How Social Class Impacts the Relationship Between Attitudes Towards Inequality and Voting Behaviour: Analysis from the British Social Attitudes Survey

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Abstract

Over the last 50 years, there has been a huge rise of income inequality across the western world. Puzzlingly, this has not been met with any increase in public concern about the levels of inequality. Whilst this has been occurring, there has been a surge in support for right wing parties, particularly from the working class. This thesis takes a quantitative approach, with the aim of developing a greater understanding of how class mediates the relationship between attitudes of income inequality and voting behaviour in the United Kingdom. I argue that individuals vote against wealth redistribution (for right wing parties) because they are largely unconcerned about income inequality. I test whether this is more or less true for the middle or the working class. I utilise secondary data from the British Social Attitudes Survey, and conduct binary logistic regression models, using two measures of social class to analyse the results (NatCen Social Research, 2021). Findings demonstrated support for the relationship between voting behaviour and attitudes about income inequality, and tentative support for the interaction effect of social class.

Key Words: *Class, Inequality, Right Wing, Survey Data, Voting Behaviour*

1.0 Introduction

Historically, the Labour Party has been defined as the party for the United Kingdom's working class (Lilleker, 2002). Their left-wing policies support the working classes. However, over the last 50 years the working class have been turning to the right wing Conservative Party (Lilleker, 2002). In the most recent general elections, 48% of working class voters voted for the Conservative Party (YouGov, 2019). This trend is happening across the west, where there has been a surge in support for right wing parties, with right wing populism becoming a salient feature of contemporary politics (Gildron, 2017). Most notoriously, the 2016 American

Presidential Election of Donald Trump and the Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom (Dodd et al., 2017). Trump was elected by white Americans without a college degree by a margin of 20 percent over Hilary Clinton (Gidron, 2017). Brexit exit polls indicated that 64 percent of manual workers voted to leave the European Union, compared to 45 percent of managers or professionals (Gidron, 2017). Yet, many scholars find this puzzling due to a working-class vote for a right wing party being a vote against their own class and economic interests. Working class citizens would actually benefit economically from wealth redistribution, which right wing parties usually oppose (Huber & Stanig, 2007).

This surge of working class citizens voting for right wing parties has huge societal and political implications, changing the face of the political landscape. Firstly, even if an increase of working class support for right wing parties does not cause electoral wins, their electoral strength draws voters away from mainstream parties and the center-left (Gidron, 2017). This changes the dynamic of governments (Gidron, 2017). Secondly, when looking at the Trump and the Brexit vote specifically, long term negative economic consequences are expected (Dodd et al, 2017). For example, leave areas in the United Kingdom have seen the least amount of economic growth since Brexit (Fetzer & Wang, 2020). These political and social implications demonstrate the importance of understanding this phenomenon further.

Puzzlingly, this increase in right wing party support has occurred against a backdrop of growing income inequality (Zucman, 2019). It is not possible to look at the Brexit and Trump elections without considering the role of the dramatic increase of income inequality, which has increased significantly across the Western world over the past 50 years (Dodd et al, 2017; Piketty & Saez, 2014). Whilst the one percent has seen their wealth increase, everyone else has watched theirs fall (Zucman, 2019). However, empirical literature has pointed to the paradoxical relationship between rising levels of inequality and low levels of public concern (Mijs, 2019; Trump, 2017). Citizens often attribute the income gap to meritocratic factors, with

citizens in more unequal societies being more likely to explain inequality via meritocracy (Mijs, 2019).

My thesis aims to build upon this existing literature by combining these two research themes. I offer an alternative explanation of why citizens vote for right wing parties, via the role of a lack of concern of income inequality in the United Kingdom. I argue that the lack of concern for income inequality causes citizens to vote against wealth re-distribution, for right wing parties. I set out to examine whether attitudes towards income inequality makes people more or less willing to support the Conservative Party, and whether this is more or less true for working class or middle class individuals. I hope to make a meaningful contribution to the scientific literature by building on theories analyzing why individuals vote for right wing parties, in the specific context of rising income inequalities. To do so, I advance the following research question: How does class mediate the relationship between concerns about inequality and their likelihood to support right wing parties in the United Kingdom? Data comes from the British Social Attitudes Survey (NatCen Social Research, 2021).

2.0 Theoretical Framework

To better understand the themes discussed in the introduction, this thesis proposal will outline further the two research themes. The first theme investigates research surrounding the puzzling phenomena of people voting against their economic interests. The second theme considers the research examining an increase in wealth inequality and inaccurate perceptions of inequality.

2.1 Voting Against the Traditional Class Structure

Historically, social class has been a main determinant of political behaviour (Lipset, 1960). Lipset used statistical data to demonstrate how governments in industrial democracies reflect a democratic class struggle, where working class voters support left wing parties and middle class voters support right wing parties (Lipset, 1960). Here, middle class voters vote to protect their interests, whilst the working class find their true voice in leftist parties (Lipset, 1960).

This political conflict is centred around the distribution of material goods, which is typically disproportionately concentrated around an elite minority. Likewise, the traditional class structure of voting suggests that the working class vote for left wing parties due to policies favouring wealth redistribution, whilst the middle class vote for right wing parties to protect their own economic interests (Achterberg & Houtman, 2006). Similarly, the Meltzer-Richard Hypothesis (1981) suggests that people vote rationally and that redistributive policies express the interests of the median voter. It is suggested that the size of governance, which is defined by the share of income redistributed, is determined by the rational choices of the majority (Meltzer & Richard, 1981).

However, these are no longer standard models or outcomes of voting. The traditional class approach no longer holds the same electoral relevance it used to, with more and more individuals voting outside of their class lines and economic interests (Clark et al., 1993). The effect of traditional class cleavages on the electorate has declined (Clark et al., 1993; Best, 2011). Moreover, unlike what is suggested by the Meltzer-Richard hypothesis, the electorate disproportionately expresses the interests of the upper classes and empirical research has found little evidence of its utility (Aldering, 2010; Kenworthy & McCall, 2008). In the United Kingdom, voting within these class structures has not occurred since the 1950's (Williams, 1995). Furthermore, the working class has become the core voter base of right wing populist parties across Europe since the 1990's (Oesch, 2008). Thus, individuals appear to be voting against their traditional economic class interests.

