Diverse sides of adolescents' and young adults' tolerance towards immigrants

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Main points

tolerance towards immigrants is composed of different dimensions

each dimension of tolerance has different basis

there is no universal predictor of tolerance

Introduction

EU foreign population: **20.4** million (**4.1%**)

(1. 1. 2013; Eurostat)

compared to other social groups, the solidarity with immigrants among EU citizens is relatively low

(van Oorschot, 2006)

pre-adult and early adult stages of life important for establishing attitudes towards immigrants

(e.g., Sears & Levy, 2003)

Who is more tolerant?

1) higher **education (school track)**

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    explanations (Coenders & Scheepers, 2003)

        cognitive (enhanced knowledge and cognitive capacities)

        social identity (enhanced self-esteem)

        realistic conflict (lower perceived threat)

Who is more tolerant?

2) higher **social capital**

      social trust and involvement in civil society

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social trust and involvement in civil society

(Côté & Erickson, 2009; Herreros & Criado, 2009)

higher social trust means **lower perceived threat** from strangers

contact with people from diverse backgrounds (redrawing group boundaries)

Who is more tolerant?

3) people with some specific **ideology**

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   e.g., **left-right dimension**

   individual v social attributions of other people's well-being (Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009)

   nationalism v cosmopolitanism

   the extent of state interventions

Dimensions of tolerance

in this paper, we understand tolerance as a support for immigrants' various rights

at least two dimensions:

basic equality (social welfare, equal wages)

recognition of immigrants' disadvantaged position

Our questions

1. what are the dimensions of young people's tolerance towards immigrants?

2. what are the predictors of different dimensions of tolerance?

higher education (i.e., cognitive, social identity and realistic conflict motives) will predict the support for basic equality

on the other hand, the recognition of immigrants' disadvantaged position (and the support for immigrants' special rights) will require having a high level of social capital and a favourable political ideology
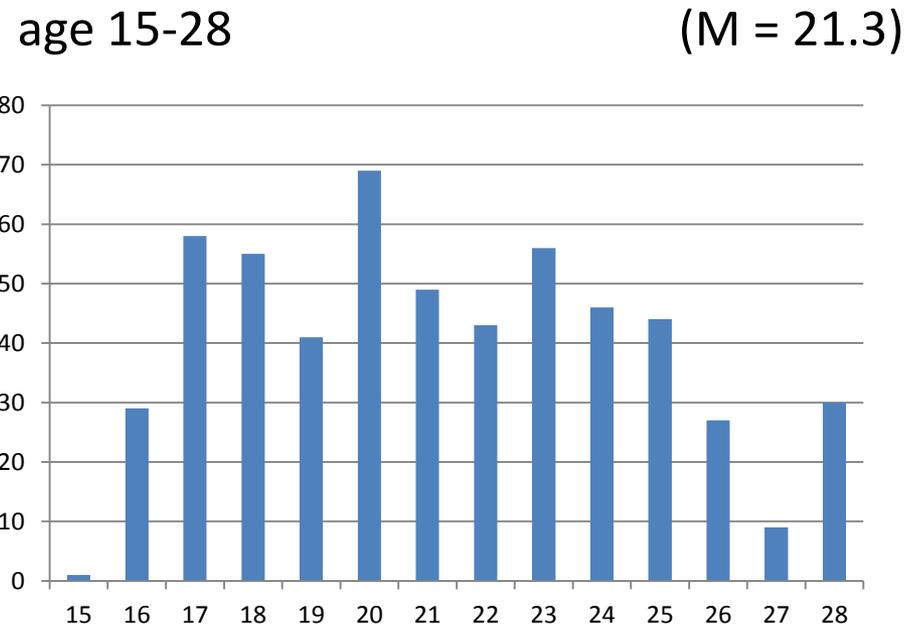
Data

source: Processes Influencing Democratic Ownership and Participation (PIDOP)

data collection: questionnaire-based self-reports

N = 556 (62% females)

only people who explicitly identified themselves as the members of the national majority

age 15-28   (M = 21.3)

Measure

The same opportunities to study

The same wage for the same job

The same social benefits

The same rights

Allowed to preserve their language

The right to learn their language in school

The right to maintain traditions and culture

The right to build places of worship

Granted special rights

To have a representative in the parliament

To have easier access to college/university

Nata, G., & Menezes, I. (2004). Escala de suporte dos direitos das minorias. Porto: FPCEUP.

