted people are social, energetic, talkative, and cheerful (Watson & Clark, 1997); neurotic ones are anxious, indecisive, inconsistent, and depressed (Costa & Widiger, 1994); agreeableness points out willing to help, generous and lovable, conscientiousness focuses on core traits such as trustworthy, reliable, highly organizational, productive (Graziano & Eisenberg, 1997); finally, the openness to experience focuses on traits such as sensitive to different issues, curious, artistic (McCrae & Costa, 1997). These personality traits highly influence both individual and intergroup behavior (e.g., Gallego & Pardos-Prado, 2014; Rosenstein, 2008). For instance, extraversion is related to prejudice toward outgroups such as refugees (Carlson et al., 2019). All these traits are dimensions of personality, and different traits may be observed at high or low levels in the same person.

In addition, many researchers have recently investigated the most prominent malevolent traits of personality, known as the Dark Triad, which covers psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism. Machiavellianism refers to a personality type that adopts any means to an end, a principle famously outlined in Machiavelli's *The Prince*. This personality trait is less emotional than others but is more likely to engage in deceptive or manipulative actions (Christie & Geis, 1970). Narcissism refers to focusing more on oneself and finding oneself superior, creative, and attractive (Campbell et al., 2006). Psychopathy, on the other hand, is associated with characteristics such as a lack of empathy, irresponsibility, and difficulty in controlling one's behavior (Hare & Neumann, 2008).

Paulhus and Williams (2002) show that positive aspects of the Big Five personality traits are negatively associated with the scores of Dark Triad personality traits. Moreover, like the Big Five, Dark Triad personality traits are also related to intergroup behaviors. For instance, Dark Triad personality traits are associated with intergroup attitudes (Anderson & Cheers, 2018; Pruysers, 2023). Based on this, the present study was focused on the Big Five and Dark Triad personality traits' attitudes toward social policies for disadvantaged groups and identification with a CII for exploratory purposes.

Social policies are strategies, regulations, and programs developed and implemented by governments and other public authorities to increase the welfare of society, ensure social equality, and improve the living conditions of disadvantaged groups. These policies deal with various social problems such as education, health,

housing, unemployment, social security, and poverty. Two of the most important goals of social policies are to support disadvantaged groups and strengthen social solidarity between advantaged and disadvantaged groups (Titmuss, 1974). Social policies may directly affect perceptions and prejudices in society toward refugees. For instance, positive social policies may help refugees to be seen as useful members of society and reduce prejudices. On the other hand, effective implementation of social policies in regions where refugees are densely populated may reduce the potential for conflict between hosts and refugees. This could foster a more peaceful and harmonious society (Berry, 1997).

Study 1

Social identities and the societal position of these identities in terms of power relations shape people's intergroup behavior (Saguy et al., 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For instance, members in an advantageous position in the context of power relations see the world as more threatening and are less supportive of diversity, equity, and inclusion policies (Iyer, 2022). The contact between hosts and Syrian refugees, which constitutes the research context, may also point to a similar context.

In the first study, we sampled the majority members (KONDA Interactive, 2022), namely Turks, who hold political power in Türkiye. Turkish-dominated regions receive more investment and enjoy greater educational opportunities. Turkish parties have formed governments throughout the history of the Turkish Republic (Saatci, 2002). By focusing on Turks, we aimed to explore the predictive effect of (a) the personality traits of the group members who have more political and social power in the context of intergroup power relations and (b) the categorization of themselves in a common group identity with Syrian refugees, who are disadvantaged group members, on social policies regarding Syrian refugees.

Method

Participants

Using convenience sampling, we sampled 639 lay people. Forty-three participants failed on the attention check statements (e.g., As an answer to this statement, mark the "strongly disagree" option. Your response will be used to determine whether you have read the statements). Nine participants had spent most of their lives outside of Türkiye, and five were not native Turkish speakers. The remaining 582 self-identified Turkish lay people (M_{age} = 24.2, SD = 6.93, 67.5% female) participated in Study 1. Most participants (54.0%) are high school graduates and classify themselves as middle socioeconomic level (57.2%).