To explain this phenomenon, economic explanations have been put forth. For example, Oesch theorises that workers vote for right wing parties due to the fear of wage pressure and economic competition over welfare benefits (2008). This explanation suggests that workers' market position has been hit the hardest by international trade, and therefore express their discontent by voting for parties who reject economic modernisation. Similarly, the Split Labour

Market theory suggests working class support for right wing parties is strengthened when immigrant workers are willing to work for lower wages than the majority population (Hjerm, & Nagayoshi, K. 2011). Many immigrants are willing to work for lower wages, due to poor conditions in their home country, resulting in reduced wage standards (Hjerm, & Nagayoshi, K. 2011). This incentivises the working-class workers to vote for right wing parties who are against economic modernisation and immigration.

Additionally, cultural determinants have been put forth to explain why working-class citizens vote for right wing parties. Right wing parties challenge the presence of immigrants in a country (Oesch, 2008). They claim to defend national identity and are against multiculturalism. Working-class individuals perceive immigration as a threat to national identity and culture, so a vote for them is a vote against multiculturalism. Equally, Group Threat Theory posits that working-class citizens feel threatened when others claim what they perceive as being theirs (Bohman & Hjerm, 2015). This leads to the development of prejudicial attitudes, which can be tied to cultural values such as national identity. Framing theory states that perceptions of other groups are shaped by interactions between in-group members (Bohman & Hjerm, 2015; Goffman, 1975). Immigration can be discussed against the backdrop of an international solidarity frame, a national security frame, or an economic frame (Bohman & Hjerm, 2015). Each frame offers a different way of understanding immigration, which can influence people's experiences of it. Rightist parties can portray immigration as a threat to national identity, which can attract working class voters (Bohman & Hjerm, 2015).

Alternatively, it has been suggested that working class individuals vote for right wing parties, due to social alienation and discontent with contemporary governance (Oesch, 2008; Kemmers, 2017). Working class people are not happy with the way the country is run; they are faced with mass unemployment and stagnant wages, leaving them feeling resentful towards the

government (Oesch, 2008). Working class individuals then vote for right wing parties, as a means of expressing their discontent with contemporary governance.

These theories provide an overview of why the working class may abandon their traditional class interests and vote for right wing parties. Yet, further consideration is needed to explain why the middle class may vote for left wing parties, against their traditional class lines. Although literature in this area is scarce, research demonstrates how income equality reduces people's stress levels, prevents physical and mental illnesses, crime, drug use, whilst increasing trust and intelligence (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). Following this reasoning, middle class citizens may vote for left wing parties in a bid to redistribute the wealth and increase equality, despite the possibility the outcome may not be personally economically beneficial. My research aims to add to the gap in the existing literature, by providing a novel explanation of how social class mediates voting behaviour by considering the role of public concern about inequality.

2.2 The Decrease in Public Concern about Inequality

Whilst traditional class voting patterns have been on the decline, so has income equality. Over the past 50 years the western world has seen a sharp increase in income inequality (Piketty & Saez, 2014). Wealth increases have been concentrated within a small elite, whilst the majority have seen their wealth fall (Mijs, 2019). In the US, wealth inequality is at a historic high, with some estimates suggesting that the top one percent of Americans hold almost fifty percent of all wealth (Norton & Ariely, 2011). The US median income has fallen, and the distribution of income has become significantly more unequal (Moris & Western, 1999). A similar picture can be seen in Europe, where the wealth of the very richest has been rising since the mid 1970's (Atkinson & Leigh, 2013). The top 1% have increased their wealth from 28% in 1980 to 33% today, whilst the bottom 75% share remained around 10% (Zucman, 2019).

Considering the above, a natural assumption would be that there has been a huge surge in public concern regarding the true extent and increase of wealth inequality. However, research has demonstrated there is no growing concern about inequality (Lübker, 2006; Trump, 2017). One explanation for this lack of concern is that most people are completely unaware of the true nature of inequality (Hauser & Norton, 2017). Citizens misperceive the current level of inequality and underestimate the levels in their own country (Hauser & Norton, 2017). There is widespread ignorance and blatant misperceptions surrounding the real levels of inequality (Gimpelson & Treisman, 2017). For example, results from nine cross-national surveys suggest that individuals have little knowledge about the extent of income inequality in their country, its direction of change and where they fit into the distribution (Gimpelson & Treisman, 2017). What individuals think they know, is usually incorrect. Secondly, citizens often attribute the income gap to meritocratic factors, legitimising inequality (Mijs, 2019). In more unequal societies, citizens are more likely to explain inequality in meritocratic terms (Mijs, 2019; Trump, 2017).

Despite the widespread lack of concern surrounding the rising levels of inequality, little research has investigated the political and policy consequences. Literature tends to focus on the political consequences of *misperceptions of inequality*, not specifically on a *lack of concern about inequality*. For example, Kuklinski et al suggest that these widespread misperceptions of inequality can lead individuals to hold beliefs which they would not hold if they were correctly informed (2000). Giving individuals information about the true nature of inequality raises concerns, however it does not change policy preferences (Kuziemo et al, 2015). Evidence demonstrates citizens in countries with high levels of inequality do not show more demand for government intervention than those in more egalitarian societies (Lübker, 2006). This can be seen in the United Kingdom, which has been described as more unequal than many other OECD countries, but does not demand great redistributive policies (OECD, 2021). My research

aims to build upon the existing literature by investigating how *concerns about inequality* affect people's likelihood to support right wing parties in the United Kingdom.

2.3 Research Setting: Why the United Kingdom?

My research question will be investigated using data from the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom has a majoritarian electoral system, where two main parties compete along a left and right dimension (Colomer, 2004). These parties have a clear left and right distinction, with the Conservative Party representing the right and the Labour Party representing the left. Their redistributive policies fit into this clear left or right scale: with the Labour Party bidding for further wealth redistribution, and the Conservative Party not (Corbyn, 2019; Johnson, 2019). For example, the Labour party wants to increase income tax for the top 5% of earners, whereas Conservatives do not want any income tax increases (Corbyn, 2019; Johnson, 2019).

