

# The Psychological and Social Underpinnings of Political Belief Development

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## ARTICLE INFO

**Keywords:** *Reflective Reasoning, Political Belief Formation, Deliberative Democracy, directional motivated reasoning, Belief Cultivation*

## ABSTRACT

In this study we will, examine the complicated psychological and social forces that produce political attitudes. The paper reveals the twofold nature of the cognitive processes; how emotive and cognitive biases influence reasoning about politics. The findings reveal that one of the common types of directional motivated reasoning is one in which the pre-held belief impacts the treatment of political information, which in turn results in biased assessment of political personalities and issues. Other than that, this research discusses the role of conversation and deliberation in the promotion of reflective political opinions. Discussion with others persuades a person to express an opinion and to listen to others that develop one's thinking of political matters. The paper also discusses the emotions, such as anxiety and anger, associated with political judgment, maintaining that such emotions distort and occlude any lucid judgment about political performance. It also reveals that scientific curiosity acts to offset such one-sidedness: "The more scientifically curious anyone is, the more open they will be to information that runs counter to pre-existing points of view, allowing them to reason more impartially." Findings underpin views that a critical thinking-open discussion environment will be highly instrumental in raising political awareness and understanding. The present study bequeaths an important understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying the construction of political opinion and the social processes that can help consolidate or contest these opinions. Controlling these factors sets up a better ability to confront polarization and misinformation in modern political discourses.

## 1. Introduction

Political ideology contextualizes the view of individuals concerning authority, governance, and the organization of society. An individual's ideology encompasses much more than a simple preference but deep-seated cognitive structures engendered through a variety of determinants such as personal experiences, cultural contexts, and educational exposure.

Of course, knowing in what ways these beliefs have changed is key in this polarized climate when sentiments for and against most political issues run so strongly.

The present study investigates the psychosocial bases on which political attitudes are formed. One introduces the concept of reflective reasoning-about the developing attitude, where reflection is given to political information over and above any automatic thinking. Discussion with others, particularly those who differ in opinion from one's self, may also bring about empathy and broaden one's perspective, further enhancing the political attitude in a valid way.

Scholarship again on the effects of emotion on political reasoning suggests that some emotions, such as empathy, sharpen reflective thought, while others, such as anger, harden predispositions.

It would range from various strategies of promoting political deliberation-from citizen assemblies down to small group discussion-that would provide an enabling condition for reflective political engagement. The present research consequently investigates these dynamics in order to explain how individuals can develop more reflective political beliefs and, by extension, enhance democratic discourse as a whole. Results emphasize the need to create an environment that fosters critical thinking and allows for the free exchange of ideas in developing such capacities to engage in and deal with such complexities of modern contexts.

### 1. What Political Beliefs are?

Political beliefs are deeply held cognitive structures that immensely influence individual views with respect to authority, governance, and the nature of social order. Such a belief system would hold a variety of ideas, including views about the role of government, the distribution of resources, individual rights, and issues of social justice. This complex interaction of factors includes personal experience, cultural influences, and educational background in their formation through media use.

Political beliefs are the core of democratic functioning. They ignite political participation by way of voting behavior, campaign contributions, and civic activism. More importantly, they have bearings on the decisions made in public policy since the elected officials usually represent and advocate interests of their constituents.

Empirical research has borne out the existence of a host of social and psychological consequences related to political ideologies. For example, these beliefs may shape health behaviors, voting decisions, and even the nature of personal relationships. Moreover, political beliefs may be sculpted by cognitive biases and emotional responses into confirmation bias and a predisposition to seek out information that supports already-held views. Understanding the nature and significance of political beliefs is a prerequisite for successfully navigating the complexities of contemporary political terrains. It allows one to critically review his or her own beliefs, engage in appropriate discourse with others who hold different views, and become a meaningful participant in the democratic process.