Measurements

The Short Dark Triad Scale. The abbreviated Dark Triad Scale developed by Jones and Paulhus (2011) and adapted into Turkish by Özsoy et al. (2017) was used to measure participants' Dark Triad personality traits. The scale consists of 27 items using

a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) measuring three sub-dimensions, which are narcissism (e.g., Many group activities tend to be dull without me, Cronbach's α[1] = .66), Machiavellianism (e.g., Most people can be manipulated, Cronbach's α = .70), and psychopathy (e.g., People who mess with me always regret it, Cronbach's α = .66) with nine items. High scores indicate that participants have stronger Dark Triad personality traits.

Big Five Inventory. We used the Big Five Inventory developed by John et al. (1991) to measure Big Five personality traits, which are extraversion (e.g., I see myself as someone who is talkative, Cronbach's α = .85), agreeableness (e.g., I see myself as someone who tends to find fault with others, Cronbach's α = .71), conscientiousness (e.g., I see myself as someone who does a thorough job, Cronbach's α = .73), neuroticism (e.g., I see myself as someone who can be tense, Cronbach's α = .76) and openness (e.g., I see myself as someone who is original, comes up with new ideas, Cronbach's α = .77). The scale consists of 44 items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *completely agree*). Higher scores indicate having more relevant personality traits.

Common Ingroup Identification. The identification with CII scale items developed by Ufkes et al. (2016) and adapted to Turkish by Çoksan (2021) were used to measure the extent to which the participants identified themselves in a common identity with the members of the disadvantaged outgroup. The scale consists of three items (e.g., I think all groups in Türkiye, including Syrian refugees, can have a common identity, Cronbach's α = .75) using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *completely agree*). A high score on the scale indicates a tendency to identify oneself more in a common identity with the outgroup.

Support for Social Policies. We used vignettes developed by Çoksan (2021) to measure participants' support for various fictional social policies toward Syrian refugees. The first of these policies only benefits Syrian refugees. This policy does not include benefits or harms for Turks (supportive policies). The second policy helps the host people, the Turks, but harms the Syrian refugees (segregation policies). The third policy provides an advantage to Syrian refugees despite harming the hosts (altruistic policies). Support for all these policies was measured with three 10-point Likert-type items (Cronbach's α = .97, .70, .84, respectively). Higher scores indicate greater support for each respective policy.

Procedure

The research protocol was approved by the institutional ethics committee of [ANONYMIZED] University under the approval number [ANONYMIZED]. After receiving IRB approval, we announced the aim of the study through the department's web page. Those who volunteered to participate in the study reached the study's online link. They filled out the demographic questionnaire after their consent. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. Then, they

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[1] Cronbach's α is a measure of reliability widely used in social sciences, especially psychology. It is used to assess the internal consistency of a test or questionnaire, that is, how consistent the items or questions are with each other.

answered the short Dark Triad scale, Big Five Inventory, identification with CII items, and support for social policies tasks. The research concluded after participants were debriefed. Each participant completed the study in approximately 25 minutes. Data were collected between February and May 2023.

Results and Discussion

Analytical Approach

We conducted hierarchical regression analyses (six hierarchical regression analyses in total) for three dependent variables (support for supportive, segregation, or altruistic policies) with (a) Big Five personality traits or (b) Dark Triad personality traits in the first hierarchical cluster and identification with CII in the second hierarchical cluster[2] to examine our research questions. We considered the results of the Breusch–Pagan[3] test to check whether the heteroskedasticity assumption was violated and the Durbin–Watson[4] test to check whether the autocorrelation assumption was violated. We examined the VIF values of each analysis to assess whether there is a collinearity problem. None of the analyses conducted violated these assumptions. All analyses were conducted using Jamovi 2.3 statistical software (The Jamovi Project, 2023).

Main Findings

The model where Big Five personality traits are the predictors and support for supportive social policies is the outcome is significant, $F(5,576) = 3.18$, $p = .008$, $R^2 = .03$. The agreeableness trait positively predicted support for supportive social policies ($b = .42$, $SE = .21$, $p = .044$), whereas extraversion trait negatively predicted it, $b = -.32$, $SE = .15$, $p = .041$. Other traits did not predict the outcome. The second model in which the identification with the CII variable is added as a predictor is significant, $F(6,575) = 34.57$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .27$. Model comparison is also significant, $F(1,575) = 186$, $\Delta R^2 = .24$, $p < .001$. In this model, identification with CII positively predicted support for supportive social policies ($b = 1.34$, $SE = .09$, $p < .001$), and the significance of all predictors in the first model was lost.

