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How Political Ideology Influences Conflict Among Moral Opinions

Introduction

- Moral Foundations Theory**
 - Explains origins of and variation in moral reasoning on the basis of innate foundations (Haidt & Graham, 2007)
 - Individuating Foundations: Harm/care, Fairness/reciprocity
 - Binding Foundations: Ingroup/loyalty, Authority/Respect, Purity/sanctity
 - Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ) (Graham, Haidt, Nosek, Iyer, Koleva, & Ditto, 2008)
 - Political affiliation related to different magnitude of endorsement for foundations (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009)
 - Liberals favor individuating foundations over binding foundations, whereas Conservatives find all foundations favorable/self relevant.
- Attitude/Value Conflict**
 - Conflict can arise when the judgments of two or more concepts are contrasting or incompatible (Festinger, 1957, Abelson, 1959)
 - Ex. Ambivalence = conflict in valence (Kaplan, 1972)
 - Value conflict = incompatibility in goals or enduring preferences (Feldman & Zaller, 1992)
 - (Jonas, Diehl, & Bromer, 1997)
 - Potential for conflict greatest when incompatible concepts are similar in magnitude (Priester & Petty, 1996).
- Purpose of Research**
 - Given the number of moral foundations that exist, might there be potential for conflict between the foundations (e.g., fairness vs. favoring one's in-group)?
 - Conflict should be most likely when incompatible concepts are similar in extremity (Priester & Petty, 1996). As applied to political ideology and moral foundations theory, conservatives, for which individuating and binding foundations are similarly favorable, should experience a greater potential for conflict than liberals should.
 - Purpose:** Four exploratory studies were conducted to examine whether there are differences in potential conflict as a function of political ideology.