### 2. How do Political Beliefs Take Shape?

One of the big mysteries that researchers have been trying to solve for a long time is how people's opinions and feelings about politics are formed. You might imagine that people organize their beliefs and feelings in this area through logic and searching for facts, but this is not always the case. Many studies in different fields (such as psychology and political science) have shown that people usually use shortcuts and biases when dealing with political information; For example, one of the things people do is **directional motivated reasoning (Bolsen and Palm 2019; Christensen and Moynihan 2024; Willenborg and Detmering 2025)**; In other words, when people are faced with new information or issues in the field of politics, they tend to seek information that confirms their previous beliefs, or fulfills their desires. At the same time, they tend to ignore or reject information that challenges their previous beliefs or desires (**Achen and Bartels 2017**)(**Taber and Lodge 2016**). One of the common behaviors of people in the field of politics is to follow their feelings and loyalty

towards political parties. Loyalty to a political party can be very empowering, especially in countries like the United States. This loyalty may motivate people to support the party and its policies without any hesitation. Sometimes, this support even occurs in situations where the policies of the supported party conflict with the individual's personal values (Cohen 2003; Iyengar and Hahn 2009; Mason 2018). One of the common behaviors of people in the field of politics is to follow their feelings and loyalty towards political parties. Loyalty to a political party can be very empowering, especially in countries like the United States. This loyalty may motivate people to support the party and its policies without any hesitation. Sometimes, this support even occurs in situations where the policies of the supported party conflict with the individual's personal values. But what if instead of following their prejudices and feelings, people would think more carefully and consciously about political issues? Wasn't this beneficial not only for democracy, but also for society? Some people agree with the idea that citizens should be able to engage in "reflective reasoning". In the sense that they must face different and conflicting views about a political issue or a candidate and compare the advantages and disadvantages of each before making a decision (Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2018; Barker 2018). Many philosophers and political thinkers also believe that political judgments should be based on deep and thought-provoking arguments, not based on quick and superficial thinking (Arendt 1999; Goodin 2000; Dahl 2008). But the question is, are people able to think more deeply about political issues, given the prevalence of directional motivated reasoning? And if this is possible, what factors lead people to this type of reflection?

### 2.1) Intuitive Beliefs

Directional motivated reasoning occurs when individuals check the accuracy and validity of information under the influence of the beliefs and opinions of the group they consider themselves to be a part of (Hutmacher et al. 2024). In such a case, when people encounter new political information, they analyze and judge this information based on the beliefs and thoughts of their group or party; In other words, their view of new information is influenced by the presuppositions of the group they consider themselves to be a member of. Bolsen and Palm (Bolsen and Palm 2019) point to three key mechanisms that play a role in people's directional thinking. The first mechanism is "confirmation bias". In this case, people are looking for political information that matches their previous beliefs. If they encounter information that contradicts these beliefs, they may reject it and instead become more dependent on their previous beliefs, which is called the "prior attitude effect". The second mechanism is "disconfirmation bias". In this situation, when people are confronted with arguments or information that contradict their previous beliefs, they are likely to ignore them and spend more time arguing against them than accepting them. This concept, proposed by Taber and Lodge (Taber and Lodge 2016), shows one of the methods that people use to maintain and support their previous beliefs against conflicting information.

A large number of studies have shown that people's political thinking is more influenced by directional motivated reasoning. In their model, Taber and Lodge (Taber and Lodge 2016) believe that "emotions and emotions" are the main driver of the thinking process: when people are faced with political information, their fast and unconscious emotional and emotional processes determine the way they react and evaluate them. He identifies these information and directs them to support his existing beliefs; For example, the conflict between Zionists and Palestinians is a complex and long-term issue that affects the way people think on both sides. The question is, do people use the reflective process to defend themselves and reject the other party's point of view? Halperin and Gross (Halperin and Gross 2011) conducted a study in the Zionist and Palestinian community. They found that both groups used their thinking in a biased and non-reflective way, but not in the same way. Zionists tended to believe information that blamed the Palestinians for the conflict and were suspicious of information that blamed the Israelis, while Palestinians tended to believe information that blamed both sides equally and information that blamed only the Palestinians. blames him, they doubted; Also, they found that these effects are influenced by emotions and feelings: feeling "anger" makes people act more in a biased and non-reflective way, while "fear" has less effect on this process. They argued that biased and non-reflective thinking is a common problem in intergroup conflicts, but it can change depending on the type of information and the emotional state of people. In their studies, Taber and Lodge (Taber and Lodge 2016) found that directed reasoning is not reduced by acquiring political knowledge. In fact, the more politically aware people are, the more likely they are to think in a directional and biased way; A finding that has been confirmed by subsequent research (Bisgaard 2019; Vegetti and Mancosu 2020).