The model where support for segregation policies is the outcome is significant, $F(5,576) = 2.05$, $p = .047$, $R^2 = .02$. Only neuroticism negatively predicted support for segregation policies, $b = -.30$, $SE = .18$, $p = .049$. The second model in which the identification with the CII variable is added as a predictor is significant, $F(6,575) = 9.91$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .09$. Model comparison is also significant, $F(1,575) = 48.4$, $\Delta R^2 = .07$, $p < .001$. In this model, identification with CII negatively predicted support for

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[2] We followed Fein et al. (2022) to answer the question of which cluster should be analyzed in which order in the hierarchical regression.

[3] The Breusch–Pagan test is used to test whether the error terms of the regression model have constant variance. The fact that the error terms have constant variance, i.e., homoskedasticity, is one of the assumptions of the classical linear regression model. If this assumption is violated, the standard errors of the regression coefficients may be misleading, and the results may not be reliable (Breusch & Pagan, 1979).

[4] The Durbin–Watson test is used to check whether the error terms are serially dependent. The test tests whether there is a positive or negative correlation between the consecutive error terms.

segregation policies (b = −.78, SE = .11, p < .001), and neuroticism continued to negatively predict the outcome, b = −.35, SE = .18, p = .048.

The model where support for altruistic policies is the outcome is significant, $F(5,576)$ = 2.39, p = .043, R^2 = .02. Only openness negatively predicted support for altruistic policies, b = −.26, SE = .10, p = .040. The second model in which the identification with the CII variable is added as a predictor is significant, $F(6,575)$ = 10.81, p < .001, R^2 = .10. Model comparison is also significant, $F(1,575)$ = 52.9, ΔR^2 = .08, p < .001. In this model, identification with CII positively predicted support for altruistic policies (b = −.78, SE = .11, p < .001), and openness continued to negatively predict the outcome, b = −.25, SE = .11, p = .034. Results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

The Association Between Big Five Traits, Identification With CII, and Support for Refugee Policies Among Advantaged Group Members (Study 1)

Model	Predictors	Outcome	b	SE	p
1	Agreeableness		.42	.21	.044
	Extraversion	Supportive policies	−.32	.15	.041
2	Identification with CII		1.34	.09	< .001
1	Neuroticism		−.30	.18	.049
2	Neuroticism	Segregation policies	−.35	.18	.048
	Identification with CII		−.78	.11	< .001
1	Openness		−.26	.10	.040
2	Openness	Altruistic policies	−.25	.11	.034
	Identification with CII		−.78	.11	< .001

Overall, these findings suggest that identification with a CII has higher predictive power than personality traits for all types of social policies. Identification with a CII explains both support for supportive and altruistic policies (positive policies) and support for segregation policies (negative policies) with a higher coefficient. While identification with a CII retains its predictive power, neuroticism retains its predictive power only for segregation policies and openness for altruistic policies. Compared to other personality traits, neuroticism has a stronger predictive power for negative attitudes toward refugees (Gallego & Pardos-Prado, 2014). Especially in perceived high outgroup threat cases, there is a positive relationship between neuroticism and attitudes toward the relevant outgroup (Rosenstein, 2008). In Türkiye, Syrian refugees are seen as a strong source of realistic threat (Çoksan et al., 2023). Therefore, while other personality traits lose their predictive power in the second model, neuroticism may maintain its prediction. On the other hand, openness is more associated with positive attitudes toward refugees and support for positive policies than other personality traits. Openness may lead to a positive view of social diversity and, thus, support for prosocial policies toward immigrants (Medeiros et al., 2024; Thompson et al., 2002).

The model where Dark Triad personality traits are the predictor and support for supportive social policies is the outcome is significant, $F(3,578) = 8.35$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .20$. Narcissism ($b = -.40$, $SE = .18$, $p = .028$) and psychopathy ($b = -.35$, $SE = .18$, $p = .048$) negatively predicted support for supportive social policies. Machiavellianism did not predict the outcome. The second model in which the identification with the CII variable is added as a predictor is significant, $F(4,577) = 50.32$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .51$. Model comparison is also significant, $F(1,577) = 169$, $\Delta R^2 = .22$, $p < .001$. In this model, identification with CII positively predicted support for supportive social policies ($b = 1.28$, $SE = .09$, $p < .001$), and the significance of all predictors in the first model was lost.