Methods

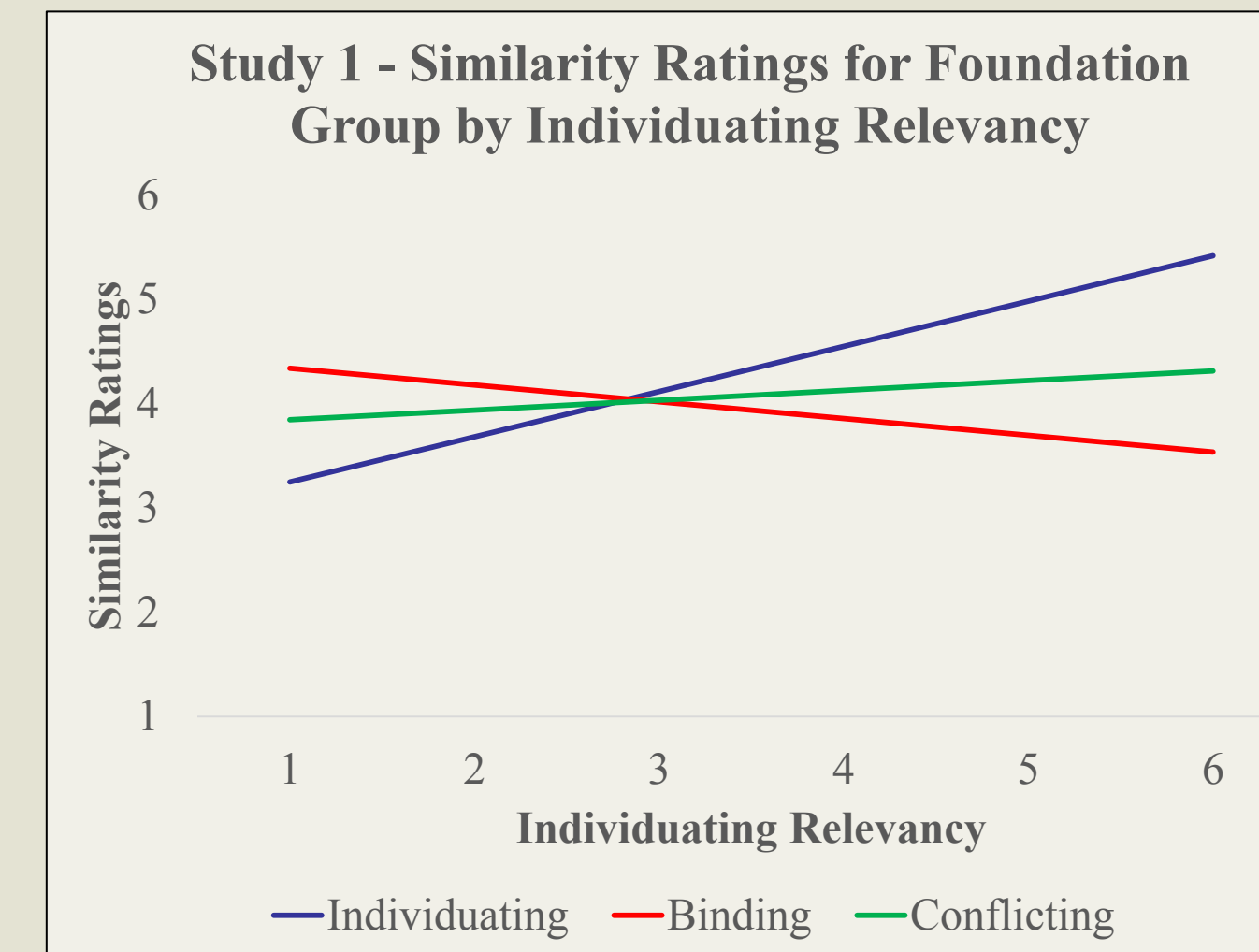
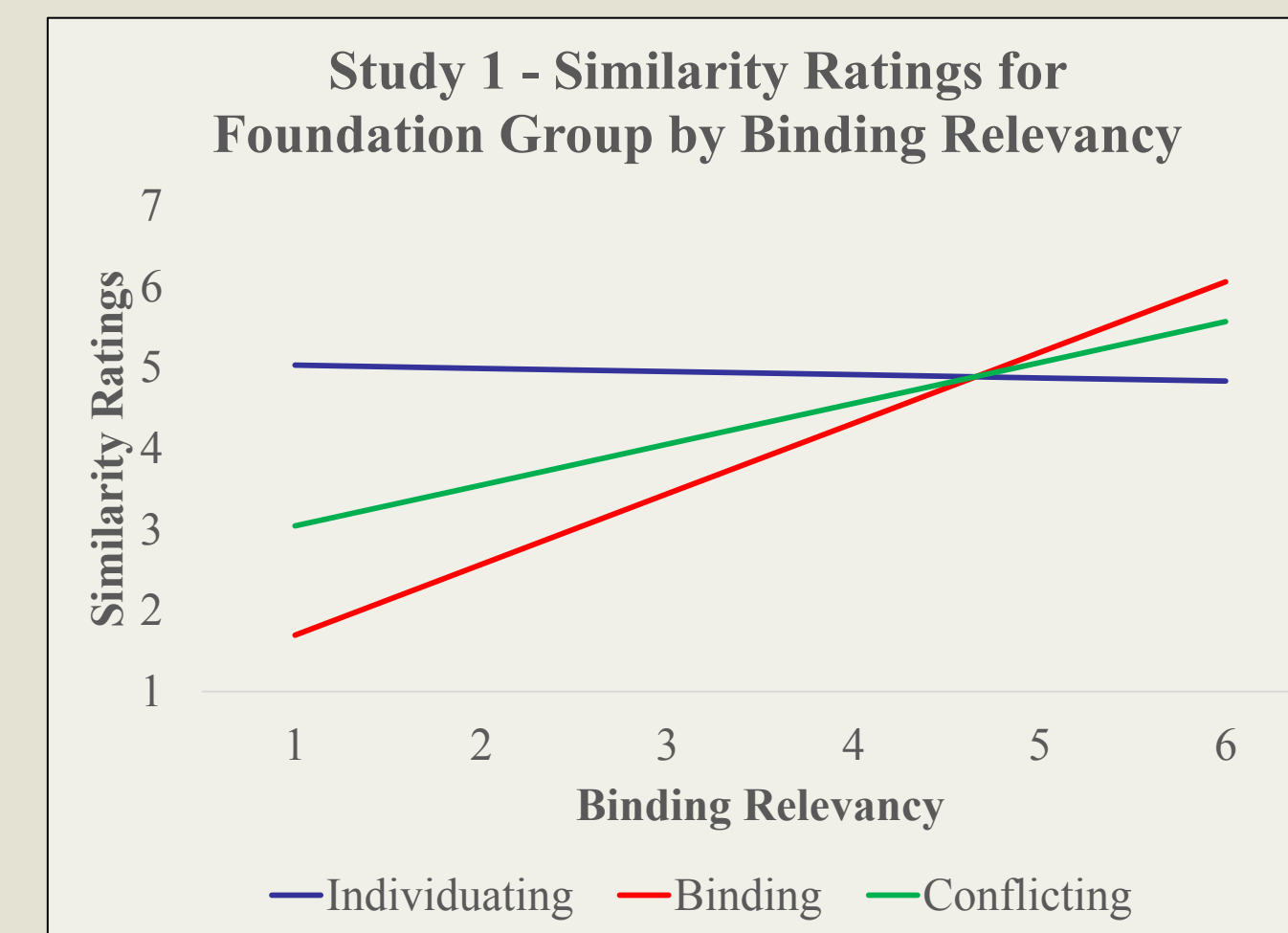
Study	Ss Characteristics			Political Ideology			Measures		
	Sample Size	Age (M/SD)	% Female	Lib.	Ind.	Con.	Political ID Measure	Moral Attitude	Ratings
1	mTurk n=86	41.63 (13.61)	62	--	--	--	MFQ Relevancy	MFQ	Similarity
2	mTurk n=107	41.81 (11.45)	60	52.34	14.02	33.65	Overall, Social, Economic	MFQ and POV	Similarity
3	ISU n=169			36.69	26.63	36.69	Overall, Social, Economic	MFQ - Individ. Importance	Liking Mixed
4	ISU n=209	18.97 (1.22)	73	41.5	26.8	31.5	Overall, Social, Economic	MFQ - Forced Choice	Difficulty Certainty

