



Exploring the Association between Political Identity and Antisemitism

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Introduction

- 88% of those surveyed in 2020 reporting that is a problem (either serious or somewhat) and 82% of the same group believing that Antisemitism has increased in the last year (Mayer, 2020)
- Antisemitic attacks or ideologies have been attributed to those representative of both modern left-leaning groups, such as the British Labour Party (Cohen, 2004) and the Boycott, Divest, Sanctions movement or "BDS" (Arnold, 2015), and right-leaning groups, such as white supremacist groups identified with the "Alt-Right" (Anti Defamation League, 2019)
- Often, antisemitic beliefs are grounded in the use of negative stereotypes meant to create a separation between a majority population, or an "Us" versus the Jewish people, or a "Them" (Wodak and Koller, 2008).
- American Jews are more likely to associate with the more left-leaning politics of the Democratic party (Pew Research Center, 2014), but it remains to be seen if Antisemitism or antisemitic beliefs are more intrinsically associated with one's political identity, specifically in the United States.

Research Questions

- Is political identity associated with any markers or Antisemitic beliefs?
- Does this association (if at all) change when examining political party association (Democrat versus Republican) versus political ideology (Liberal versus Conservative)?

Methods

Sample

- Respondents (n=1372) were drawn from the 1990 General Social Survey (GSS), a nationally representative sample of English-speaking, non-institutionalized adults in the U.S.

Measures

- Political identity was measured with the question "Do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or what?" Possible responses ranged from 1 (Democratic-leaning) to 3 (Republican-leaning).
- Political ideology was measured with the question "Do you think of self as liberal or conservative?" Possible responses ranged from 1 (liberal-identifying) to 3 (conservative-identifying).
- Jewish influence was measured with the question "Do Jews have too much influence?" Possible responses ranged from 1 (possessing too much influence) to 3 (possessing too little influence).
- Thoughts on Jews and patriotism was measured with the question "Do people in this group (Jews) tend to be patriotic or do they tend to be unpatriotic?" Possible responses ranged from 1 (an affirmative association of patriotism) to 3 (a negative association of patriotism).
- Thoughts on Jews and wealth was measured with the question "Do you believe people in this groups (Jews) are rich or poor?" Possible responses ranged from 1 (higher amount of wealth associated) to 3 (lack of wealth associated).