No traits predicted the outcome in the model where support for segregation policies and altruistic policies is the outcome. However, identification with CII predicted support for both segregation policies ($b = -.78$, $SE = .11$, $p < .001$) and support for altruistic policies ($b = .46$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$). Although both model comparisons were significant ($p < .001$ for both), the findings remained unchanged, indicating that Dark Triad personality traits did not predict the outcomes. Results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

The Association Between Dark Triad Traits, Identification With CII, and Support for Refugee Policies Among Advantaged Group Members (Study 1)

Model	Predictors	Outcome	*b*	*SE*	*p*
1	Narcissism		−.40	.18	.028
	Psychopathy	Supportive policies	−.35	.18	.048
2	Identification with CII		1.28	.09	< .001
2	Identification with CII	Segregation policies	−.78	.11	< .001
2	Identification with CII	Altruistic policies	.46	.06	< .001

As in the analysis with the Big Five, identification with CII significantly predicted support for social policies in the models where Dark Triad personality traits were predictors. In all analyses where identification with CII was included in the model, no Dark Triad personality trait predicted support for social policies. This indicates that attitudes toward positive or negative policies concerning refugees are influenced by group-level social variables such as identification with CII, rather than by individuals' intrinsic characteristics like personality traits.

Study 2

The findings of Study 1 indicated that agreeableness, extraversion, narcissism, and psychopathy were associated with supportive social policies, neuroticism with segregation social policies, and openness with altruistic social policies. However, when identification with CII was included in the model, the significance of personality traits in almost all models disappeared, indicating that only the prediction of identification with CII remained.

This finding is significant in demonstrating the power of identification with CII over personality traits. The limited number of advantaged group members of the study sampling showed that when people categorized themselves in a common identity with disadvantaged group members, their support for social policies toward those disadvantaged members varied (e.g., Vezzali et al., 2017). Study 1 revealed that personality traits played a minimal role in this relationship.

On the other hand, for relatively disadvantaged group members, recategorizing oneself in a common identity is associated with collective inertia and, thus, the perpetuation of the disadvantaged social system (Saguy & Chernyak-Hai, 2012; Ufkes et al., 2016). But what will these members' attitudes toward social policies regarding more disadvantaged members? Will higher identification with CII, as indicated by the irony of harmony studies, be associated with less support for remedial social policies for more disadvantaged groups? Or, will greater common ingroup identification with the more disadvantaged due to potential empathy (Capozza et al., 2010; Dovidio et al., 2007), perspective taking (Andrighetto et al., 2012), and having similar life events in the context of power relations (Saguy et al., 2008) be positively related to attitudes in terms of social policies toward these members? Moreover, what is the role of personality traits in this relationship? As we mentioned before, a few findings showed that some positive personality types were associated with positive attitudes toward refugees, while some negative personality traits were associated with negative attitudes. Will this pattern also apply to their thoughts on social policies toward Syrian refugees, one of the most disadvantaged groups for Kurds states as disadvantaged in Türkiye (e.g., Tropp et al., 2021)? In the second study, we sought to answer these questions.

The reason why we seek answers to these questions in terms of disadvantaged group members is that groups in different positions in terms of power relations may have different perspectives toward groups that are more disadvantaged than themselves (Saguy et al., 2008). For instance, disadvantaged members may have more positive attitudes toward other disadvantaged members than advantageous ones (van Oudenhoven et al., 1998). However, in this research, we chose Syrian refugees, one of the most disadvantaged groups in Türkiye, as the target group. Some recent studies have indicated that there is no difference in the attitudes and behaviors of Turks (advantaged hosts) and Kurds (disadvantaged hosts) toward Syrian refugees (e.g., Çoksan et al., 2023). This further motivated us to seek answers to these questions.

