

Peer Review

Review of: "Universalism and Innovation: The Influence of Impartiality and Inclusiveness on National Innovativeness"

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Overall, I believe the paper should be published. It provides at least some evidence that respecting human rights and endorsing a universalistic view toward cultural, ethnic, religious, and even political diversity promotes human innovation (perhaps a proxy for progress?). Although I am not an expert on the topic, the idea of combining data from the Global Innovation Index with global data from Cappelen et al. 2022, Trompenaars 1993, and Schwartz 2007 seems original.

I detected three points that, in my view, admit of some refinement:

R1. In the first three sections, a distinction should be made between Universalism as a basic, perhaps subconscious, evaluative attitude and the philosophical normative theory - connected to the idea of human rights - that perhaps provides the propositional content of that attitude. The paper should perhaps make explicit whether they believe that Particularism in some sense denies rights to outgroups and in which sense; and they should declare that in this context, they take the opposition to Particularism as the main mark of Universalism. It is, after all, the negative impact of particularism on Innovation that they want to establish.

R2. If this is what the authors mean by Universalism, they should show how the three measures they use relate to their construct 'Universalism' as explained in the first three sections. (The three measures are 1. modified dictator game; 2. willingness to violate norms to favor friends; and 3. Schwartz's universalism as inclusiveness scale). If they can connect those measures to the idea of universal human rights, all the better. I have no suggestions to contribute here.

R3. Related to this, they should provide an explanation for why they observed no correlation between Innovation and the modified dictator game used by Cappelen et al. 2022 and Enke et al. 2022 as a measure of Universalism–Particularism. Their explanation is unclear. They start on page 12 to describe Enke’s 2022 procedure of using the difference between ingroup and outgroup scores. However, on page 7, they describe Cappelen et al. 2022 as using the mean of the ingroup and outgroup scores, which seems different from what Enke 2022 did. However, since they used Cappelen et al.’s data, the reference to Enke et al. does not appear relevant. Even if the two procedures were equivalent, it is still not clear why that explains the lack of correlation in this measure specifically, while the correlation was positive and large in the other two measures. I have no suggestions to contribute here.

The paper, notwithstanding, contributes to research by reporting positive correlations with measures 2 and 3.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.