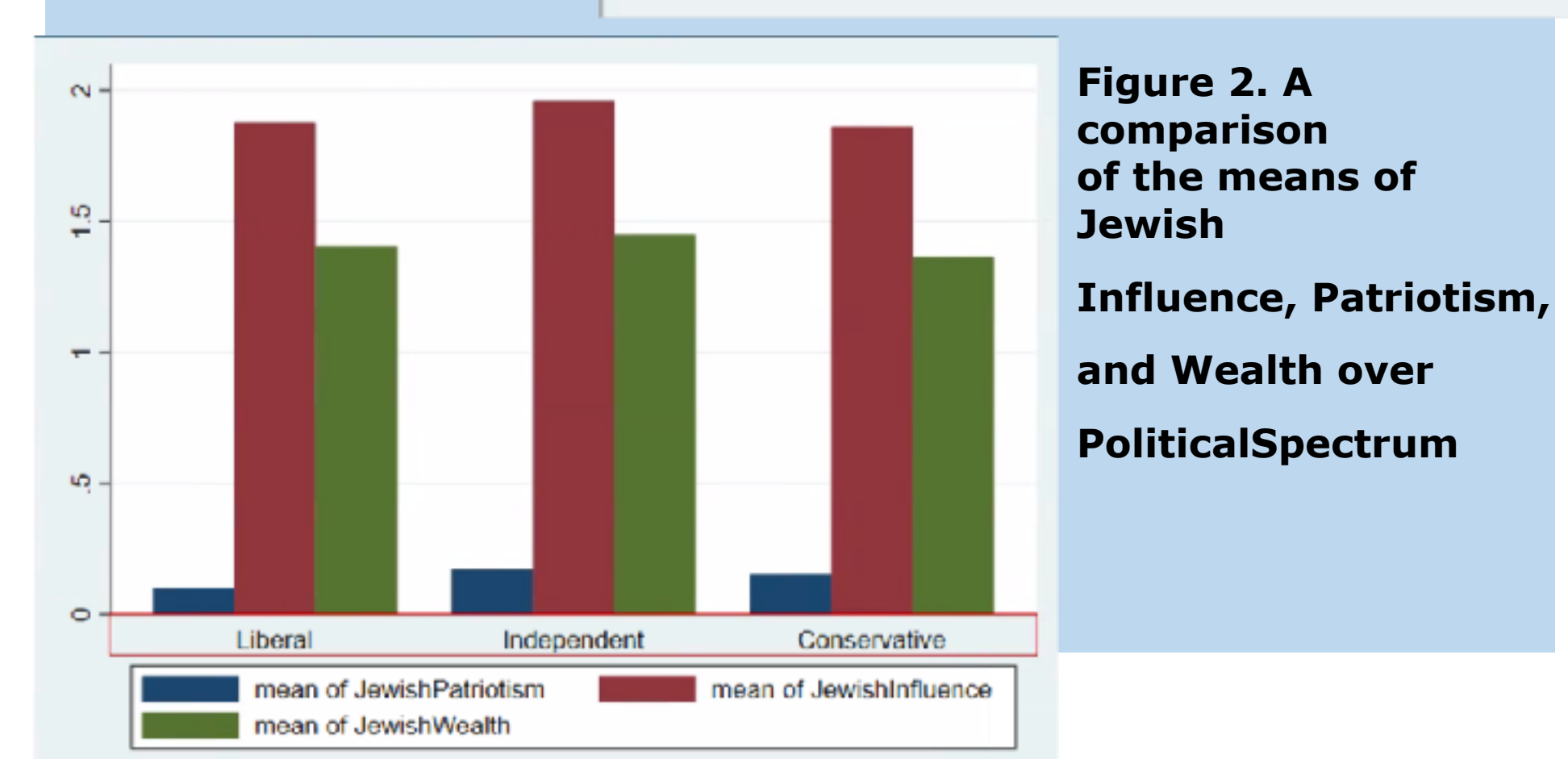
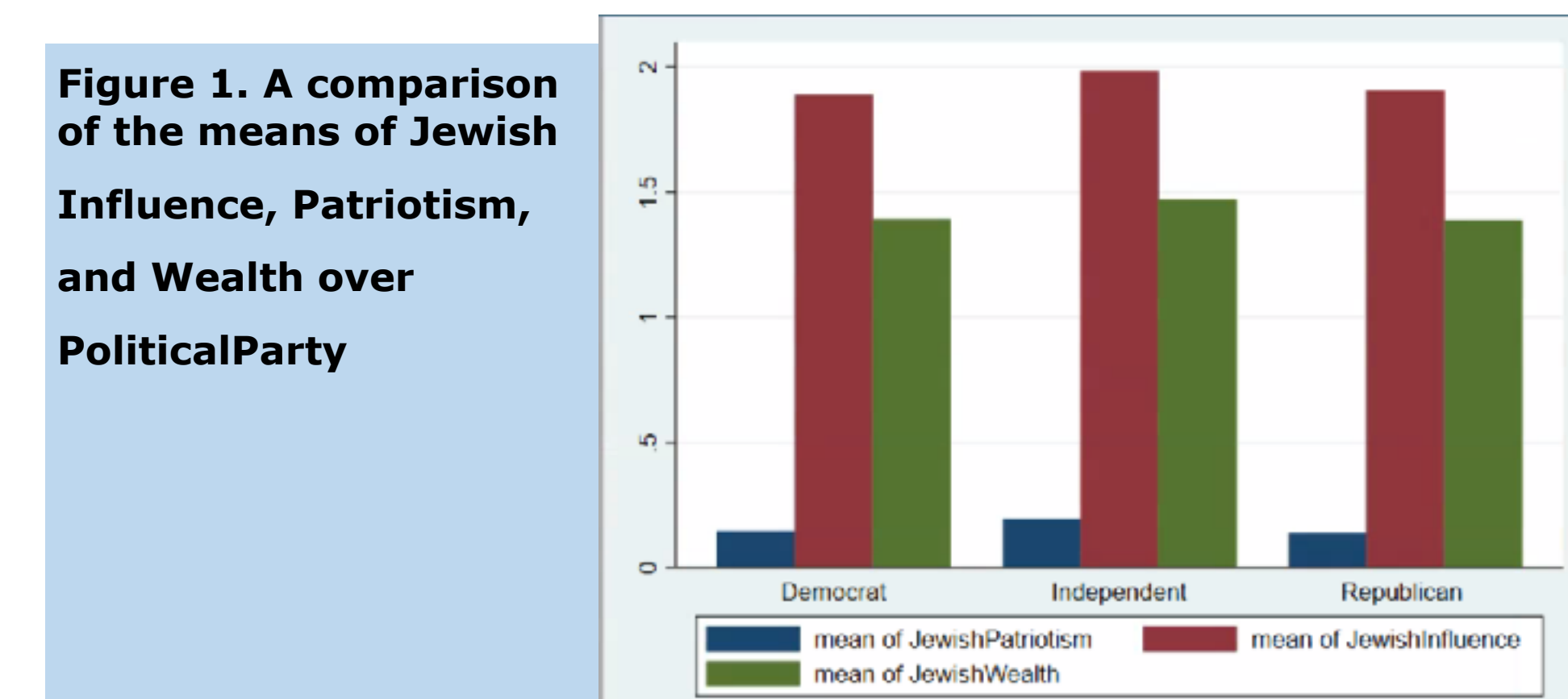
Results