Moreover, the voter landscape of the United Kingdom is reflective of this research's theoretical framework. For example, in the 2019 general elections, 48% of working class voters voted for the Conservative Party (YouGov, 2019). Those who earned under $20000 a year were more likely to vote for the Conservative Party than the Labour Party (YouGov, 2019). Additionally, in the 2016 Brexit referendum many people in the UK voted against their economic self-interest (Gartzou-Katsouyanni, 2021). Leave areas are more likely to experience vast economic decline from Brexit, than remain areas (Gartzou-Katsouyanni, 2021; Fetzer & Wang, 2020). In 2020, the Gini coefficient was 0.35, which means the United Kingdom is more unequal than many other developed countries (Frederick, 2020). These conditions demonstrate high inequality and lots of working class voting against economic interests, making it a suitable county for this research.

2.4 A Novel Explanation: How Concerns about Inequality Affect People's Likelihood to Support Right Wing Parties

In consideration of the discussion above, my research provides an alternate explanation as to why individuals support right wing parties, despite rampant inequality. This thesis aims to combine the two research themes discussed, to propose that individuals vote for right wing parties due to lowered concerns for income inequality. I suggest that individuals with lowered concerns for inequality are more likely to vote for right wing parties, than those with heightened concerns for inequality.

Traditionally, right wing parties do not support wealth redistribution and their economic policies are not aimed at reducing inequality (Huber & Stanig, 2007). On the other hand, left wing parties goals usually centre around redistributing the wealth. With major increases in income inequality, the question is raised as to why individuals are not voting to reduce income inequality. My thesis aims to answer this question, by investigating the role of lowered concerns about inequality. If citizens have low concerns about inequality, I propose that they are likely to vote for right wing parties. On the other hand, I suggest that those individuals with higher concerns for inequality are more likely to vote for left wing parties. Thus, I set out to investigate the relationship between concerns about inequality and the likelihood to support right wing parties in the United Kingdom, and whether this is more or less true for the middle or upper classes.

To answer my research question, I firstly set out to explore whether individuals are more likely to vote for the Conservative party if they have lower concerns for income inequality. The Conservative Party does not want to increase income tax for the rich, indicating policies which will not reduce income inequality (Johnson, 2019). A vote for the Conservative Party will not increase equality levels, despite the extreme increasing inequality. If the working class vote for the Conservative Party, they will be voting against their economic class interests.

A middle class vote for the Conservative Party will not necessarily have a negative effect on them personally, but the widening inequality levels are suggested to be detrimental to society (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). I suggest that individuals who vote for the Conservative party have lower concerns about income inequality, which is expressed via my first hypothesis.

H1: Individuals are more likely to vote for the Conservative Party if they have lower concerns about income inequality.

Following similar reasoning, I aim to investigate whether individuals are more likely to support the Labour Party if they have higher concerns about income inequality. Labour aims to redistribute the wealth, and increase corporation tax for the super-rich (Corbyn, 2019). This suggests that people who vote for the Labour Party have higher concerns about inequality, as they are voting for a leftist party which have their roots in increasing equality.

H2: Individuals are more likely to vote for the Labour Party if they have higher concerns about income inequality.

This thesis' analysis of how concerns for inequality influence the likelihood to vote for a right wing party, would not be complete without accounting for social class. The recent surge in support for right wing parties is due to the working classes moving away from the left (Lilleker, 2002). Furthermore, as the working class negatively feel the effects of income inequality, it is possible that concerns for inequality will be different for the working and middle classes. This provides tentative support for the idea that social class mediates the relationship between concerns for inequality and the likelihood to vote for a right wing party. This thesis aims to investigate whether the relationship between concerns for inequality and voting for a right wing party is stronger for the working or middle classes.

H3: The relationship between concerns for inequality and the likelihood to vote for a right-wing party is mediated by social class.

3.0 Data and Methods

Data comes from the British Social Attitudes Survey (NatCen Social Research, 2021). Utilising a secondary data set allowed me to access a data set of very high quality (Bryman, 2015). The survey received 897 valid responses from the variables used in this thesis, which will be discussed below. This quantitative survey was conducted in Great Britain in 2019. As discussed above, analysing survey data from the United Kingdom was a strategic choice due to the unique socio-political landscape, connected to high levels of inequality and high levels of working class support for right wing parties. The survey is designed to produce annual measures of attitudinal movements, which deal with facts and behavioural patterns (NatCen Social Research, 2021). The survey used multi-stage stratified random sampling of adults over the age of 18, living in private households in Great Britain. Data was collected via face-to-face interviews and self-administered questionnaires. Stratified random sampling allows for the resulting sample to be distributed in the same way as the population in terms of the stratifying criteria, increasing the representativeness of the sample (Bryman, 2015). The interviews were conducted by Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). CAPI techniques enhance the degree of control over the interview process and can improve the standardization process of asking and recording questions (Bryman, 2015). This is beneficial to my research as it suggests greater reliability between each interview.

3.1 Operationalisation of Main Variables

Independent Variable: Attitudes Towards Inequality

To measure respondent's attitudes towards inequality the following statement (Q4a) will be used "*Differences in income in Britain are too large"* (NatCen Social Research, 2021). Respondents offer their response on a five point Likert scale: strongly agree/agree/neither agree nor disagree/disagree/strongly disagree. Responses are recoded into 1. Concerned about inequality (Strongly agree/agree), 2. Indifferent about inequality (neither agree nor disagree)

and 3. Not concerned about inequality (disagree/strongly disagree). Of the respondents, 80.7% were concerned, 14.8% were indifferent and 4.5% were not concerned.

Dependent Variable: Political Party Identification

My dependent variable is political party identification. This is operationalised by the variable '*PartyIDN',* which asks respondents '*Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a supporter of any one political party?'* (NatCen Social Research, 2021). If respondents choose '*Yes*', they are then asked to choose from: Conservative Party, Labour Party, Liberal Democrat Party, Scottish National Party, Plaid Cymru, Other Party, Other Answer, None, UK Independence Party (UKIP), British National Party (BNP)/National Front, Trade Union and Socialist Coalition (TUSC)/ RESPECT/ Other socialist party, Green Part, (don't know) and (refusal). If respondents choose *"No",* they are asked "*If there was a general election tomorrow, which political party do you think you would most be likely to support?".* They can then choose from the same political parties. As I am only focused on the distinction between the Labour Party and the Conservative Party, this proposal will recode this variable into a new variable which contains only Conservative Party CONS and Labour Party LAB as responses. (CON=1, LAB=2). 54.1% of respondents answered with 'Conservative party', and 45.8% answered with 'Labour party'.