Moral Attitude Conflict Task Set-up			Attitude #1				
			Individuating		Binding		
Attitude #2	Individuating	Harm	Individuating Foundation Group		Conflicting Foundation Group		
		Fairness	Individuating Foundation Group		Conflicting Foundation Group		
	Binding	In-group	Conflicting Foundation Group		Binding Foundation Group		
		Authority	Conflicting Foundation Group		Binding Foundation Group		
		Purity	Conflicting Foundation Group		Binding Foundation Group		

Results and Discussion

Study 1 – Similarity Predictions using Relevancy

- Aggregated Similarity Ratings**
 - Individuating Foundation Group - 15 ratings ($\alpha = .91$)
 - Binding Foundation Group - 36 ratings ($\alpha = .98$)
 - Conflicting Foundation Group - 54 ratings ($\alpha = .97$)
- Mixed Design**
 - Continuous: MFQ Relevancy Items (political ideology proxy)
 - Within: Three Foundation Groups (Individuating, Binding, Conflicting)
- DISCUSSION** - Does relevancy of moral foundations predict how one handles moral conflict? **PARTIALLY**
 - Provides evidence that the Binding Foundation relevancy items from the MFQ can be used to predict similarity ratings when conflict is present but the Individuating Foundation may not do as well.



	F	β	p	r ²
Individuating Relevancy				
Individuating	10.76	0.43	0.002	0.11
Binding	0.78	-0.16	0.38	0.01
Conflicting	0.47	0.09	0.50	0.01
Binding Relevancy				
Individuating	0.15	-0.04	0.70	0.002
Binding	91.11	0.87	<0.001	0.52
Conflicting	36.94	0.50	<0.001	0.31

Study 3 – Conflict based on Individuating vs. Binding Opinion Comparisons

- “Liking” and “Conflict” ratings based on evaluative judgments of Individuating and Binding opinions
 - Individuating was MORE/LESS/EQUALLY important than/to Binding
- General continuous political ideology measure used to predict Liking and Conflict ratings between comparisons (Table 3)
- DISCUSSION** – Do conflict ratings based on comparing moral opinions vary by political ideology? **PARTIALLY**
 - Liberals appear to have less conflict and like the “person” more when they state that Individuating opinions (i.e., Harm and Fairness) are more important than Binding.
 - Consistent with previous study results.

