# Opposition to Immigrants and the Political Establishment

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In the aftermath of the 2016 U.S. election it has been suggested that the success of Donald Trump was to be blamed on the dislike by primarily white worker and middle-class voters of what is called "political establishment" (Cilliza, 2016). Similarly, it has been argued that giving a voice to suppressed racism significantly re-shapes the present political landscape, not only in the U.S., but also for the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union ("Brexit"), and the increasing success of nationalist parties throughout Europe. (cf. Lusher, 2016). Both arguments suggest that, as an alternative hypothesis, there exists a correlation between opposition against immigrants and distrust into what is perceived the class of professional politicians that is seen belonging to the elite of political establishment. As a null-hypothesis, no correlation between these two variables can be found.

As there is no (ethical) way for scientists to control people to either oppose immigrants or distrust political establishment, there are no independent or dependent variables in this design. Therefore, only their association may be investigated. General samples of U.S. and U.K. citizens should include an equal share of protagonists and antagonists: both polls were tied races. Participants are asked in a multiple-choice question whether they oppose immigrants or the political establishment (answers "yes" or "no", variables *anti-immigrants* and *anti-*

*establishment*). For binary values, a 2x2 contingency table of both categorical variables can be made containing the number of participants that fall into each category. A Chi-Square test can be used to assess the significance of the association of categorical variables. To obtain a probability level of $p \leq .05$ with one degree of freedom, $X^2 \geq 3.841$ is required (Field, 2013, ch. 18; cf. MedCalc, n.d.). In an improved setup, the participants are asked for a self-assessment of their strength of opposition to either group (0 = no opposition, 10 = strong opposition). These ordinal variables may be plotted and analysed in a scattergram. Then, correlation coefficients, particularly Spearman's rank order correlation (Spearman's rho $r_s$) or Perason's product moment correlation (Perason's $r$), indicate the strength of the correlation of these ranked variables. Pearson's effect size is ranked small ($r > .2$), medium ($r > .5$) or large ($r > .8$). For one-tailed $p = .025$ and a medium ($r > .5$) effect with a power of 80% a sample size of at least 28 participants is required (Cohen, 1988, p. 102).

To infer causality, in addition to the above-discussed strength, consistency across experiments, specificity, temporal relationship (prior exposure), plausibility, coherence with existing theory must be established and the experimenter must be able to alter the independent variable (cf. Oxford, 2008). An experimental study may evaluate whether the tendency to oppose immigrants differs dependent on emotional states (e.g. the presence of fear or disgust). The study may prime emotion by display of picture inventories that have proven to stimulate emotional responses rapidly alternated by multiple-choice questions. Even if a causal design of the above study was possible, it can be doubted that a causal relationship between *anti-immigrants* and *anti-establishment* can be found, as there is a vast number of extraneous variables that may fuel distrust and be causative for the effects shown by both variables in the study, e.g. financial interests, low self-esteem or general mistrust (cf. Field, 2013, ch. 1-2).

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