Mediating Variable: Social Class

My hypothesis assumes that the influence of inaccurate perceptions of inequalities affects voting behaviour differently dependant on the respondent's social class. Savage argues that social class is a very powerful force in the public's imagination (2015). Despite this, there is not a universally agreed measure of class and it has been argued to be one of the most disputed areas of social science (Lui, 2011). Moreover, research has demonstrated the importance of using both subjective and objective measures (Hodge & Treiman, 1968). The objective measures limit the subjective biases in self-reports, and eliminate the concern that many people

do not know what category of social class they belong to (Rubin, 2014). Contrary to this, subjective measures allow for the identity component of social class to be accounted for (Langhout, Drake & Rosselli, 2009). For this reason, I use both an occupation based measure of class and a self-reported measure, to ensure greater internal validity (Bryman, 2012). This allows my thesis to encompass a more empirical, macro level and a more subjective, individual level measure of class.

The first measure will divide social class into five categories using the variable *'Respondents Occupational Class'* (NatCan Social Research, 2021). Respondents are asked to choose from: 1. Employers in large org, higher managers and professionals, 2. Lower professionals and managers 3. Higher technical professionals and supervisors 4. Intermediate occupations 5. Employers in small organisations, own account workers 5. Lower supervisory and technical occupations 6. Semi-routine occupations and 7. Routine occupations. These occupations are recoded according to the Nuffield Class Schema (1 = White Collar Workers, 2 = Petty Bourgeoisies, 3 = Farm Workers, 4 = Skilled Workers, 5 = Non-Skilled Workers) (Goldthorpe & Erikson, 1992). 38.5% of respondents belonged to category 1, 10.3% to 2, 24.9% to 3, 8.5% to 4, 17.7% to 5. These classes are distinguished by employers who purchase labour from employees and employees who sell their labour to employers (Bergman & Joye, 2005). The Goldthorpe Class Schema is one of the most influential classifications of social class and is a good indicator of future employment conditions (Evans, 1992).

The second measure of social class looks at respondent's perceptions of their own position in society. Respondents are asked '*In our society there are groups which tend to be towards the top and groups which tend to be towards the bottom. Below is a scale that runs from the top to the bottom. Where would you put yourself on this scale?'* (NatCen Social Research, 2021). Respondents then mark their responses on a scale of 1-10, where 1 indicates the top and 10 indicates the bottom. This measure allows for a better understanding of

individual level experiences of societal level and structural inequalities (Liu, 2011). Research has demonstrated that the individuals subjective experience of their class can encompass occupational position, education, household income, satisfaction and feeling of financial security (Singh-Manouxa et al, 2003).

Control Variables

In addition to the above variables, five other key social demographic factors are considered.

Gender (RSEX) is included in this analysis, findings have demonstrated non-trivial differences in conclusions from analyses of occupation based class classifications in regards to gender (Lambert, 2008). As one of my class variables is an occupation-based measure, it is important to include a control variable for gender in this analysis. Moreover, gender can influence voting behaviour and political party affiliation (Hatemi, 2012). In the 2019 United Kingdom general elections, females were more likely to vote for the Labour Party than males (McDonnel & Curtis, 2019). Male = 1, Female = 2 (mean = 1.51). This data set includes 45.1% males and 54.9% females.

Age (RAgeCat) is also included as a control variable, class variables based upon occupational measures have strong associations with age (Connelly, 2016). Research has also demonstrated that younger cohorts participate electorally differently to older age cohorts, demonstrating the importance of including age in my analysis (Hadjar & Beck, 2010). Age is measured in categories: 1 = 18-24 (6.3% of cases), 2 = 25-34 (13.3%), 3 = 35-44 (16.3%), 4 = 45–54 (16.8%), 5 = 55–59 (7.7%), 6 = 60=64 (8.1%), 7 = 65+ (31.4%).

The realistic group conflict model suggests that *education level* can affect political participation, with different groups differing strongly in objective position (Hadjar & Beck, 2010; Sprupt & Kuppens, 2015). The more highly educated, the more likely the United Kingdom was to vote for Labour in the 2019 general elections (McDonnel & Curtis, 2019). This highlights the importance of using this measure as a control variable in my analysis.

Education level is measured by the respondent's highest level of education (HEdQual3). 1 = degree, 2 = Highest education below degree/A Level, 3= O Level or Equivalent/GSE, 4= No Qualification (mean = 2.4). 25.1% of respondents had a degree, 27% had A Level's, 26.1% had GCE/O Levels and 21.8% had no qualifications.

The respondents *ethnic group* (raceori4) is included in my analysis. This is due to the various pieces of research suggesting that cultural factors and cultural threats affect voting behaviour (Hjerm & Nagoyoshi, 2011). 1 = Black origin, 2 = Asian origin, 3 = White origin, 4 = Mixed origin, 5 = Other origin. 3.1% of respondents were black, 5.7% were Asian, 89.7% were white and 1.5% were from mixed origins.

Newspaper consumption (Readpap) is included in the analysis, which measures whether respondents usually read a newspaper more than three times a week (NatCen Social Survey, 2021). This is to account for the media bias which took place against Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party, which was found to go beyond the normal limits of disagreement in a democracy (Cammaerts et al, 2016). Yes = 1 (23.6% of respondents), No = 2 (76.4%).

The descriptives of all variables used in this thesis are displayed in table 1 below. The maximum number of variables in the data set was 3226, after listwise deletion the number was 881. This is a significant reduction of the original sample size, and mainly due to my independent and dependent variables. My dependent variable (*PartyIDN)* has 1445 respondents who answered '*don't know', 'refused to say'* or '*refusal'.* Likewise, my self-reported measure of class, and my variable measuring concerns for inequality has a big proportion of *'refusals'.* These variables drastically bought down the sample size of the study, (n = 881) which has negative implications for the representativeness of my thesis (Bryman, 2012).