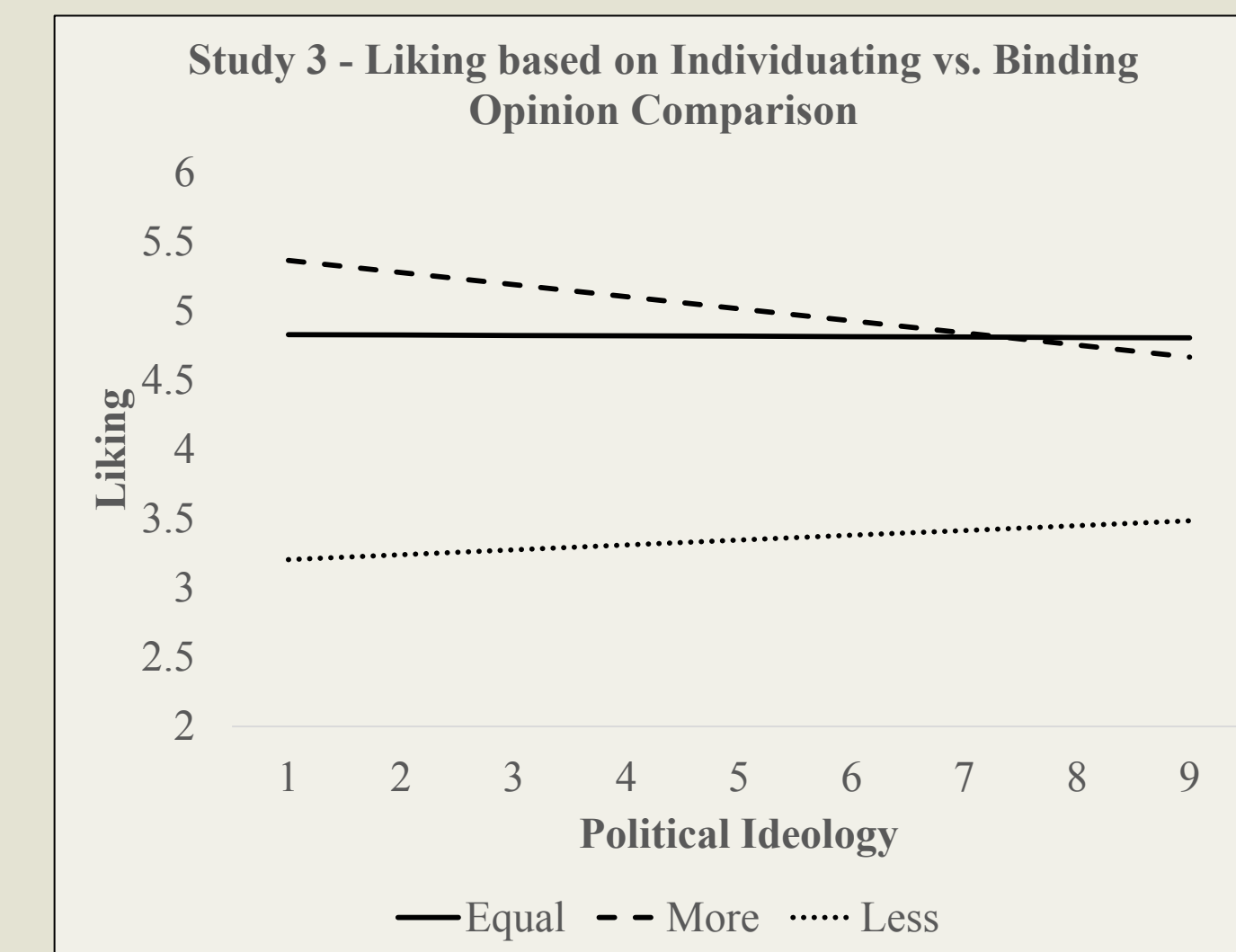
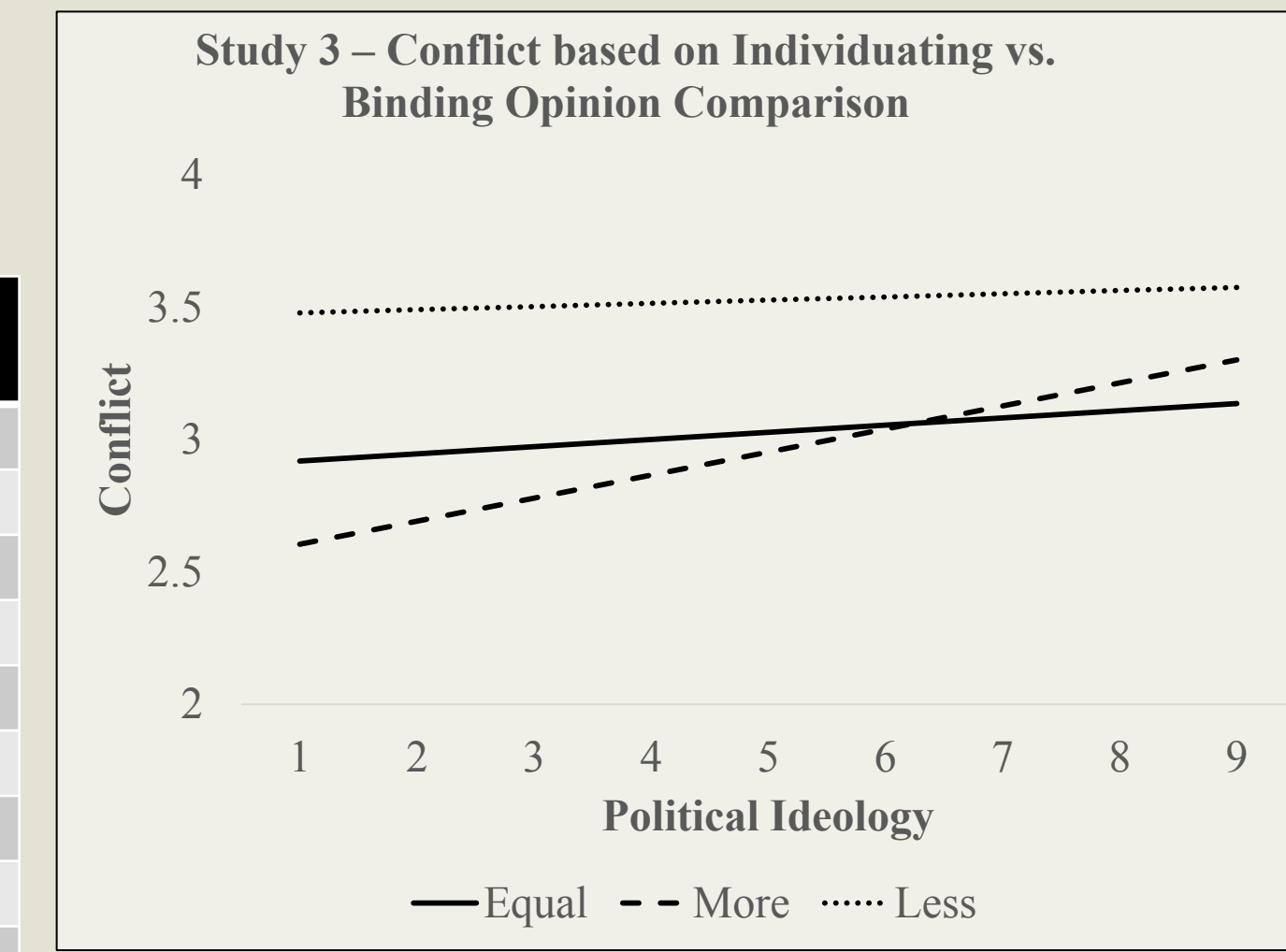