Univariate

- 45.58% of respondents identify as Democrats and 42.99% identify as Republicans; however, 27.7% of respondents identify as "Liberal" and 36.74 identify as Conservative
- 32.2% of respondents identify Jews as having "too much influence"
- 14.57% of respondents as identify Jews as having a lower amount of patriotism
- 67.04% of respondents identify Jews as having more wealth

Bivariate

- Chi-square analyses showed that **political identity (ideology)** was not significantly associated with **Antisemitic beliefs** ($p > 0.001$)
 - This is the case with all levels of examined variables — Influence, Wealth, and Patriotism.
- The same is true for **political identity (party association)** — chi-square analyses show that it is not significantly associated with **Antisemitic beliefs** ($p > 0.001$)
 - This is the case with all levels of examined variables — Influence, Wealth, and Patriotism.
- Logistical regression using aggregated binary predictor versions of variables "PoliticalSpectrum" and "PoliticalParty" typically showed a significant relationship between identities across both measures of ideology
 - except when using the binary version of "PoliticalSpectrum" (known as PSpectrum) as the response variable and examining those identified as "independent" ($p > .001$)



Multivariate

- Controlling for age does not appear to change the majority of results as p-values were largely greater than .01 except in the cases of associations of Jews with wealth and those identifying as "independent" ($p = 0.00$)