Measure

mean (1 = lowest; 5 = highest)

The same opportunities to study	4.36
The same wage for the same job	4.31
The same social benefits	3.97
The same rights	4.29
Allowed to preserve their language	3.41
The right to learn their language in school	2.28
The right to maintain traditions and culture	3.49
The right to build places of worship	3.09
Granted special rights	2.40
To have a representative in the parliament	1.96
To have easier access to college/university	1.37

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Measure

The same opportunities to study

The same wage for the same job

The same social benefits

The same rights

Allowed to preserve their language
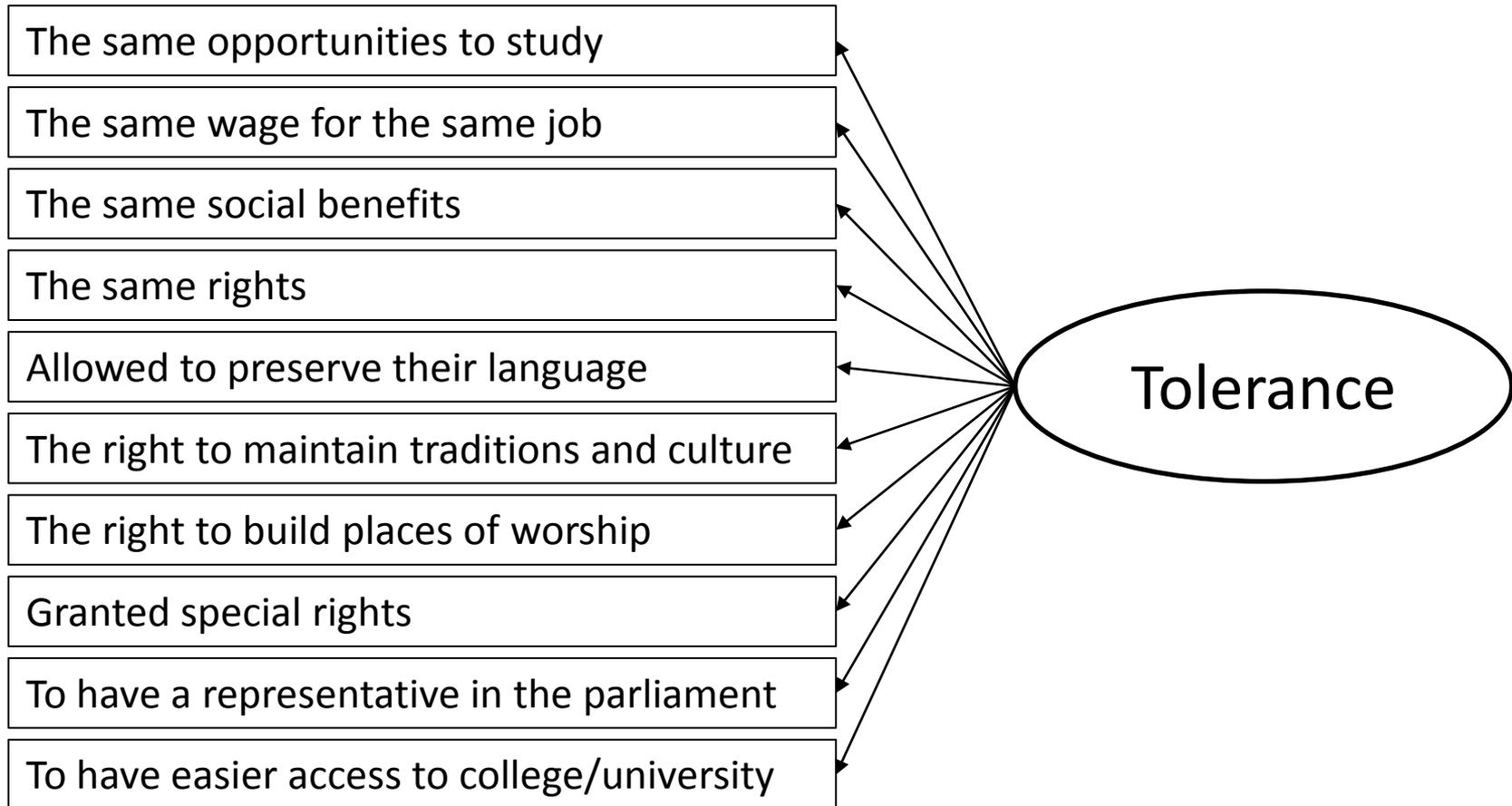
The right to maintain traditions and culture