One type of directional motivated reasoning that has attracted the attention of many political scientists is "partisan directional motivated reasoning" (Bolsen et al. 2014; Leeper and Slothuus 2014; Mason 2015; Mullinix 2016; Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2018; Robison 2020). Partisan-directed reasoning is the process in which people react to and interpret political information through their partisan perspective, especially

on issues related to election policies and candidates; In other words, in this process, people's party identity, not the information itself, is the main factor guiding their thinking about political issues. Redlawsk (**Redlawsk 2002**) investigated this idea in a unique environment which is actually a simulation of a political campaign. He found that trying to ignore misinformation about candidates we're interested in may end up ignoring important warning signs of a candidate's flaws or weaknesses; Also, previous researches have shown that Americans' opinions about the country's economic conditions depend on their party identity; In other words, rather than being influenced by actual changes in the country's economy, their judgments are influenced by their party allegiance (**Enns and McAvoy 2012**). Similarly, Arceneaux & Vander Wielen (**Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2018**) by examining the data of the American national elections in 2000, 2002 and 2004, found that partisanship has a significant effect on people's evaluation of the state of the national economy. Depending on which party (Democrat or Republican) was in control of the country in a given year, partisan views on the state of the economy varied dramatically (see also (**Bisgaard 2015**)). In their study, they observed that the Democratic respondents think that the state of the economy was good in 2000, but in 2004, the state of the economy did not have much definition. This perception was simply due to the fact that a Democrat and a Republican held the presidency in 2000 and 2004, respectively. The researchers concluded that people's party identities systematically affect the evaluation of economic performance (**Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2018**).

## 2.2) Reflective Beliefs

Some people form their political beliefs not based on their previous beliefs or social identity, but based on the desire to be correct and fair in evaluating new political information about an issue or an election candidate. This tendency, called "accuracy motivation" (**Hahn et al. 2024**), leads to a type of reasoning called "**Reflective reasoning**." Reflective reasoning means that people are ready to integrate different and conflicting views and arguments in their thinking process and, if necessary, change their political opinions and preferences; In other words, having an open and fair perspective, these people are ready to revise their beliefs based on new and accurate information (**Goodin 2000; Stanovich 2011; Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2018**).

Our concept of "reflection" is based on Stanovich's opinion (**Stanovich 2011**) in the field of rationality. "Reflective reasoning" in this sense does not simply mean deep thinking. This process goes beyond the individual's self-centered prejudices in the thinking process; As Robert Goodin (**Goodin 2000**) pointed out, "reflection means" considering the evidence and experiences embodied in the beliefs of others.

## 3. Cultivating the Art of Reflective Political Thinking

In searching for an answer to the question of how we can attain reflective political thinking, we must pay attention to various factors, including the willingness of citizens to participate in the formation of reflective thoughts. A lot of research (**Frederick 2005; Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2018; Baron 2018**) has been done in different fields of political science and psychology, which shows that people's inclination towards deliberative political reasoning is different. In the field of political science and psychology, there are studies from the past that investigate cognitive mechanisms. These mechanisms guide thinking by using objective criteria of intelligence, knowledge and education. This issue has been further investigated in the research of (**Delli Carpini 2000; Stanovich 2011**). The new round of these studies was trying to answer the question of whether the existing variables can show the tendency to reflective thinking in the political field or not.

The research results led to interesting findings; Instead of education and knowledge reducing guided and directed reasoning, they can help strengthen and intensify them; In other words, people who have more education take more sophisticated political views; Also, calculative individuals tend to engage in topical and partisan arguments more than their more lax counterparts (**Bisgaard 2019; Bakker et al. 2020**).

### 3.1) How to distinguish the dual nature of thoughts?

Apart from objective indicators, other studies have investigated the effect of personality traits on deep meditation. One of these features is "need to know". The need for cognition is a personality trait that motivates people to engage in deep reflective activities and enjoy them (**Cohen et al. 1955; Cacioppo and Petty 1982**). This personality trait plays an important role in the normative participation of people in political reasoning; In other words, people with a higher need for cognition will be more willing to participate in political arguments (**Nir 2011**). Although the need for knowledge can have a positive effect on reflective political reasoning, this effect is by no means simple and one-dimensional. Arceneaux and Vander Wielen (**Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2018**) have addressed this issue by creating and validating a reflective measure. This reflective measure includes not only "thinking capacity" which is measured by the need for cognition index, but also "people's motivations to adhere to their previous attitudes".

