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Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior Using the Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders

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Abstract

Do the personal characteristics of political leaders affect their governments' foreign policy behavior? The present study examines the impact of 6 personal characteristics of 45 heads of government on the foreign policy behavior of their nations. These characteristics, each of

individual interest, interrelate to form two orientations to foreign affairs, and the influence of these orientations on foreign policy behavior is also explored. The results are reported for all 45 heads of government, as well as for those leaders among the 45 with high or low interest in foreign affairs and with little or much training in foreign affairs.

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