The right to build places of worship

Granted special rights

To have a representative in the parliament

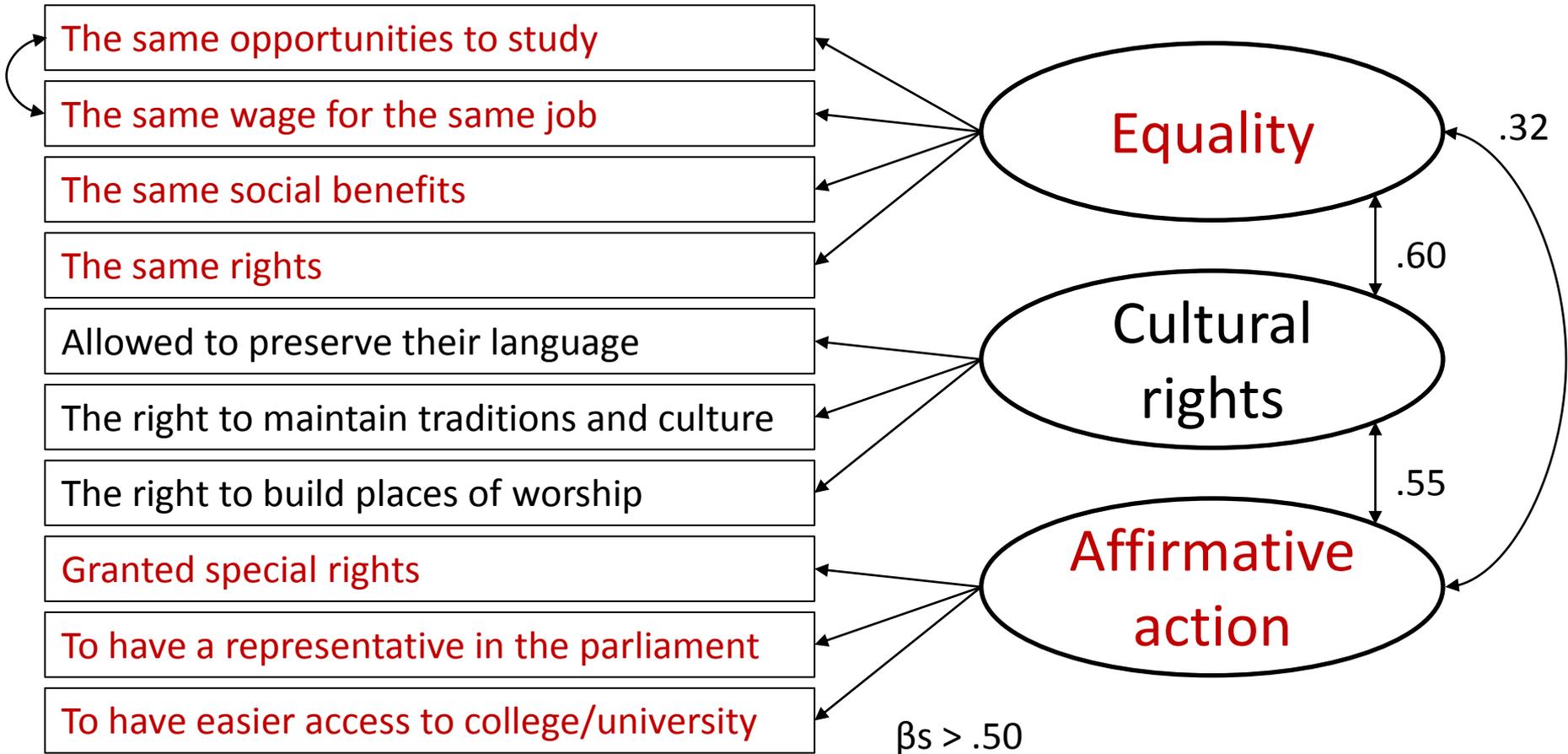To have easier access to college/university