**"Dispositional reflection"** is defined as the extent to which people tend to change their previous beliefs and attitudes and become more involved in cognitive reflection. This definition shows that reflective political thinking depends not only on intellectual capacity, but also on individual motivations and the desire to change previous attitudes. In an effort to gain a deeper understanding of political thinking, studies have tried to combine two cognitive criteria: **"need to know"** and **"need for affect"**. These two criteria show the tendency of people to experience strong emotions and deep thinking.

Arceneaux and Vander Wielen (**Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2018**), using these two criteria and taking into account the distinction between System 1 and System (Stanovich et al. 2000), to examine the political thinking process. They used "need for affect" as a measure to measure the strength of intuitive responses (or system 1) and "need to know" as a measure to measure intellectual capacity (or system 2). Their results indicated that people who participate in reflective political reasoning usually have a high score in "need to know" and a low score in "need for affect". On the contrary, non-reflective thinking people scored differently in these two measures. These findings suggest that the balance between "need to know" and "need for affect" can indicate the degree to which individuals tend to combine strong motivations to reflect with weak motivations to adhere to an intuitive judgment. This balance can be used as a measure to measure the degree of participation of different people in guided and reflective political arguments.

One of the ways to measure people's way of thinking is to check their curiosity about scientific subjects. Scientific curiosity is not only limited to the understanding of facts or scientific theories, but also includes the pleasure of searching and exploring media related to science; Like watching documentaries, listening to podcasts or reading scientific articles for fun. Kahan and his colleagues (**Kahan et al. 2017**) provided a way to measure this characteristic by asking people about the amount of reading or watching scientific media and also observing their actual behavior and performance; For example, they investigated how much time people spend watching a science film and how much they search for more information about it after watching the film. They found that people who are more curious about scientific topics are more inclined to examine evidence that contradicts their current beliefs; In other words, "scientific curiosity" can help people overcome their prejudices and reason more objectively.

Another factor that plays a role in people's thinking about political issues is an effective method of evaluating their ability to understand different points of view. This assessment includes examining people's ability to empathize with the emotions, feelings and thoughts of others and deeply understand the reasons behind different opinions. Typically, this ability is measured by examining whether individuals attempt to see situations from the perspective of others and gain a deeper understanding of them (**Davis 1983**). Reflective reasoning, as mentioned, refers to the ability to go beyond personal prejudices and preconceptions and pay close attention to what is learned from people who hold opposing views. People who can understand and explain others' points of view well usually perform better in this field. According to past research, people with such skills usually benefit from participating in political discussions (**Mutz 2002**); In addition, they are usually more inclined to participate in political dialogues, seek solutions to differences, and assist in conflict resolution (**Clifford et al. 2019**); However, the effects of this feature on other vital aspects of democracy, such as political polarization, are still debatable (**Simas et al. 2020**); Therefore, more research is needed to confirm these findings.

One of the key characteristics that seems to influence people's reasoning and decision-making in political issues is "actively open-minded thinking" (**Stanovich and West 1997; Baron 2019**). This characteristic shows the extent to which people tend to adhere to certain cognitive norms, such as openness to new evidence, the ability to change one's mind in the face of mistakes, and the effort to consider different perspectives. This feature, which is related to people's performance in various tasks such as problem solving and evaluating arguments, plays an important role in their ability to think actively (**Baron 2019**); In other words, people who show the ability to think actively may be more skilled in critical analysis and evaluation of political issues; Because these people are more likely to consider new evidence and alternative viewpoints. This feature will play an important role in shaping people's approach to political decision-making and their ability to participate in constructive dialogue and discussion; Therefore, understanding and promoting this type of thinking can be effective in strengthening informed and rational political discourse.