Table 1: Descriptives of the Variables Used in the Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Concerns about Inequality	1650	1.00	3.00	1.2388	.52234
Respondents Occupational Class	3109	1.00	5.00	3.7909	2.05570
Self-Reported Measure of Social Class	1683	1	10	5.65	1.603
Party Identification	1779	1.00	2.00	1.4587	.49843
Age	3218	1	7	4.56	2.042
Sex	3224	1	2	1.55	.498
Highest Educational Qualification	3158	1	4	2.45	1.089
Racial Orientation	3191	1	4	2.90	.431
Read any daily morning newspaper at least 3 times a week?	3224	1	2	1.76	.425
Valid N (listwise)	881				

3.2 Ethics and Privacy Considerations

In accordance will the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS), the ethics and privacy checklist has been attached to the appendix. This research project will be conducted in line with all privacy and ethical guidelines. Most privacy and ethical concerns are resolved by the fact that this thesis will be working with secondary data, meaning it is already anonymised. This information will still be handled safely, and will be protected against any information leaks by it being stored in a password protected file on my computer.

3.3 Data Analysis

To test my hypotheses, I use binary logistic regression analysis, which is performed via IBM SPSS statistics software. Supplementary to this, I conduct Crosstabulation tables which demonstrate the differences in attitudes towards income inequality between the

Conservative and Labour voters.

I perform three binary logistic regressions to ascertain the odds ratios and statistical significance of the independent variable. The moderating effect of class is explored in the latter models through an interaction term.

My first model investigates the influence of concerns about inequality on voting for the Conservative Party (Con = 1). My second model includes the moderating variable, occupational class, to explore the interaction effect of the respondent's social class. My third model includes the second variable of social class, respondents' self-reported measure of class, to investigate further the moderating effect of social class.

I interpret the regression results via odds ratios, which is the most suitable form of analysis due to the allowance of the classification of cases into one or another (Menard, 2002). This allows for the independent variable (attitudes towards income inequality) to be classified into voting for the Conservative party or the Labour party. Moreover, the odds ratios form of probability is suggested to be the best way of understanding dichotomous dependent variables (Menard, 2002).

4.0 Results

4.1 How do Individual Perceptions of Income Inequality Influence Political Party Support?

I firstly test for hypothesis 1, which questions whether individuals are more likely to vote for the Conservative party if they have lower concerns about income inequality. I conduct a Crosstabulation to determine the percentage of Conservative and Labour voters who have low concerns about income inequality. Table 2 demonstrates that 8.3% of Conservative voters have low concerns about income inequality, compared to only 2.4% of Labour voters. Similarly, 20.7% of Conservative voters are indifferent about income inequality, compared to 8.9% of Labour voters. These scores demonstrate a difference in concerns for inequality between

Conservative and Labour party voters, and provides tentative support for H1, that Conservative voters have lower concerns about income inequality than Labour voters.

Likewise, this thesis aims to investigate whether individuals are more likely to vote for the Labour party if they have higher concerns about income inequality (H2). Table 2 demonstrates 71% of Conservative party voters are concerned about income inequality, compared to 88.7% of Labour party voters. These figures display that there is a higher proportion of Labour voters who are concerned about inequality, providing preliminary support for the hypothesis that individuals are more likely to vote for the Labour party if they have higher concerns about income inequality.

To investigate these relationships further, a Binominal Logistic Regression was conducted to determine whether individuals are more likely to vote for the Conservative Party if they have lower concerns about income inequality, which can be seen on table 3. The coefficients and odds ratios determined by binary logistic regression analysis demonstrate that those who are indifferent about income inequality (OR = 0.255, 95% CI: 0.121-0.538; $p<0.001$) and those who are not concerned about inequality (OR = 0.257, 95% CI: 0.161-0.411; $p<0.001$) are more likely to vote for the Conservative party. The control variables are also included in the analysis. These figures support my first hypothesis by providing evidence for the claim that individuals are more likely to vote for the Conservative Party if they have lower concerns about income inequality. Naturally, these figures also suggest that citizens with higher concerns about inequality are more likely to vote for the Labour party, supporting my second hypothesis.

These results suggest that you are more likely to vote for the Conservative Party, who are against wealth redistribution, if you are not concerned about inequality. These findings can be analysed against prior theorising which suggests that despite rising inequality levels, citizens are unconcerned about income inequality. The results suggest that these citizens who are not concerned about inequality, vote against wealth redistribution, maintaining the inequalities.

Likewise, results build upon the existing literature which investigates the political and societal ramifications of low concerns about income inequality. They provide empirical research into the political implications of low concerns about inequality. The political implications of low concerns about inequality were discussed previously, for example, Kuziemo et al., suggested increased concerns about inequality do not change policy preferences (2015). This research refutes these claims, as the research suggests that those who have higher concerns about inequality do have different policy preferences than those who do not. My research suggests that concerns about inequality influence which political party individuals support, providing counter evidence to existing literature.

Table 2: Crosstabulation displaying the concerns about inequality for Conservative and Labour voters.

*Political Party Support * Concerns About Inequality Crosstabulation*

			Concerns About Inequality			
			1.00 Concerned	2.00 Indifferent	3.00 Not Concerned	Total
Party Identification	1.00 Conservative Party	Count	370	108	43	521
		% within CLPartyIDN CLPartyIDN	71.0%	20.7%	8.3%	100.0%
	2.00 Labour Party	Count	368	37	10	415
		% within CLPartyIDN CLPartyIDN	88.7%	8.9%	2.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	738	145	53	936
		% within CLPartyIDN CLPartyIDN	78.8%	15.5%	5.7%	100.0%

Table 3: Binary Logistic Regression of the Effect of Attitudes Towards Income Inequality on Political Party Support.