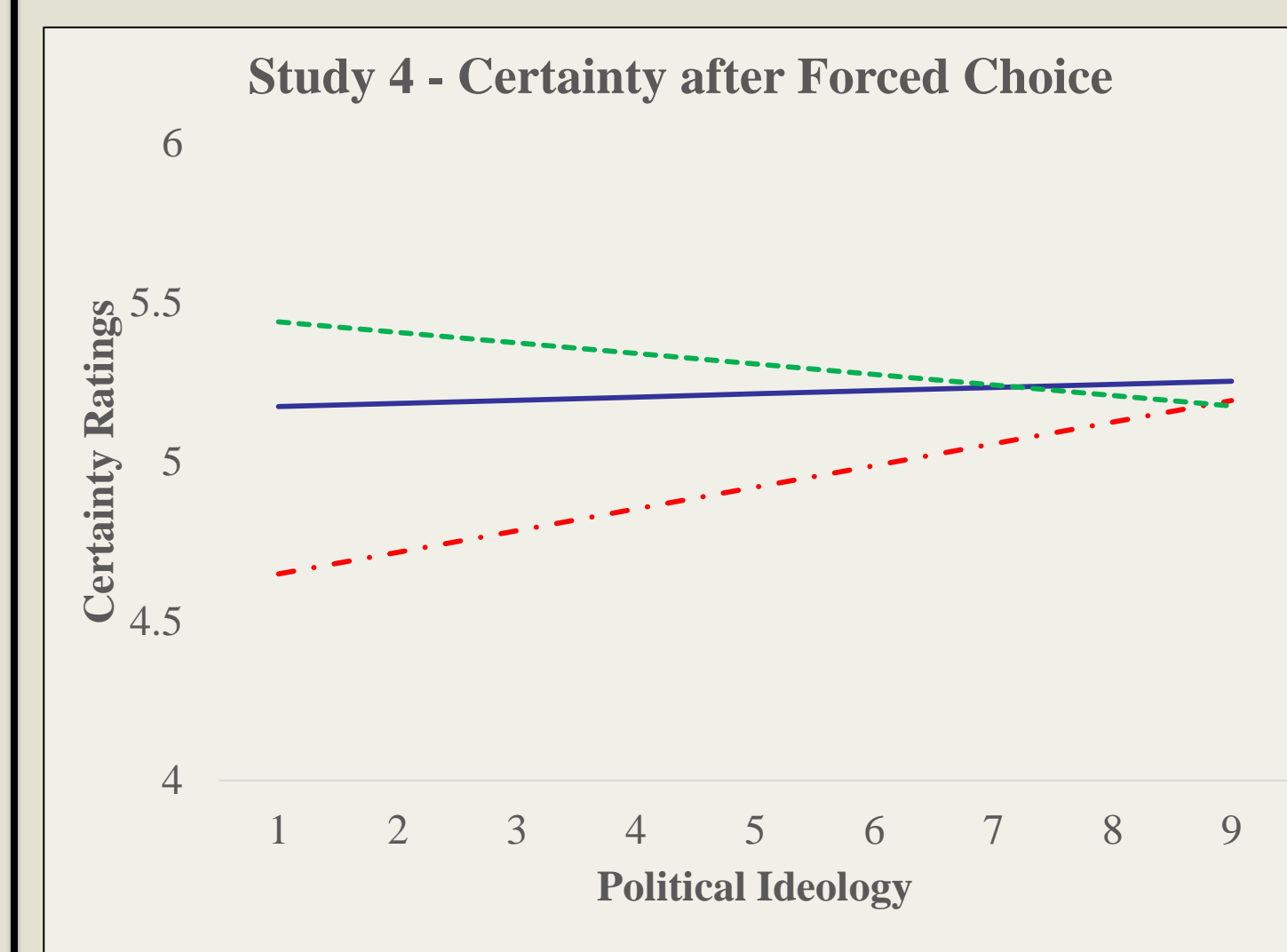
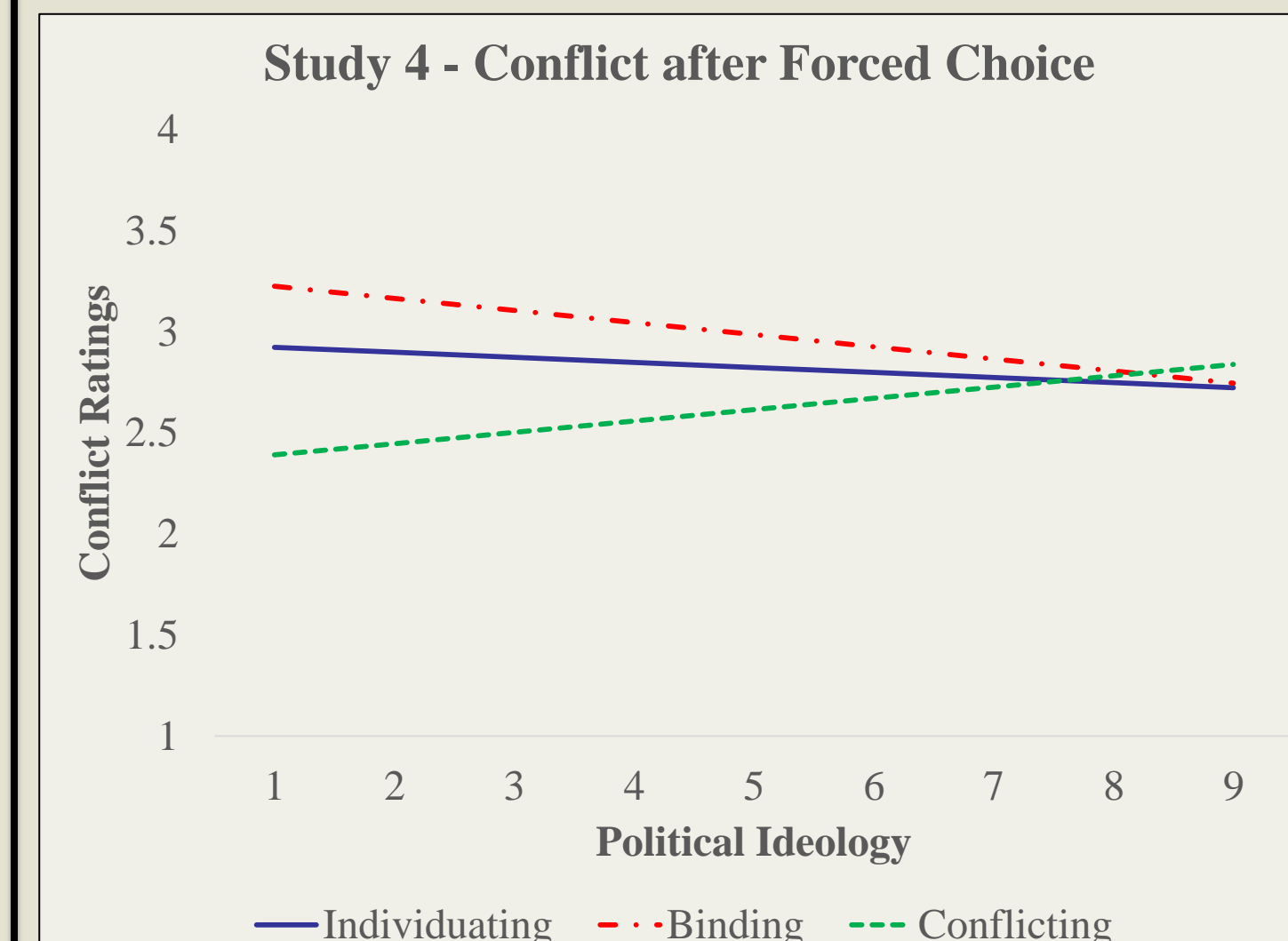