Confirmatory factor analysis

The same opportunities to study	
The same wage for the same job	
The same social benefits	
The same rights	
Allowed to preserve their language	Tolerance
The right to maintain traditions and culture	
The right to build places of worship	
Granted special rights	
To have a representative in the parliament	
To have easier access to college/university	

N = 556 χ^2_{35} = 726.28, p < .01; CFI = .72; RMSEA = .19; SRMR = .12

Confirmatory factor analysis

The same opportunities to study

The same wage for the same job

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Equality

Cultural rights

Affirmative action

.32

.60

.55

βs > .50

N = 556

$\chi^2_{31} = 82.81$, p < .01; CFI = .98; RMSEA = .06; SRMR = .04

Predictions

Gender (female)

Age

Family income

Does your income cover everything that your family needs?
(1 = not at all; 4 = fully)

Education

(1 = basic; 6 = doctoral)

Social trust

„I feel that most people can be trusted." (5-item response scale)

Organizational involvement

being involved in some organization/group/club
(dichotomous variable)

Ideology (leftist)

„In political terms, how would you describe yourself?"
(1 = extreme right; 7 = extreme left)

Predictions

Gender (female)

Age

Family income

Education
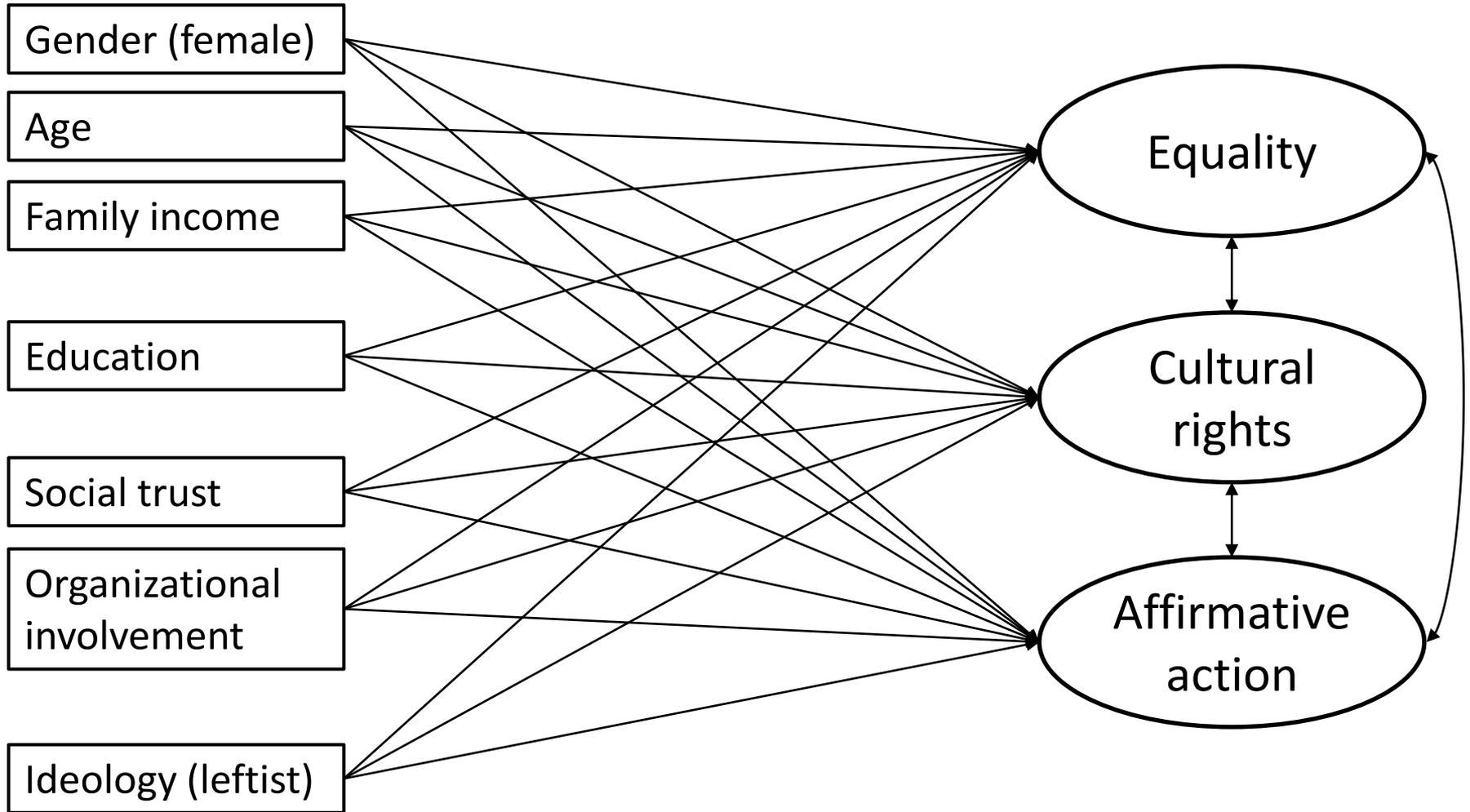
Social trust

Organizational involvement

Ideology (leftist)
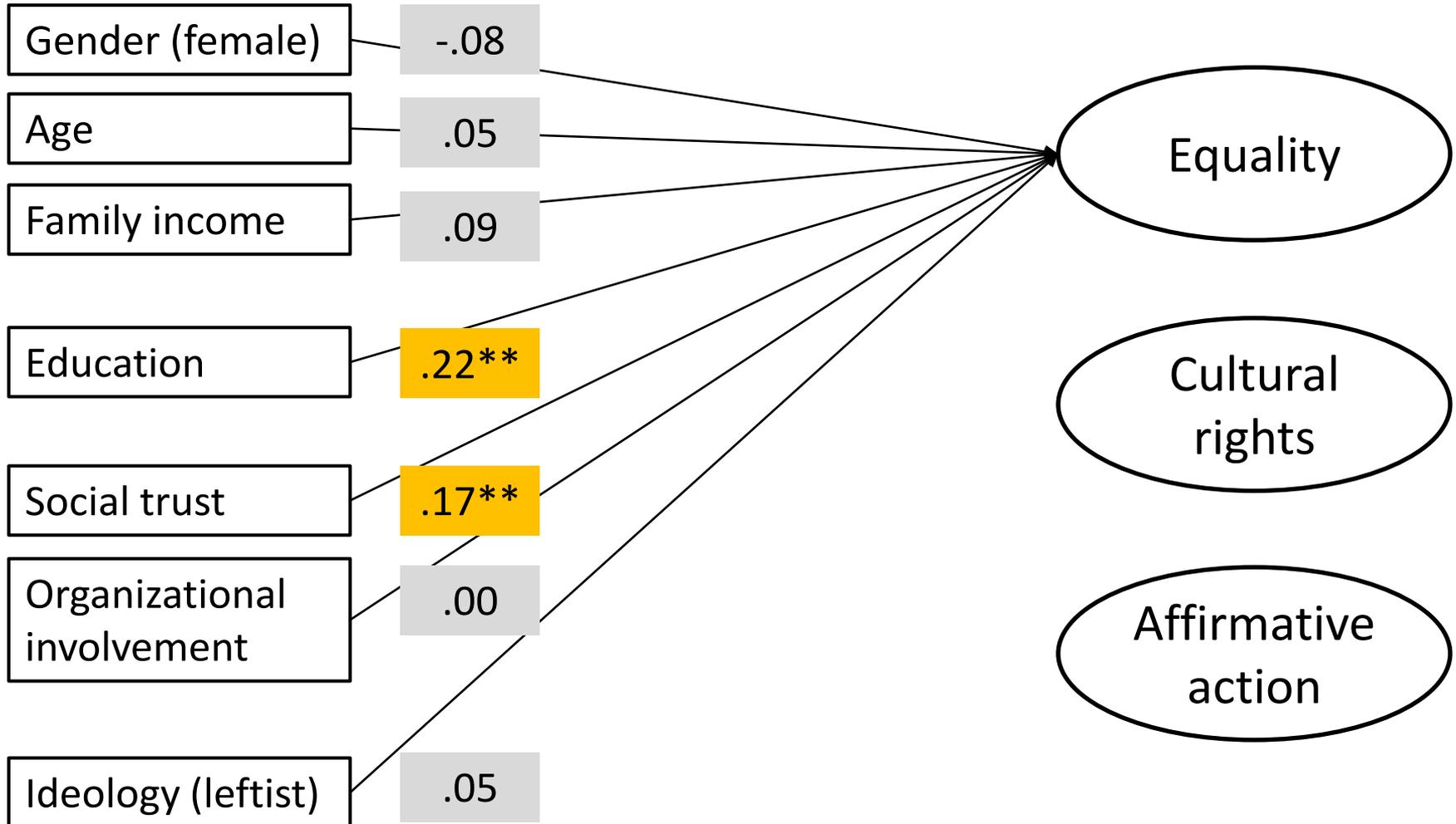
Equality

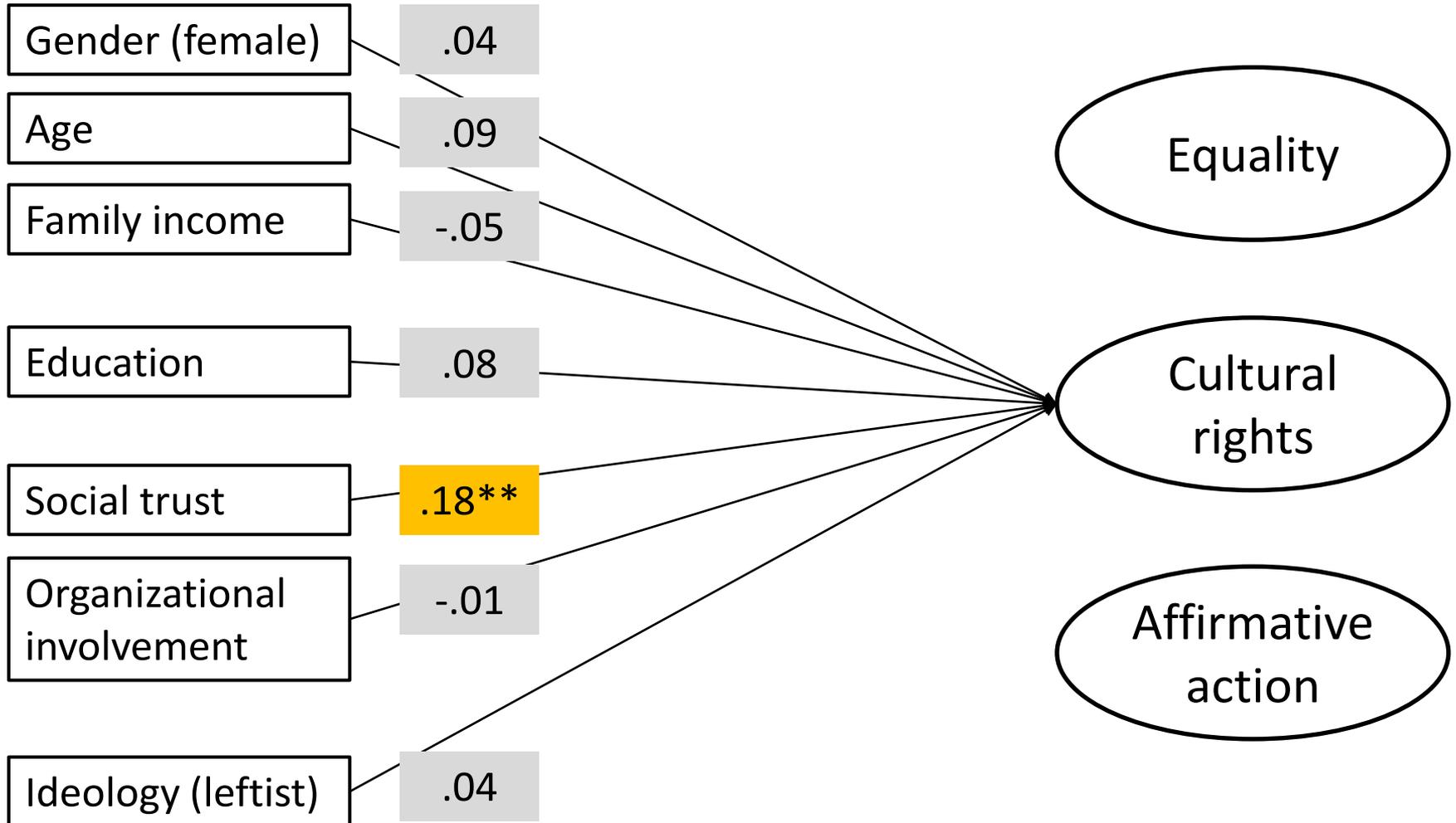Cultural rights

Affirmative action

Predictions

Gender (female)

Age

Family income

Education

Social trust

Organizational involvement

Ideology (leftist)