Variables in the Equation

							95% C.I.for EXP(B)	
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	OR	Lower	Upper
Step 1[a]	Concerned about inequality			42.405	2	.000			
	Indifferent about inequality	-1.359	.239	32.321	1	.000	.257	.161	.411
	Non-concerned about inequality	-1.367	.382	12.843	1	.000	.255	.121	.538
	Sex of respondent	.031	.151	.041	1	.840	1.031	.766	1.388
	Age of respondent (18-24)			46.506	6	.000			
	Age of respondent (25-34)	-.251	.479	.274	1	.601	.778	.305	1.989
	Age of respondent (35-44)	-.819	.456	3.226	1	.072	.441	.180	1.078
	Age of respondent (45-54)	-1.088	.452	5.792	1	.016	.337	.139	.817
	Age of respondent (55-59)	-1.312	.488	7.214	1	.007	.269	.103	.701
	Age of respondent (60-64)	-1.952	.492	15.753	1	.000	.142	.054	.372
	Age of respondent (65+)	-1.776	.449	15.670	1	.000	.169	.070	.408
	Highest educational qualification obtained - Degree			11.931	3	.008			
	Highest educational qualification obtained – A Level	-.449	.213	4.446	1	.035	.638	.420	.969
	Highest educational qualification obtained – O Level or GCE	-.425	.209	4.137	1	.042	.654	.434	.985
	Highest educational qualification obtained – No qualifications	.194	.237	.668	1	.414	1.214	.762	1.933
	Do you normally read any daily morning newspaper at least 3 times a week?	.446	.175	6.525	1	.011	1.563	1.109	2.201
	Ethnic Group – Black			21.948	3	.000			
	Ethnic Group – White	-1.759	.831	4.477	1	.034	.172	.034	.878
	Ethnic Group – Asian	-2.800	.767	13.314	1	.000	.061	.014	.274
	Ethnic Group – Mixed Origin	-2.879	.970	8.808	1	.003	.056	.008	.376
	Constant	3.783	.897	17.784	1	.000	43.968		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Attitudes towards income inequality, Sex of respondent, Age of respondent, Highest educational qualification obtained, Do you normally read any daily morning newspaper at least 3 times a week?, To which of these racial groups do you consider you belong?.

Note: B = Unstandardized Beta, df = degrees of freedom, sig. = significance value, C.I. for EXP(B) = confidence interval

4.2 How does Class Mediate the relationship between Perceptions of Income Inequality and Political Party Support?

Following the acceptance of my first and second hypothesis, the next part of my thesis aims to explore whether the relationship between concerns for inequality and the likelihood to vote for a right wing party is mediated by social class. Hypothesis 3 is concerned with exploring whether this relationship is mediated by social class. To analyse this, I conduct two binary logistic regression models to account for the two measures of social class; respondents occupational social class (based on the Goldthorpe Class Schema) and respondents self-reported measure of social class.

My first binary logistic regression model uses the Respondents Occupational Class measure of social class, which can be seen on table 4. Control variables were included in the model. The interaction term is significant, indicating class is a statistically significant moderator on the relationship between attitudes towards inequality and voting behaviour (OR = 1.215, 95% CI: 1.115-1.325; $p<0.001$). It suggests that the relationship between attitudes towards inequality and voting for a right wing party, affects social classes differently. This provides support for my third hypothesis, by suggesting that class does mediate the relationship between concerns for inequality and the likelihood to vote for a right wing party.

These results support previous theorising that social class mediates the relationship between attitudes towards income inequality and likelihood to vote for a right wing party. I proposed that as the working classes negatively feel the effects of income inequality, it is

possible that this relationship will be different for the working and middle classes. The interaction effect does demonstrate that class affects the relationship of attitudes towards income inequality and the likelihood to vote for a right wing party, providing support for this theorising.

Contrary to this support, these results refute existing literatures proposals of how class affects voting behaviour. As discussed previously, the traditional class approach to voting suggested that the working class vote for left wing parties as they reflect their democratic class interests (Lipset, 1960; Achterberg & Houtman, 2006). Table 4 displays that class does have an effect on voting behaviour, but not in the same way the literature proposed, results suggest a more contingent relationship between social class and voting behaviour, which is determined by concerns about income inequality. Results suggest that class mediates the relationship between concerns about inequality and voting behaviour. They do not suggest that class is the primary determinant of voting behaviour.

Results support argumentations regarding the changing influence of class on voting behaviour. Results support the existing literature which suggests that more and more individuals are voting outside of their class lines and economic interests (Clark et al., 1993; Best, 2011). My results do not deny the importance of class on the electorate, but they align with existing literature which suggest the impact is changing (Oesch, 2008). Results propose that the UK political parties no longer represent clear cut class paradigms, but that individuals vote for political parties dependent on their attitudes towards inequality, which is mediated by social class.

Research builds on the existing literature which states that there has been no increase of public concerns about income inequality, by exploring the political implications. Moreover, results build on empirical findings demonstrating a surge in support for right wing parties (Gidron, 2017). My research combines these two research themes by demonstrating how low

concerns about income inequality increases the likelihood to vote for a right wing party. This research supports these existing societal trends, and provides empirical evidence proposing a link between them.

Table 4: Binary Logistic Regression Model Demonstrating the Interaction Effect of Occupational Class on Concerns for Inequality and Voting Behaviour.

Variables in the Equation

							95% C.I.for EXP(B)	
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	OR	Lower	Upper
Step 1[a]	Concerned about inequality			54.468	2	.000			
	Indifferent about inequality	2.458	.487	25.476	1	.000	11.679	4.497	30.33
	Non-concerned about inequality	.577	.476	1.469	1	.225	1.781	.700	4.531
	Sex of respondent	.002	.153	.000	1	.988	1.002	.742	1.353
	Age of respondent (18-24)			41.746	6	.000			
	Age of respondent (25-34)	1.652	.452	13.363	1	.000	5.215	2.151	12.64
	Age of respondent (35-44)	1.473	.293	25.235	1	.000	4.362	2.455	7.749
	Age of respondent (45-54)	.925	.252	13.470	1	.000	2.523	1.539	4.135
	Age of respondent (55-59)	.671	.241	7.736	1	.005	1.957	1.219	3.140
	Age of respondent (60-64)	.443	.295	2.260	1	.133	1.558	.874	2.776
	Age of respondent (65+)	-.174	.298	.342	1	.559	.840	.469	1.506
	Highest educational qualification obtained - Degree			15.729	3	.001			
	Highest educational qualification obtained – A Level	.296	.263	1.269	1	.260	1.345	.803	2.251
	Highest educational qualification obtained – O Level or GCE	-.363	.248	2.147	1	.143	.695	.428	1.130
	Highest educational qualification obtained – No qualifications	-.489	.234	4.370	1	.037	.613	.388	.970
	Ethnic Group – Black			19.335	3	.000			
	Ethnic Group – White	2.816	.984	8.185	1	.004	16.709	2.427	115.0
	Ethnic Group – Asian	1.065	.688	2.400	1	.121	2.902	.754	11.16
	Ethnic Group – Mixed Origin	.102	.611	.028	1	.867	1.108	.334	3.672
	Do you normally read any daily morning newspaper at least 3 times a week?	-.391	.177	4.895	1	.027	.676	.478	.956
	Interaction Term: Occupational Class X Concerns for Inequality	.195	.044	19.692	1	.000	1.215	1.115	1.325
	Constant	-3.429	.879	15.227	1	.000	.032		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Attitudes towards Inequality, Sex of respondent, Age of respondent, Highest educational qualification obtained, To which of these racial groups do you consider you belong?, Do you normally read any daily morning newspaper at least 3 times a week?, Interaction Term: Occupational Class X Concerns for Inequality.
B