A different way to examine people's thinking is to use mathematical problems with complex and deviant points. Such problems and puzzles are known as "cognitive reflection test" which was presented by Shane Frederick (**Frederick 2005**). These riddles are designed in such a way that their answer seems simple and obvious, but in fact it is wrong. For the correct answer, you should think more carefully. The cognitive reflection test helps us to identify the level of intuitive thinking versus reflective thinking that is based on deep reflection and logical understanding; However, some researches (**Kahan 2013; Pennycook and Rand 2019; Bakker et al. 2020**) have shown that this test is not very effective for predicting people's behavior on political issues. One of the

possible reasons is that people's intuition is influenced by their strong beliefs and this can vary depending on the subject or context (**Pennycook and Rand 2019**). Some researchers have shown that it is better to combine the cognitive reflection test with other motivational measures such as need for feeling and need for cognition. This idea can help us to explain the differences in people's intuitions in different situations (**Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2018**).

### **3.2) How to Sway the Political Opinion Towards More reflectiveness?**

Currently, a large number of researches are being conducted and they are seeking to identify the factors that can or do move people's reflective thinking in different situations. The existing research can be included in three main groups.

The first group examines the role of emotions in guiding political reasoning. This research suggests that emotions and feelings are not just a reaction to political events, but also affect the way people process and shape their beliefs about politics: some emotions can enhance reflective thinking, while others have the opposite effect. The "emotional intelligence theory" presented by George Marcus and his colleagues (**Marcus and MacKuen 1993; Marcus 2000**) focuses on a specific emotion "anxiety" which is known as the key to deliberative reasoning.

Based on the theory of emotional intelligence, anxiety can make people look at politics in a new way and go beyond their superficial thinking. This feeling can lead people to discover new information and learn. In contrast, emotions such as anger and fascination can lead people to stick to their previous views about politics; For example, the research conducted by Redlawsk and his colleagues (**Redlawsk et al. 2010**) shows that those political candidates who can evoke feelings of anxiety among people have the ability to encourage them to do more research about themselves. In the field of political propaganda, Brader (**Brader 2005**) has noticed that advertisements that arouse "fear" among people can stimulate deeper ways of reasoning in people's minds. On the other hand, advertisements that cause a feeling of "enthusiasm" among people are able to make people adhere to their previous political beliefs. Birch and his colleagues (**Birch et al. 2017**) also investigated how emotions such as "anxiety" and "anger" can affect how people evaluate the behavior of politicians in the face of political corruption in France. They found that contrary to the theory of emotional intelligence, anxiety and anger have different effects on people's focus on different details. Emotions and feelings that come from anger can weaken people's ability to accurately and multifacetedly evaluate information. These feelings can lead people to make decisions based on their angry feelings instead of analyzing the information deeply and accurately, and ultimately it will cause immature or irrational decisions; On the other hand, feelings stemming from anxiety can intensify negative views of a political actor perceived as self-interested. Such emotions and feelings may cause people's view of this actor to become too negative, and as a result, their ability to identify his positive or influential aspects decreases; Therefore, such a phenomenon can lead to one-sided or fanatical analyses.

But some research shows that the relationship between anxiety and reasoning is deeper than it seems; For example, Gadarian and Albertson (**Gadarian and Albertson 2014**) have shown in their research results that citizens who suffer from anxiety tend to be biased in searching, paying attention and interacting with information. They mostly look for information that confirms their worries and fears, and in this process, they pay less attention to other issues; However, some new research shows that other emotions and feelings can also trigger deeper reasoning in different situations. Johnston and his colleagues (**Johnston et al. 2015**) use the "expectancy violation theory" and believe that the political impact of an emotion depends on its connection with the relevant issue. When a phenomenon evokes an emotion in people that is different from what they expected, it can motivate them to think more carefully (**Muradova and Arceneaux 2022a**).

Similarly, Muradova & Arceneaux (**Muradova and Arceneaux 2022b**) show that another emotion "empathy" can also spark reflective reasoning. When people inevitably empathize with someone who disagrees with them on a political issue, they are more likely to use reflective reasoning and moderate their views. Similarly, Muradova (**Muradova 2021**) believes that talking to people who have different views can increase the feeling of empathy in people towards their lives, feelings and thoughts. This empathy may lead to the strengthening of reflective political reasoning; However, this new line of research is still in its infancy, and more research is needed to systematically examine the role of other types of emotions. This issue shows the complexity and depth of understanding emotions and feelings and clearly shows its impact on political analysis and thinking.