In fact, Turks are the predominant group in Türkiye, whereas Kurds form the largest minority group in this country (KONDA Interactive, 2022). There is less investment in areas where the Kurds dominate and fewer education opportunities. For various reasons, political parties founded by Kurds have been closed. More importantly, although no law explicitly prohibits it, Kurds cannot freely use their native language in public. Mutual trust between Turks and Kurds is low (Çelebi et al., 2014), and the groups hold negative stereotypes about each other (Bilali et al., 2014). The two main ethnic groups in Türkiye are the Turks and the Kurds, despite the differences in power and conflicting relationships. Consequently, they may

identify themselves with a single identity, such as citizenship, which can affect their intergroup orientations when assessing an outgroup membership of Syrian refugees.

Method

Participants

Using convenience sampling, we reached 218 laypeople for Study 2. Twenty-eight participants failed on the attention check statement. Most of the remaining 190 self-identified Kurdish people (M_{age} = 25.5, SD = 7.12, 52.6% female) are high school graduates (52.1%) and at the middle socioeconomic level (48.4%).

Measurements and Procedure

The Kurdish-adapted versions of the measurement tools in the previous study were used in Study 2 (The short Dark Triad scale, Cronbach's α between .60 and .71; Big Five Inventory, Cronbach's α is between .69 and .79; identification with CII, Cronbach's α = .68; support for social policies, Cronbach's α is between .69 and .96). The procedure was carried out in a manner similar to Study 1.

Results and Discussion

Analytical Approach

In Study 2, we examined the research questions from the first study for the disadvantaged group of Kurds. We used the same analytical approach and analyses as in the first study. No assumptions were violated during the analyses.

Main Findings

The model where Big Five personality traits are the predictor and supportive social policies are the outcome is not significant, $F(5,184)$ = 1.48, p = .97, R^2 = .04. However, the second model in which the identification with CII variable is added as a predictor is significant, $F(6,183)$ = 4.01, p < .001, R^2 = .12. Model comparison is also significant, $F(1,183)$ = 16.0, ΔR^2 = .08, p < .001. In this model, neuroticism negatively (b = −.65, SE = .31, p = .036), and identification with CII positively predicted support for supportive social policies (b = .83, SE = .21, p < .001).

Similar to the previous analysis, the model where support for segregation policies is the outcome is not significant, $F(5,184)$ = 1.66, p = .147, R^2 = .04; however, the second model in which the identification with CII variable is added as a predictor is significant, $F(6,183)$ = 2.26, p = .039, R^2 = .07. Model comparison is also significant, $F(1,183)$ = 5.10, ΔR^2 = .03, p = .025. In this model, extraversion (b = −.77, SE = .31, p = .015), and identification with CII both negatively (b = −.45, SE = .20, p = .025) predicted support for segregation policies.

Neither Big Five personality traits in the first hierarchical cluster ($F(5,184)$ = 1.28, p = .274, R^2 = .03) nor identification with CII in the second hierarchical cluster ($F(6,183)$ = 1.10, p = .363, R^2 = .03) predicted to support for altruistic social policies toward Syrian refugees. Results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

The Association Between Big Five Traits, Identification With CII, and Support for Refugee Policies Among Advantaged Group Members (Study 2)

Model	Predictors	Outcome	b	SE	p
2	Neuroticism	Supportive policies	−.65	.31	.036
	Identification with CII		.83	.21	< .001
2	Extraversion	Segregation policies	−.77	.31	.015
	Identification with CII		−.45	.20	.025

The model where Dark Triad personality traits are the predictor and supportive social policies are the outcome is not significant, $F(3,186) = .44$, $p = .72$. The second model in which the identification with CII variable is added as a predictor is significant, $F(4,185) = 5.24$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .10$. Model comparison is also significant, $F(1,185) = 19.5$, $\Delta R^2 = .09$, $p < .001$. In this model, identification with CII positively predicted support for supportive social policies, $b = .93$, $SE = .21$, $p < .001$.

The model where support for segregation policies is the outcome is not significant for either the first hierarchical cluster, $F(3,186) = .51$, $p = .68$, $R^2 = .01$, or the second hierarchical cluster, $F(4,185) = 1.48$, $p = .211$, $R^2 = .03$.