To investigate this relationship further, my second regression model uses respondents' self-reported measure of social class, which is displayed on table 5. The coefficients and odds ratios determined by binary logistic regression analysis demonstrates the interaction effect of respondents' self-reported social class on voting behaviour (OR= 1.033, 95% CI: 0.828-1.290; p>0.005). However, the interaction term is not significant, indicating the self-reported measure of class is not a statistically significant moderator of the relationship between attitudes towards inequality and voting behaviour. Control variables were included in the model.

Due to the statistical insignificance of the results, they cannot be said to support any previous research exploring the effect of social class on the relationship between voting behaviour and attitudes towards income inequalities. However, they do support literature which highlights the difficulty in operationalising and defining social class (Savage, 2015; Lui, 2011). The differences in the significance levels and the results of the occupational measure of social class and the respondents' self-reported measure of class accentuate the importance of using both a subjective and objective measure of social class (Hodge & Treiman, 1986). In conceptualising social class in two different ways, this thesis obtained different results. When looking at occupational social class, results demonstrate class does have an influence on the relationship between income inequality and voting behaviour. Yet, no such observations were found when looking at respondents self-reported social class. These results aid the debate on social class, by providing support for the use of multiple measures of social class: if only the subjective measure of class was utilised, the statistically

significant results of the objective measure of class would not have been found.

Additionally, these results support wider sociological debates surrounding 'what is class'. The occupational measure of class omits the individual level experiences of societal and structural inequalities, whilst failing to assess subjective class identity (Liu, 2011; Rubin, 2015). Although the Goldthorpe Class Schema is a good indicator of future employment conditions, previous research strongly recommends multiple measures of social class (Evans, 1992). This draws into question whether, with only occupational social class being statistically significant, it can be said that *social class* influences the relationship between attitudes towards inequality and the likelihood to vote for a right wing party. This is due to the concern that occupational social class cannot adequately capture all aspects of social class. For this reason, results of this thesis need to be interpreted with caution, as it is possible that it is not social class in its entirety which has been operationalised by *respondents' occupational class.* This aid's wider debates on 'what is class', and how it can be measured. Obtaining different results from different variables reinforces the importance of including multiple measures, to get a more holistic view of social class.

In addition to these discussions on the operationalisation of social class, previous research has demonstrated that homeownership effects the relationship between class and voting intention (Kurz & Hans-Peter, 2006). To ensure that homeownership does not affect the relationship between attitudes towards inequality and voting behaviour, it would need to be included as a control variable in my analysis. Unfortunately, the British Social Attitudes survey did not ask respondents this question, which restricted my analysis. The complexity of operationalising social class, along with omitting home ownership in my analysis needs to be considered when interpreting my results. It is possible that these factors negatively affect the internal validity of the study (Bryman, 2012).

Table 5: Binary Logistic Regression Model Demonstrating the Interaction Effect of Respondents Self-Reported Class on Concerns for Inequality and Voting Behaviour

Variables in the Equation

								95% C.I.for EXP(B)	
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	OR	Lower	Upper
Step 1[a]	Concerned about income inequality			4.741	2	.093			
	Indifferent about income inequality	1.045	.639	2.672	1	.102	2.843	.812	9.951
	Not concerned about income inequality	.992	1.231	.649	1	.421	2.696	.241	30.127
	Sex of respondent	-.028	.154	.033	1	.856	.972	.720	1.314
	Age of respondent (18-24)			43.852	6	.000			
	Age of respondent (25-34)	.514	.464	1.226	1	.268	1.672	.673	4.154
	Age of respondent (35-44)	1.129	.443	6.493	1	.011	3.091	1.298	7.363
	Age of respondent (45-54)	1.333	.438	9.277	1	.002	3.792	1.608	8.941
	Age of respondent (55-59)	1.564	.476	10.793	1	.001	4.778	1.879	12.147
	Age of respondent (60-64)	2.096	.477	19.313	1	.000	8.131	3.193	20.703
	Age of respondent (65+)	1.934	.432	20.045	1	.000	6.916	2.966	16.125
	Highest educational qualification obtained - Degree			15.893	3	.001			
	Highest educational qualification obtained – A Level	.657	.219	8.957	1	.003	1.928	1.254	2.965
	Highest educational qualification obtained – O Level or GCE	.650	.218	8.866	1	.003	1.916	1.249	2.939
	Highest educational qualification obtained – No qualifications	.063	.247	.066	1	.797	1.066	.656	1.730
	Do you normally read any daily morning newspaper at least 3 times a week?	-.439	.176	6.190	1	.013	.645	.456	.911
	Ethnic Group – Black			22.183	3	.000			
	Ethnic Group – White	1.715	.830	4.268	1	.039	5.557	1.092	28.286
	Ethnic Group – Asian	2.789	.766	13.260	1	.000	16.26	3.625	72.956
	Ethnic Group – Mixed Origin	2.662	.958	7.722	1	.005	14.32	2.191	93.600

Social group: R's position in society? (10 point scale)	-.246	.141	3.030	1	.082	.782	.593	1.032
Interaction effect: Self-reported Class X Concerns for Inequality (mediating variable)	.033	.113	.084	1	.771	1.033	.828	1.290
Constant	-2.940	.934	9.904	1	.002	.053		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Attitudes towards Inequality, Sex of respondent, Age of respondent, Highest educational qualification obtained, To which of these racial groups do you consider you belong?, Do you normally read any daily morning newspaper at least 3 times a week?, Interaction Term: Self-Reported Class X Concerns for Inequality.

