

Exploring the Cognitive and Social Profile of Science Rejection

Emilio Lobato

Illinois State University

Corinne Zimmerman

Illinois State University

Steve Croker

Illinois State University

Abstract: We examined the degree to which cognitive style, cultural worldview, conspiracy ideation, and religious and political demographic variables correspond to agreement with scientific claims across four domains. Participants rated their level of agreement with scientific statements in four domains (evolution, GMOs, vaccinations, climate change) along with open-ended questions to investigate participants' reasons for their support or rejection, filled out individual difference measures, and completed a demographics questionnaire asking about frequency of attendance at religious services as a proxy for religiosity, and political ideology along the liberal-conservative spectrum. Lower agreement with scientific statements was found to be related to a lower analytic thinking style and a stronger conservative political ideology. Our results contribute to a better understanding of the cognitive and social profiles of individuals who reject scientific conclusions and can be useful in designing future research efforts aimed at investigating science acceptance and science denial.