The model where support for altruistic policy is the outcome is significant, $F(3,186) = 3.34$, $p = .020$, $R^2 = .05$. Only psychopathy negatively predicted support for altruistic policies, $b = −.46$, $SE = .22$, $p = .035$. The second model in which the identification with the CII variable is added as a predictor is significant, $F(4,185) = 2.56$, $p = .040$, $R^2 = .05$. However, the model comparison is not significant, $F(1,185) = .254$, $\Delta R^2 = .001$, $p = .615$. Results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4

The Association Between Dark Triad Traits, Identification With CII, and Support for Refugee Policies Among Disadvantaged Group Members (Study 2)

Model	Predictors	Outcome	b	SE	p
2	Identification with CII	Supportive policies	.93	.21	< .001
1	Psychopathy	Altruistic policies	−.46	.22	.040

Like the previous study, the findings indicate that personality traits have minimal effects. Neuroticism is negatively associated with supportive policies, extraversion segregation policies, and psychopathy with altruistic policies. We may discuss neuroticism and extraversion in line with Rosenstein's (2008) study, as we did in the previous research, and consider that the relationship between these personality traits and social policies may reflect a perceived potential outgroup threat. On the other hand, in situations that will affect the outgroup, low positive attitudes toward the outgroup may be observed more frequently in high negative attitudes. This may be related to our inability to find a fundamental pattern between the Dark Triad and supporting

social policies. Also, contrary to the first study, identification with CII among Kurds is less associated with supporting policies. A limited number of significant relationships in Study 2 showed that high identification with CII is positively related to support for supportive policies and negatively associated with support for segregation policies. This may indicate that the sedative effect of disadvantaged members categorizing themselves in a common identity with advantaged members does not apply when they categorize themselves in a common identity with more disadvantaged members; instead, identification with CII may be related to support for policies that improve the social system.

General Discussion

This research aimed to explore the association between personality traits, CII, and support for social policies toward refugees. The irony of harmony studies (e.g., Saguy & Chernyak-Hai, 2012; Ufkes et al., 2016; Vezzali et al., 2017) has indicated that CII among both advantaged and disadvantaged members suppresses support for positive social policies toward disadvantaged members such as refugees. However, the role of personality traits in this relationship has been rarely explored. Our goal was, first, to explore the relationship between these personality traits and support for policies toward Syrian refugees. Second, since our theoretical framework depends on the irony of harmony, we examined the possible predictive effect of personality traits against CII. Overall, however, the results indicated that personality traits had a minimal relationship with support for policies toward refugees and that this relationship was mostly absent in the face of CII.

Among Turks, agreeableness, extroversion, and openness are associated with positive policies. Agreeableness is characterized by traits such as helpfulness and generosity. The higher this personality trait, the more likely one is to engage in benevolent behavior and to be generous in sharing one's resources (Graziano & Eisenberg, 1997). As a result, individuals with higher agreeableness may be more supportive of positive social policies toward refugees.

Extraversion is characterized by social, talkative, and energetic characteristics. Since such people lead a socially active life and value friendships in social settings, they may struggle to accept refugees with a foreign culture and habits (Watson & Clark, 1997). Therefore, we may observe a negative relationship between extraversion and supportive policies toward refugees. Recent studies (e.g., Carlson et al., 2019) also indicate positive associations between extraversion and prejudice against Syrian refugees.

For disadvantaged group members, extraversion may represent an opportunity to talk to outgroup members who share similar cultures and habits within the same context. The regions in Türkiye where Kurds, whom we conceptualize as relatively disadvantaged group in this study, live predominantly overlap with the living areas of Syrian refugees, whom we conceptualize as an outgroup in the research. Before the Syrian civil war, Kurds and Syrian refugees were neighbors. Since segregation policies would mean separating these people from each other, we might observe

a negative relationship between support for these policies and extraversion in Kurdish participants.

Openness includes behavioral traits such as being interested in different subjects, artistic, and curious (McCrae & Costa, 1997). No matter how positively individuals with openness personality traits may approach new cultures, they may consider regulations that would harm them as a threat to their productivity and freedom. Therefore, we might observe a negative relationship between openness and altruistic policies.