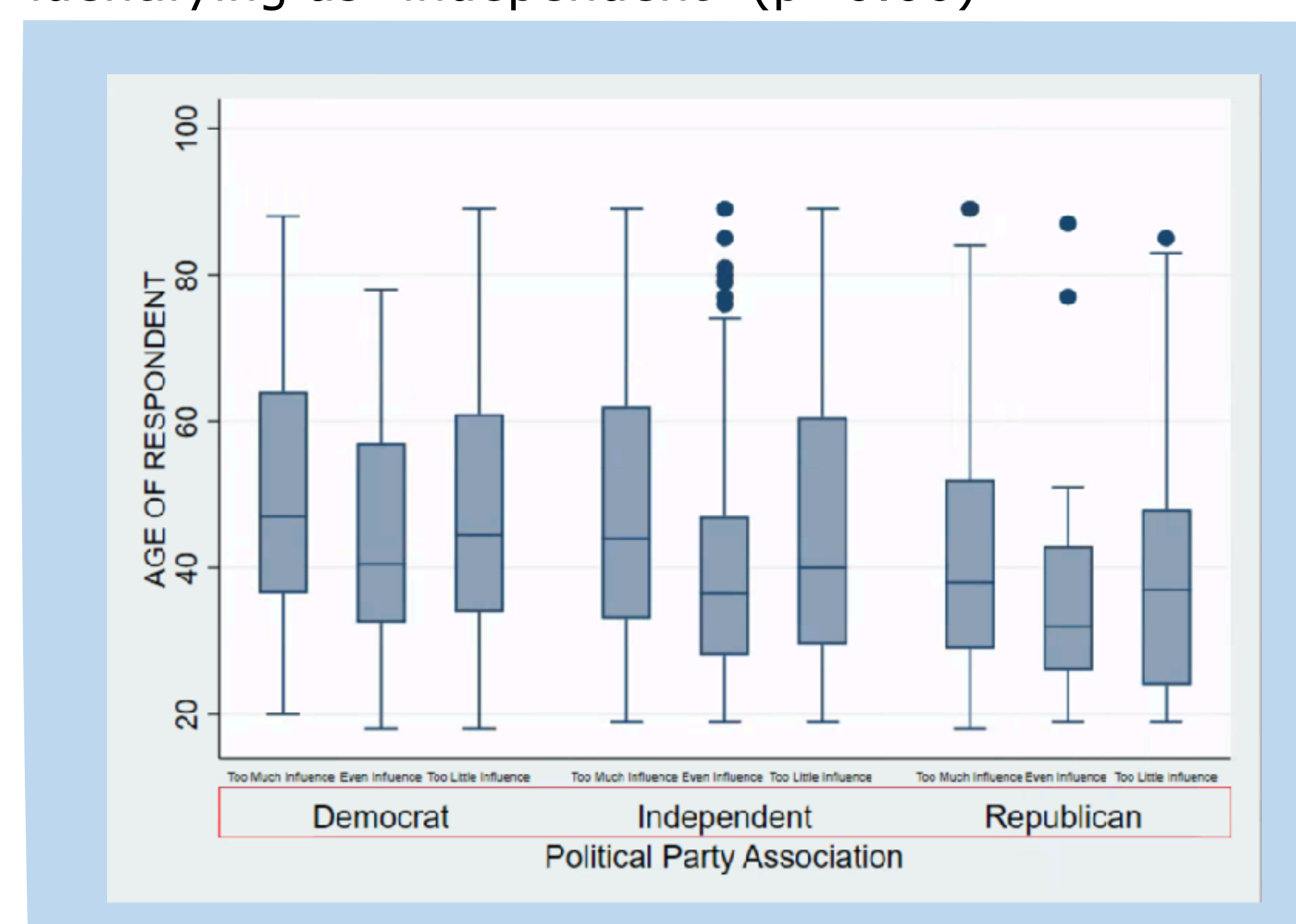


Figure 3. Age of Respondent and Degree of Jewish Influence by Political Party Association

- In the case of the variable influence, the majority participants who identified as independent and were on the older side who also specifically answered that Jews have a more even amount of influence as opposed too much or too little (Figure 3)

Discussion

- Political identity, regardless of party affiliation or spectrum affiliation, is not associated with any Antisemitics beliefs
- **While still statistically insignificant**, respondents who identified as independent, were more likely to also identify with antisemitic beliefs of increased influence, increased wealth, or decreased patriotism
- Activists and educators can better target groups and formulate more effective ways to engage in education based on political ideology, but useful for the general public in suggesting that political ideology does not preclude prejudice using Antisemitism as a particular example.
- Further research is needed to determine the broader application or significance of these conclusions on a more global scale