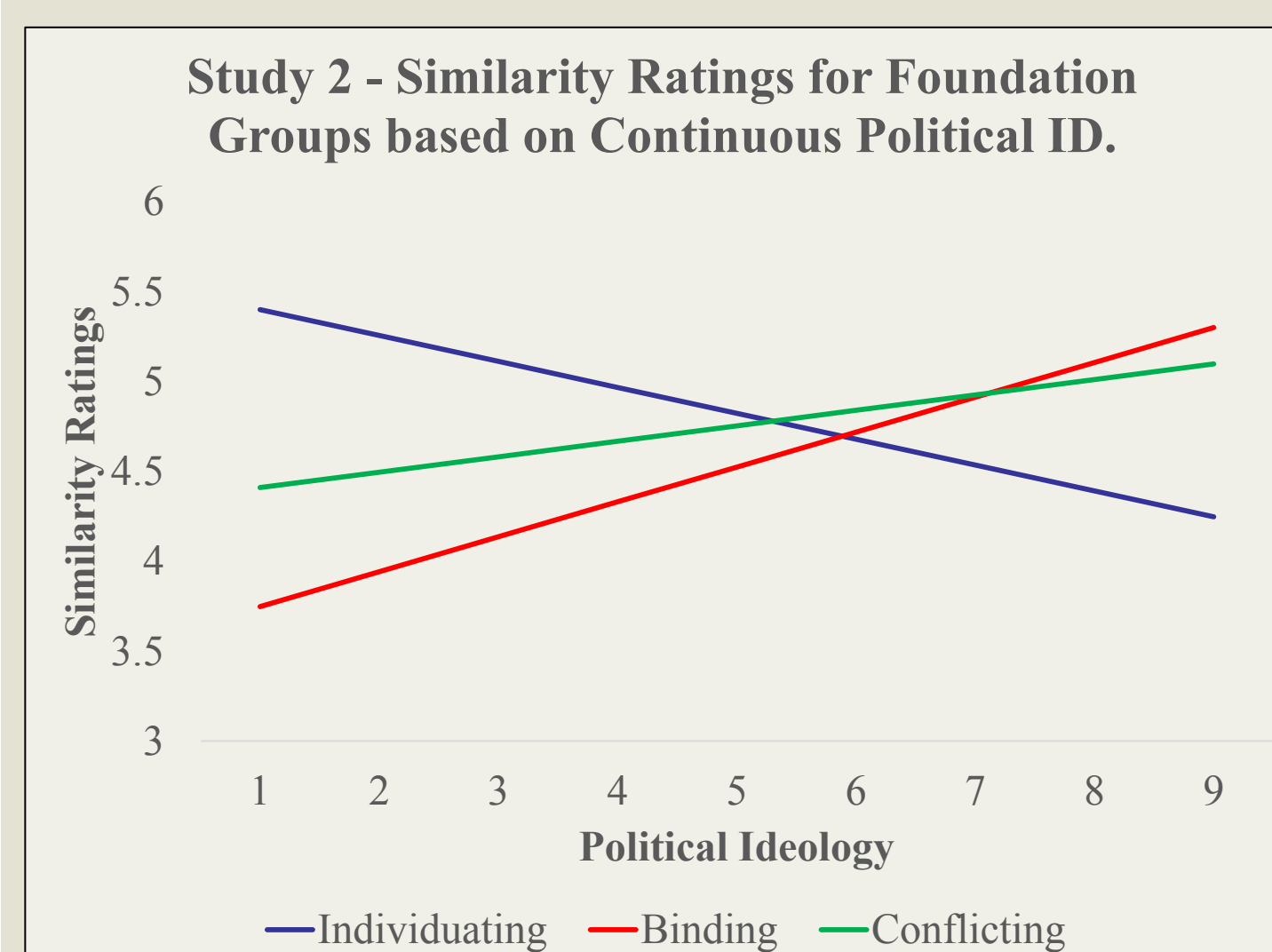
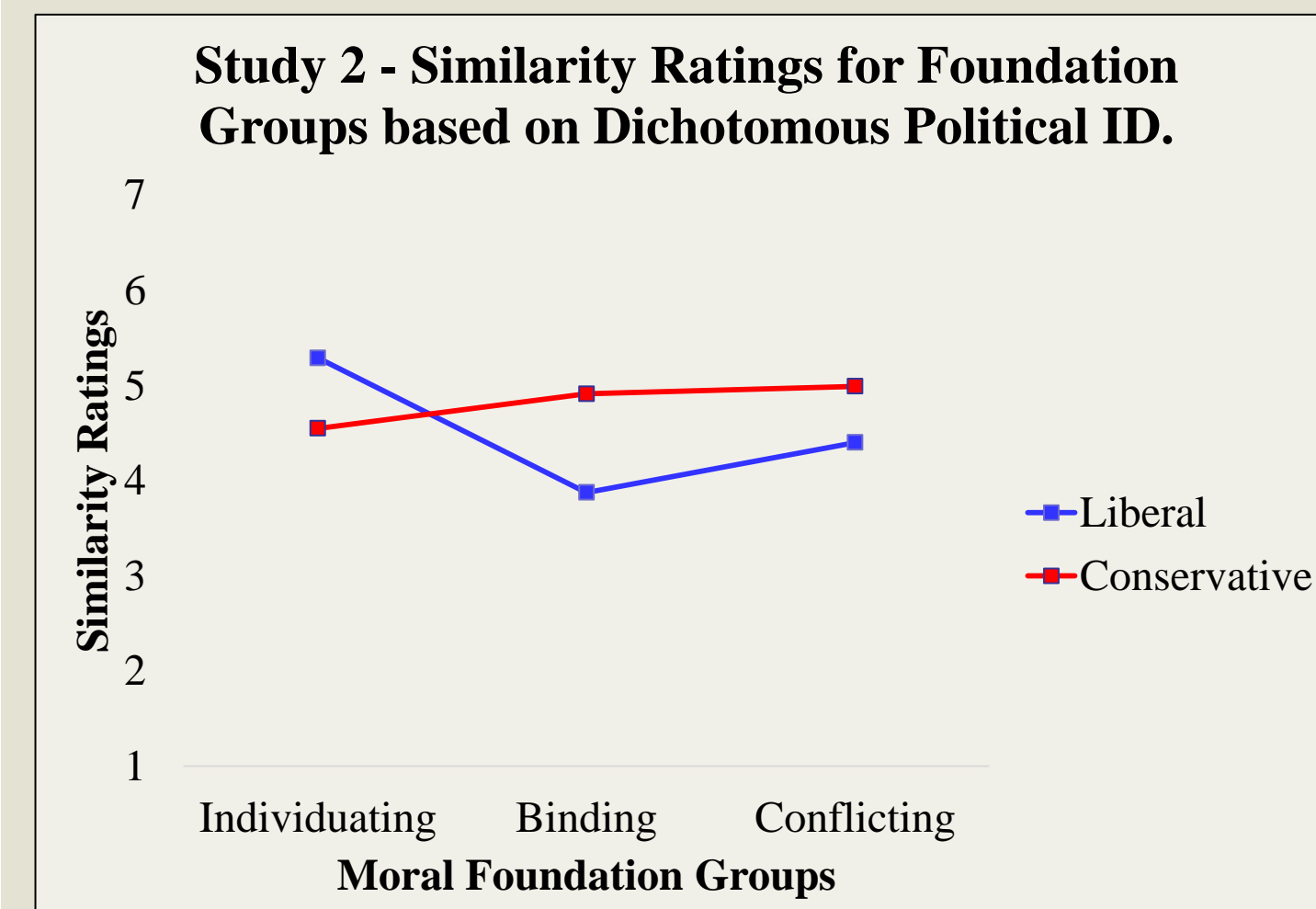
Table 3. Liking and Conflict Ratings by Individuating/Binding Comparison and Political Ideology