5.0 Conclusion

This research aimed to investigate whether the relationship between attitudes towards inequality and voting behaviour is mediated by social class. Despite its growing sociological importance, existing literature has not yet explored this question. I take the context of the United Kingdon and utilise the British Social Attitudes Survey to answer my research question.

This thesis used binary logistic regression analysis to provide support and tentative support for my three hypotheses. Firstly, I found support for hypothesis 1 by demonstrating that individuals are more likely to vote for the Conservative Party if they have lower concerns about income inequality. Secondly, my results demonstrated how individuals are more likely to vote for the Labour Party if they have higher concerns about income inequality. Finally, I found tentative support for the suggestion that the relationship between concerns for income inequality and the likelihood to vote for a right wing party is mediated by social class. When analysing the occupational measure of respondents' social class, the interaction effect of class was found to be statistically significant. However, the use of the self-reported measure of social class derived statistically insignificant results.

These results support the existing literature suggesting the impact of social class on the electorate is changing. They suggest the previously theorised paradigm of the leftist parties representing the working class, and the middle classes turning to right wing parties is no longer

typical. My results suggest that the party individuals vote for is determined by their attitudes towards income inequality, which is mediated by the respondents' occupational social class.

Moreover, the results are in line with the existing literature demonstrating the complexity of operationalising and defining social class (Savage, 2015; Lui, 2011). Using two measures of respondents' social class allowed for a more thorough discussion of the interaction effect of social class. Although, the two different measures procured different results, highlighting the difficulty and complications involved in operationalising social class. These results can aid future literature by reinforcing the importance of including multiple measures of social class to gain a more holistic operationalisation. The results suggest that class needs to be operationalised via an objective and subjective measure, for best accuracy. These results can aid wider sociological debates of 'what is class' and how social class can be defined and measured.

When reflecting on the wider societal implications of these results, it can be worrying for the levels of income inequality. My results show that individuals who are not concerned about income inequality vote for right wing parties. Due to the nature of right wing party policies and their aversion to wealth redistribution, if they gain office it is likely that wealth inequality will rise further. This exists alongside increasing support for right wing parties, huge increases of wealth inequality in the West and lowered societal concern about inequality (Zucman, 2019; Gidron, 2017; Lübker, 2006; Trump, 2017). If societal concerns about inequality remains low, the results from my thesis suggest that individuals will be increasingly likely to vote for a right wing party. Right wing parties remaining in power is likely to maintain the income inequalities within the United Kingdom, demonstrating the vast socio-political implications of my results, when viewed alongside existing literature.

However, this researches results cannot be perused without considering the limitations of the study. The original sample size of the research (n = 3226) was drastically reduced (to n

= 881) after Listwise deletion. This is problematic and negatively effects the representativeness of the study. It is possible that a large group of respondents share a particular characteristic, which has caused them to dismiss a particular question from the survey, which has resulted in missing data. This has negative ramifications for the representativeness of the study, as it could result in a social group being excluded from the analysis. Although secondary survey data is usually one of the best types of data to gain a large sample size, in this specific case I would advise a future researcher to conduct their own large-scale survey to increase the representativeness and generalisability.

Moreover, as previously discussed the United Kingdom has a unique socio-political landscape. Its majoritarian electoral system sets it apart from most other European democracies, with France being the only notable exception (Colomer, 2004). Other European countries political parties do not share the same clear left and right political party divide, perpetuated by a two party system. For this reason, results should not be generalised to areas outside of the United Kingdom. This leaves room for future research to investigate this relationship further. Future research could explore whether this relationship is found in proportional electoral systems and across different democracies.

This researches results may be interesting to politicians and policy makers. These results suggest it is in the Labour party's interest to increase concerns about income inequality. A policy maker for the party may introduce various initiatives informing citizens about levels of inequalities in the United Kingdom and in their local areas. In raising concerns about income inequality, the results of this research suggest that the likelihood to vote for the Labour Party increases.

In conclusion, the main findings of this research demonstrate that occupational social class does influence the relationship between voting for a right wing party and attitudes towards income inequalities. No such relationship was found when looking at the self-reported measure

of social class. This research can be built upon in the ways discussed above, whilst also providing important contributions to the sociological and political literature in this area.

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8.0 Appendix's:
Appendix 1:

CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: Can working class support for right wing parties in the United Kingdom be understood through the role of inaccurate perceptions of income mobility and inequality?

Name, email of student: Florence Slark, 566219fs@eur.nl
Name, email of supervisor: Jonathon Mijs, jonathan.mijs@gmail.com
Start date and duration: 04.04.2021 – 20.06.2021
Is the research study conducted within DPAS: **YES**
If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?
(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants. YES **- NO**

   If 'NO': skip to part V.

   If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? YES - NO

   Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act (WMO) must first be submitted to an accredited medical research ethics committee or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (CCMO).

2. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants. YES - NO

   If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else). YES - NO

   If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? YES - NO

2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? YES - NO

3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? YES - NO

4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? YES - NO

   Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).

5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? YES - NO

6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? YES - NO

7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? YES - NO

8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? YES - NO

9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? YES - NO

10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? YES - NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.

Continue to part IV.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

_____

_____

__

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

_____

_____

__

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

_____

_____

__

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

In the short term, I will be storing my data on my computer. The data will be stored in a password protected, encrypted file on my computer.

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

I am personally responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from my research.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

Although the data utilised by this project will already have been anonymised, it will still be handled very carefully. This research project will be using 'BitLocker', to back up the data every week. This means the data will be backed up with full volume encryption, to protect it from data leaks.

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

I will be using secondary data from the International Social Survey, this will already have been anonymised, prior to me obtaining the data (ISSP Research Group, 2017).

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Florence Slark

Date: 20/04/2021

Name (EUR) supervisor: Jonathan J. B. Mijs

Date: 20/04/2021