

# Circumventing resistance: using values to indirectly change attitudes

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## Research Article Assignment Circumventing Resistance: Using Values to Indirectly Change Attitudes of Article Circumventing Resistance: Using Values to Indirectly Change Attitudes

### Topic of Investigation and Hypothesis

The relationship between resistance and persuasion was explored in the article by Blankenship, Wegener, and Murray (2012). The premise of their experiments was to understand whether attitude change happened because of values or some other factor. The participants were involved in two experiments. For this research paper, only the first experiment will be used. In the first experiment, participants were asked their opinions on the topic of affirmative action. Afterward, they were given a written message about the topic. One group was told that the information was against affirmative action, the other was told that the article was for affirmative action; in reality, the message was the same for both groups. The authors hypothesis was that when the researchers attacked a value it would have greater impact than the policy itself (Blankenship et al., 2012).

### How Research Applies to Real World

There are many situations where people's opinions are attempting to be changed. As an example, the current political climate in the United States is one example. Both sides are attempting to persuade people (particularly those who are undecided) to vote for them. They use many political ads to point out the other candidate's fallacies, hoping to change people's minds. Some people will stick to their opinions no matter what they hear, while others will change their minds if they hear a good enough argument.

### Methodology

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The first experiment consisted of 121 introductory psychology students in a Midwestern college, with an average age of 19.5. The participants were mostly female and a mixed design was used (Blankenship et al., 2012). The participants were told they would be involved in two different studies.

Students provided answers to survey questions about their general ideas and beliefs. Once the questionnaire was finished, they participated in reading various reading material and evaluating it. The independent variable, according to the authors, was the message target. There were two dependent variables. The initial attitudes of the students regarding their opinions before their values were attacked, and the second dependent variable was the attitude of the students after their values were attacked (Blankenship et al., 2012).

### Findings

The authors found that students were not upset with the differences in attitudes about affirmative action. They were more upset when they felt the value of inequality was raised. The variable of affirmative action was not as significant as the value of inequality. The authors thought they would be more reactive with the policy. The authors concluded that values were a powerful

### Critical Evaluation

The authors seemed to take on too much in this study. It would have been better for them to organize one study and report on that one. The results section of the study was confusing and there were no real correlations between the two studies made. Later in the study, it was found that there were actually four experiments instead of two. This was very confusing

reading through the article. Again, it would have been better to concentrate on one study to see how that worked. This subject did not seem to be very important because there are many articles about the issue of attitude and values. I did not see any new information in the article, and I did not see how using college students provided a strong argument for how values influence attitudes. The only strength to the article I saw was the fact that they used statistical measures to gain their understanding of the topic and this made the information more believable.

#### References

Blankenship, K. L., Wegener, D. T., & Murray, R. A. (2012). Circumventing resistance: Using values to indirectly change attitudes. *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 103(4), 606-621. doi: 10. 1037/a0029226