Equality

Cultural rights

Affirmative action

N = 471

$\chi^2_{80} = 156.73$, p < .01; CFI = .96; RMSEA = .05; SRMR = .04

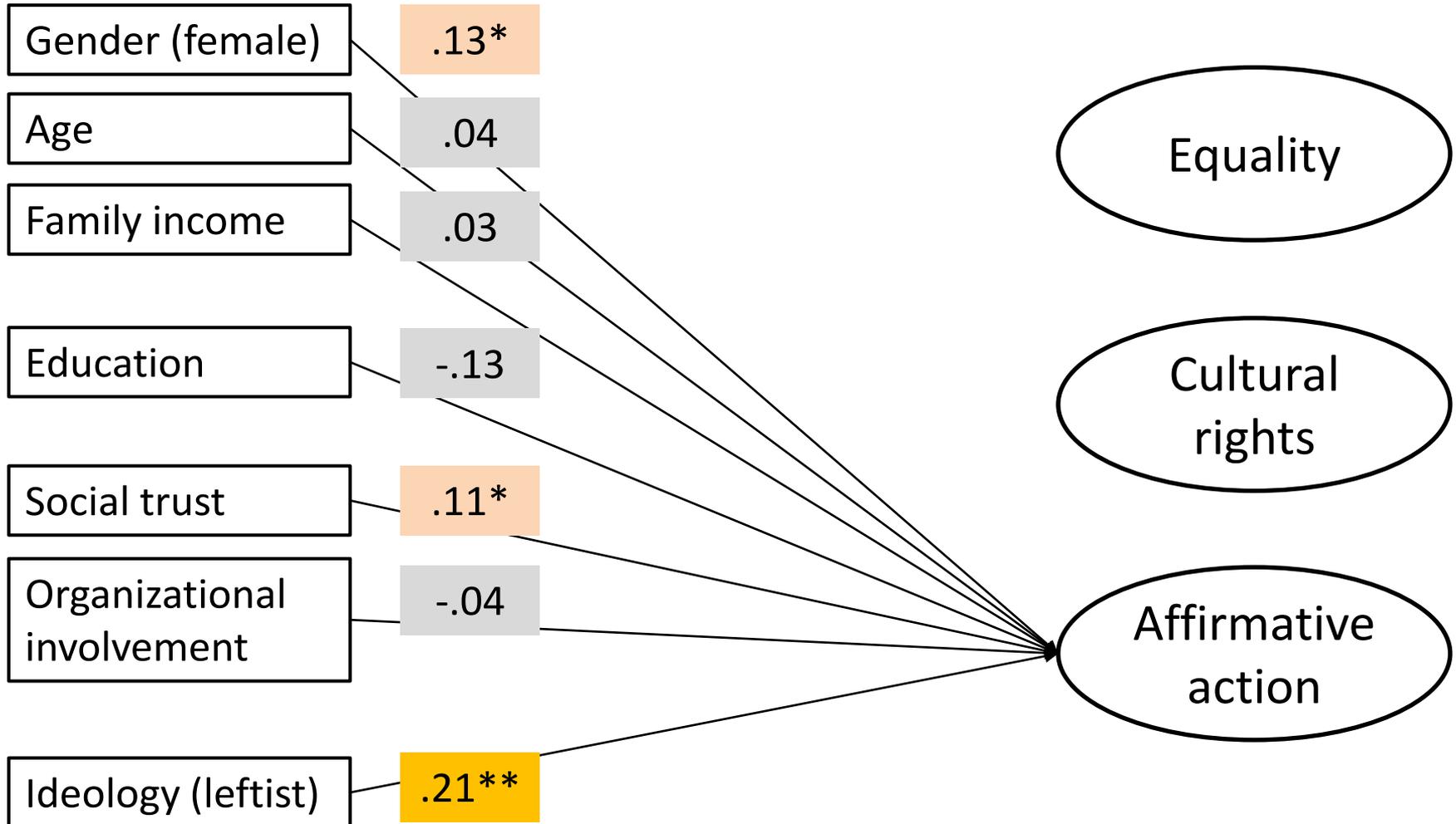# Predictions

Gender (female)	-.08
Age	.05
Family income	.09
Education	.22**
Social trust	.17**
Organizational involvement	.00
Ideology (leftist)	.05

Equality

Cultural rights

Affirmative action

Predictions

Predictions

Discussion

support for equality predicted by higher educational attainment and greater social trust

support for cultural rights predicted by greater social trust

support for affirmative action predicted by leftist political ideology

Discussion

education is **not** a universal predictor of tolerance – together with social trust, it seems to reduce the essential fear of immigrants (based on cognitive, social identity, or realistic conflict motives); in result, educated young people support the idea of immigrants' equal rights

however, more demanding dimensions of tolerance (which require the recognition of immigrants' disadvantaged position) must be embedded in one's broader social and political beliefs

one's generalized trust in other people contributes to the support for immigrants' cultural rights, while one's leftist political ideology (often associated with social attributions of well-being, lower nationalism, and support for state interventions) is associated with the approval of affirmative action

Discussion

if schools aim to cultivate **different dimensions** of students' tolerance towards immigrants, they should go beyond formal curricula (see also Gniewosz & Noack, 2008)

individual social capital, which might be developed in schools through various extracurricular activities, seems to be an important resource of one's cultural tolerance

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