	R ²	β	F	p
Liking Ratings				
Indiv. More Important	.067	-.087	11.934	.001
Indiv. Less Important	.013	.035	2.135	.146
Indiv. Equally Important	.000	-.003	.015	.904
Conflict Ratings				
Indiv. More Important	.058	-.087	10.240	.002
Indiv. Less Important	.001	.012	.145	.704
Indiv. Equally Important	.005	.027	.828	.364



Study 2 – Similarity Predictions using Political Ideology

- Political Ideology as Dichotomous Variable**
 - Liberal (n=53) vs. Conservative (n=54)
 - Repeated measures ANOVA
 - Main Effect of Moral Foundation Group
 - $F(2, 182.49) = 13.55, p < 0.001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .11$
 - Interaction between Group and Political Ideology
 - $F(2, 182.49) = 41.61, p < 0.001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .28$
- Political Ideology as Continuous Variable**
 - 1 = Strongly Liberal - 9 = Strongly Conservative
 - Repeated measures ANOVA
 - Foundation Groups (Individuating, Binding, Conflicting) by Political Ideology
 - $F(50.43, 140.47) = 3.25, p < 0.001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .54$
- DISCUSSION** - Does political ideology influence how one handles moral conflict? **YES**
 - Self-reported political ideology is related to similarity ratings for opposing viewpoints
 - Liberals: Individuating > Binding
 - Conservatives: Binding > Individuating
 - Conflict
 - Contradictory to hypotheses, Liberals rated themselves less similar to those in the conflicting foundation group than Conservatives
 - Less similarity indicates increased experience in conflict



Study 4 – Conflict after Forced Choice

- “Conflict” and “Certainty” ratings after choosing between one of two opinions.
 - Conflict = “conflicted”, “difficult”, “satisfied”
 - Individuating $\alpha = .782$; Binding $\alpha = .930$; Conflicting $\alpha = .953$
 - Certainty = “certain”, “correct”, “clear”
 - Individuating $\alpha = .827$; Binding $\alpha = .942$; Conflicting $\alpha = .961$
- General continuous political ideology measure used to predict Conflict and Certainty ratings between comparisons (Table 4)
- DISCUSSION** – Do conflict and certainty ratings vary by political ideology when required to choose between two moral opinions? **YES**
 - Liberals report higher conflict and less certainty when choosing between two Binding opinions.
 - Conservatives report higher conflict when choosing between Conflicting moral opinions.

Table 4. Conflict and Certainty Ratings by Foundation Group and Political Ideology

	R ²	β	F	p
Conflict Ratings				
Binding	.020	-.060	4.316	.039
Individuating	.004	-.025	.793	.374
Conflicting	.026	.056	5.427	.021
Certainty Ratings				
Binding	.024	.068	5.001	.026
Individuating	.001	.010	.122	.727
Conflicting	.008	-.033	1.751	.187