Among Turks, neuroticism is associated with support for unfavorable social policies, such as segregation policies. Neuroticism is characterized by inconsistent behavior, indecisiveness, and anxious mood (Costa & Widiger, 1994). Support for segregation policies may reflect the instability and anxiety present in peopl's attitudes and behaviors. By their very content, such policies separate the in-group from the out-group and make the future predictable by limiting what the out-group can do. Thus, support for segregation policies may be seen as an escape from the potential anxiety caused by neuroticism and a desire for emotional stability. Other studies also suggest a positive relationship between neuroticism and perceiving refugees as a threat (e.g., Gallego & Pardos-Prado, 2014).

Among the Dark Triad personality traits, psychopathy and narcissism are negatively associated with support for positive social policies. Psychopathy is associated with a tendency to engage in uncontrolled behavior, irresponsibility, and lack of empathy for others (Hare & Neumann, 2008). It is an expected result that changes in society may cause a negative reaction in them, and the tendency to react to positive developments against the outgroup increases. In parallel to this, studies in the literature show a positive relationship between psychopathy and support for negative policies toward refugees (e.g., Anderson & Cheers, 2018). Furthermore, there is a positive relationship between psychopathy and negative attitudes toward refugees (Pruysers, 2023).

Narcissism involves beliefs that one is more creative, attractive, and remarkable than others (Campbell et al., 2006). As narcissism increases, so does the tendency to view others as competitors. Similarly, in this study, we might observe a negative association between narcissism and support for positive social policies toward refugees due to perceiving refugees as competitors or threats to one's own benefits.

The most striking finding of the current study is that CII predicted support for nearly all policies, overshadowing the predictive effects of personality traits. In fact, when CII is included in the model, the predictive effect of personality traits disappears, and CII becomes the primary predictor. In almost all models, CII is positively associated with positive social policies and negatively related to negative social policies. This suggests that support for policies toward refugees may be better explained by dynamic factors like CII rather than more static elements like personality traits.

As previously mentioned, the irony of harmony studies, in general, shows that identification with the CII may suppress support for positive social policies toward disadvantaged members such as refugees. However, the findings of this study seem to indicate the opposite. Identification with the CII is positively associated with support for positive social policies toward Syrian refugees among both advantaged and relatively

disadvantaged members of the host community. However, we would like to remind readers that our design is correlational; that is, although our research design shows the opposite of what the irony of harmony studies have shown, we cannot determine what results variations in identification with the CII within participants might produce, or at least whether it will produce findings contrary to the irony of harmony studies.

One of the primary explanations for this difference is that people's identification with their own ingroup identities may have differentiated the relationship between the variables. For instance, depending on people's ingroup identification levels, the relationship between variables differs from the irony of harmony studies (e.g., Çoksan, 2021). Since Syrian refugees are seen as a realistic and symbolic threat by both Turks and Kurds in Türkiye (Çoksan et al., 2023), the research context may have intensified ingroup identification. Accordingly, the relationship between the variables we focus on may indicate the opposite of the irony of harmony studies.

Another possible explanation may point to our participants' characteristics. The majority of the irony of harmony studies have sampled WEIRD[5] (Henrich et al., 2010) participants. The relationship between variables in non-WEIRD populations, such as our sample, might be in the opposite direction to what irony of harmony studies indicate. Therefore, it can be argued that more heterogeneous, global, and inclusive studies, such as the distinguished work by Hässler et al. (2021), are needed.

Some limitations must be considered when evaluating the findings. First, we collected data via web-based online tools. However, Türkiye is relatively weak in terms of technological literacy (OECD Skills Studies, 2016); therefore, the possibility that we could not reach a representative sample should be considered. Second, we collected data mainly from participants who were high school graduates. This means a relatively low level of education. It is possible that we were not able to adequately convey the fictional social policies to these participants. Finally, as we mentioned above, our research used a correlational design; hence, we still do not know whether we can obtain findings parallel or opposite to studies on the irony of harmony studies when we differentiate existing identification with CII.

In conclusion, our study clearly shows that personality traits do not play a dominant role in shaping support for policies toward refugees. In comparison, identification with a CII is much more influential in supporting these policies. This shows that people can be made aware of policies toward refugees through various interventions, regardless of which personality trait is dominant. Environmental elements that will be changed by such interventions, such as identification with CII, may offer opportunities for researchers to create a more peaceful society.

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[5] It denotes participants who live in Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic societies.

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