Some people believe that talking about political issues can make us more thoughtful and broaden our views. This idea is part of a larger theory called "deliberative democracy" and it is believed that democracy is not only limited to voting, but also related to meaningful interaction and dialogue with people who have different opinions and backgrounds. These conversations are supposed to help us understand each other better, learn new things and make better decisions for the common good. Many researchers and political activists have tried to

implement this theory by creating spaces and rules for respectful and constructive dialogue; But how does conversation with others lead to reflective reasoning? There are many ways to explain this, but they all have one thing in common: they imagine that conversations with others challenge us to think beyond our own preferences and biases. Here are three possible ways to do this:

- The first way is that talking with others can lead to an increase in our knowledge and awareness; For example, if we talk to someone who has experienced poverty or discrimination, we may gain new information about the causes and consequences of these issues. This information can help us to have more accurate and informed views on such complex issues. It is a way to expand our understanding and perspectives and helps us to think beyond our personal prejudices and preferences (**Barabas 2004**).
- Second, dialogue with others can encourage us to give reasons for our opinions and listen carefully to others' reasons; For example, if we are talking to someone who disagrees with us on a political issue, we may feel compelled to fully explain the reasons behind our opinion. This can help us to critically examine our opinions and see if they are based on solid and reasonable arguments. Sometimes, if we hear a stronger argument from someone else, we may even decide to change our opinion (**Habermas 1985**). Such an issue shows how much dialogue can help intellectual development and reflective reasoning.
- Third, talking with others can lead us to empathize with their views and feelings; For example, if with a person who previously; We can talk about a different culture or religion, we can put ourselves in his place and see his world from his point of view. This experience can help us better understand his values and interests and reduce our stereotypes and prejudices.

These are just some of the ways that conversation and interaction with others can lead us to deeper thinking and reflection; However, in reality, this is not always the case. Sometimes, talking to others can make us more angry, confused or stubborn; But the theory of deliberative democracy shows that if we follow certain rules and conditions, such as respecting the audience, honesty and having an open attitude, we can improve the quality of our political discussions and judgments (**Gutmann and Thompson 2009; Bächtiger et al. 2018**). This theory is divided into two branches: one focuses on the overall picture of how society functions (such as the role of the media, civil society and institutions) (**Parkinson and Mansbridge 2012; Gastil 2018**) and the other on small details, such as the way people talk with each other (**Gastil 2008; Parkinson and Mansbridge 2012**). Here, we will focus more on the second branch, because this branch is more about how an individual makes decisions.

Is there scientific evidence that talking to others can lead us to reflective reasoning? Some researchers have tried to answer this question by designing and testing various methods to organize and facilitate political dialogues among the general public. One of the most famous of them is called "consultative survey" which was invented by Jim Fishkin and his colleagues (**Fishkin 2009, 2018**). This method, considering the emphasis on meaningful and consultative dialogue, is considered as one of the effective ways to strengthen reflective reasoning.

A survey is a unique process in which a group of people are randomly selected and invited to participate in a specific event. In this event, they will have the opportunity to learn and discuss an important issue that affects society. They receive reliable information from experts and can also sit in small groups with the help of trained observers to talk to each other. At the end of the event, they fill out surveys that measure their opinions and attitudes before and after the conversation; Then, the researchers compared the results to see if there were any changes. Researchers have noticed that consultative survey has significant positive effects on people's thinking and learning; For example, they found that people who participate in deliberative surveys become more knowledgeable about the topic at hand, change their opinions in meaningful ways, and understand the topic from more diverse perspectives (**Fishkin and Luskin 2005; Fishkin 2009, 2018; Kim et al. 2018**). These findings show that consultative polls can help strengthen people's thinking and reflection by providing the right opportunity and tools to participate in high-quality political dialogues. This method can help people to examine their views more deeply, face different points of view, and thus develop a better understanding of political issues.

Advisory survey is just one of the possible ways to achieve this goal. There are other methods that aim to create and foster political dialogue among people who might not normally have the opportunity to talk to each other or who hold different opinions. These methods, known by names such as "citizen assemblies", "citizen juries" or "small group discussion experiments", have common features. These features include random selection of

people, presentation of specialized information, discussion in small groups, and pre- and post-interview surveys (**Gerber et al. 2014; Suiter et al. 2016; Lindell et al. 2017; Colombo 2018**). These methods also show similar results: they can help strengthen people's reflective reasoning by exposing them to diverse viewpoints and discussions in a respectful and constructive environment.

