UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Trust in experts and political ideology predict COVID-19 beliefs and policy attitudes

Gabrielle Mion, Greyson Williams, Gabrielle Schienert, Skye Speakman, Grayson Eastman, Kurt Loiseau, Marjorie Prokosch & Colin Smith

Introduction

○ Past research has examined the relationship between trust in authority and its impact on COVID-19 relevant attitudes and behaviors ((Ruisch et al., 2021).

○ Trust in authority is positively related to COVID-19 mitigation behaviors (Brzezinski et al., 2020; Jamieson et al., 2021; Chung & Jones-Jang, 2021).

○ The current work investigated how trust in experts is related to beliefs about COVID-19's origins and the administration's (in 2020) mitigation strategies.
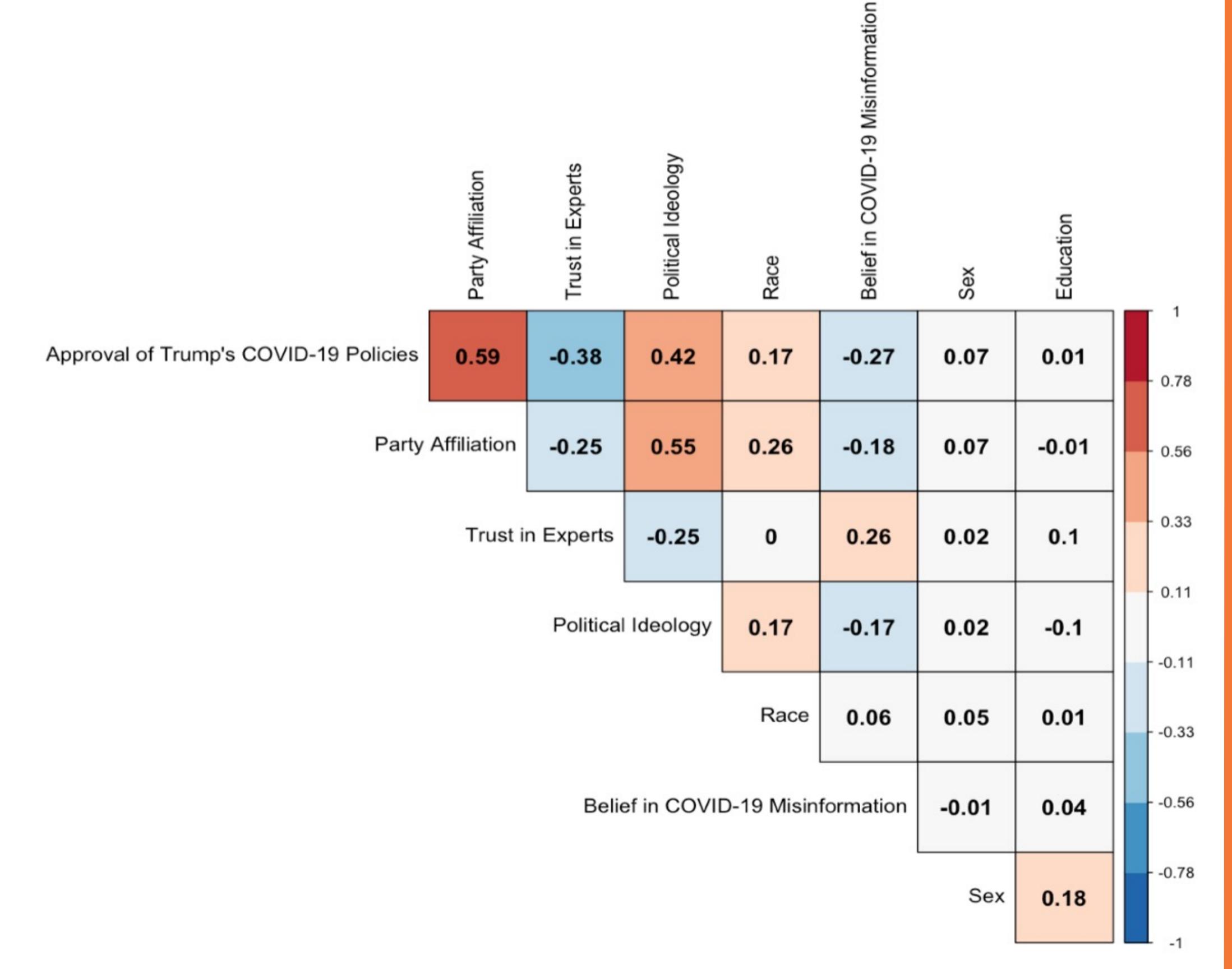
Method

● We used publicly available data from the ANES 2020 Exploratory Testing Survey (N=3080): 52.2% Female, 81.9% White, *M* age = 48.87, *SD* = 16.79

● *Participants completed measures of that assessed: Trust in experts, support for Donald Trump's handling of COVID-19, belief in COVID-19 misinformation, and political ideology.*

We ran correlations, linear regression, and logistic regression analyses.

Greater trust in experts and **liberal ideology** were related to **lower approval** of Trump's COVID-19 policies and **lesser belief** in misinformation about COVID-19's origins, independently of other demographic factors.

Experiments should examine if trust in experts causally influences people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors regarding COVID-19.

Regression Results

Approval of how Trump has handled COVID-19

Predictor	B	SE	β	95% CI$_B$
Trust in Experts	−.831	.060	-.317	[-.96,-.18]
Political Ideology	.423	.029	.338	[.36,.48]
Sex	.120	.106	.025	[-.09,.32]
Race	.804	.132	.154	[.55,1.1]
Education	.101	.031	.073	[.04,.17]
Age	-.014	.003	-.102	[-.02,-.01]

Belief in misinformation about COVID-19's origins

Predictor	B	SE	β	95% CI$_B$
Trust in Experts	.247	.020	.223	[.21,.29]
Political Ideology	-.078	.009	-.153	[-.10,-.06]
Sex	-0.23	.035	-.011	[.10,.04]
Race	.075	.040	.034	[.01,.01]
Education	.007	.010	.012	[.02,.03]
Age	.009	.001	.150	[.01,.01]