But does conversation with others always lead to the strengthening of reflective reasoning? Not necessarily. Some research has shown that the effects of communicating with others depend on several factors, including how we feel about our opinions, how the conversations are organized and facilitated, and with whom we are communicating (**Wojcieszak and Price 2010; Barabas 2004; Klar 2014**); For example, Samara Klar (**Klar 2014**) conducted an experiment in which she asked people to discuss political issues in groups. These groups included people who either had similar or different political views; Also, he measured the extent to which people use their political views to interpret and judge information in a biased manner. This phenomenon is called "partisan-motivated reasoning ". He found that people who tend to talk with people who agree with their point of view benefit more from partisan-motivated reasoning; In other words, talking to people who agree with us can make us more biased and weaken our reflective reasoning.

As for everyday interactions with others, such as friends, family, or colleagues, can these interactions lead us to deeper thinking and reflection? The answer to this question is not entirely clear. Some of the first studies that have addressed this issue show that talking to people who have different opinions can expose us to new information and arguments, and thus lead us to think more (**Mutz 2002**); However, subsequent research has reached different results. Using survey data, Joshua Robison (**Robison 2020**) investigated whether talking to people who hold different opinions can affect our biases and biases in our judgments about the national economy. He realized that there is no such effect. People who discussed with their opposing groups were less inclined to change their opinions or admit their mistakes than those who agreed with them (**Robison et al. 2018; Muradova et al. 2021**). These findings show that talking to others in daily life can sometimes make us more stubborn and lead to a decrease in reflective reasoning. Are there other factors other than talking with others that can lead us to deeper thinking and reflection? Some researchers have investigated several factors that may affect our thinking and learning process in the field of politics. Below, some of these factors will be mentioned:

- First, some researchers believe that sensitive and controversial election contests can lead us to more reflective arguments by exposing us to diverse and conflicting information and arguments; For example, Cindy Kam (**Kam 2006**) believes that when faced with a close and sensitive electoral contest, we are likely to be more inclined to consider the strengths and weaknesses of both candidates simultaneously rather than simply supporting the other side. This approach can lead to the reduction of our prejudices and biases and ultimately make us meditate with a more open mind.
- Second, some researchers believe that the duty of citizenship - the sense of responsibility and commitment we have towards our society - can guide us to think beyond our own interests and personal identity; For example, Mullinix (**Mullinix 2016**) showed that people who have a high sense of civic duty are less likely to use their political views to justify their political preferences, and are more likely to use deliberative reasoning; However, he also found that this effect was not as strong among people who identify with the Republican Party and can sometimes have the opposite effect.
- Third, some researchers have investigated the effect of financial incentives on reasoning processes; For example, Bullock and his colleagues (**Bullock et al. 2015**) stated that paying people to provide correct or honest answers can reduce the gap between Democrats and Republicans in their true beliefs. A related study (**Groenendyk and Krupnikov 2021**) shows that presenting this simple message to open-minded people can lead to success in life, and can also make them more fair and balanced in evaluating political arguments.

## Conclusions

To conclude the paper, the emergence of political ideologies from the complex interaction of psychological and sociocultural variables meaningfully influences how people contribute toward political discourse. Indeed, this work has thrown up two things: for instance, how reflective reasoning—which really encourages one to disbelieve beliefs and consider stances other than one's own—discussion with other people, especially others, might develop much empathy and thus be far more understanding in the course of forming their political ideologies.

The role of emotions in either supporting or hindering political reasoning has also been underlined: whereas positive emotions, like empathy, may facilitate reflective thinking, negative emotions such as anger will



increase the crowd of prior biases and block open-mindedness.

This duality highlights the importance of establishing a venue that would foster constructive debate and reflection on matters pertaining to politics. Besides, it has researched the promotion of political communication based on citizens' juries, small group deliberations involving people of varying opinions in order to build an atmosphere for real political participation.

By doing all of the above, we may actually create a more reflective political culture of informed discourse rather than partisan driven reasoning or any other motivation based reasoning way. The implications of the study would, therefore, seem to lead to the betterment of reflective political reasoning at the core of the well-being of democratic societies. Critical thinking and empathetic communication can be encouraged to mollify the polarizations toward an increasingly inclusive political culture. Further research will help in getting further insight into the dynamics underpinning attitude construction and devise strategies to support reflective engagement with political argument.

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