RESEARCH ARTICLE

EASP WILEY

Who's a yea-sayer? Habitual trust and affirmative response behaviour

Ann-Christin Posten[1,2] | Janina Steinmetz[3]

[1] University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland

[2] Department of Psychology, University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany

[3] Bayes Business School, City University of London, London, UK

Correspondence
Ann-Christin Posten, Department of Psychology, University of Cologne, 50939 Cologne, Germany.
Email: ann-christin.posten@ul.ie

Abstract

We test the hypothesis that people who habitually trust others respond more affirmatively to questions (i.e. acquiescence). Six studies explore whether people's habitual tendency to trust others translates into a general acquiescent response bias. By re-analysing large-scale cross-country data, Study 1 shows that participants' level of habitual trust predicts agreement across multiple and diverse concepts. Studies 2a and 2b show that habitual trust predicts acquiescent responding in classic psychological questionnaires. Habitual trust likewise predicts behavioural acquiescence, such as an agreement to assign monetary awards to others (Study 3) and staying with the suggested default option in a real choice paradigm (Study 4). Furthermore, the relation between habitual trust and acquiescent responding holds across different communication contexts (Study 5). These results imply that habitual trust predicts how individuals respond to questionnaire items that are used across a variety of research domains.

KEYWORDS
acquiescent response bias, affirmation, habitual trust, response bias

1 | INTRODUCTION

How democracies understand the wishes of their citizens, companies understand the wishes of their customers, or researchers understand their participants' reactions to experimental manipulations is largely based on questionnaire data: do most citizens support governmental measures to fight SARS-CoV-2? How popular is Coca Cola? Do participants evaluate a stimulus positively? Such questionnaires are foundational methods for market researchers, policymakers as well as quantitative researchers (De Vaus, 2013).

Over and above simply posing questions, questionnaires are a form of communication that is prone to systematic biases and distortions (Schwarz, 1999). On the side of the question asker, the questions can 'shape the answer' by communicating beliefs and intentions of the question asker to the receiver (Schwarz, 1999, p. 93). On the side of the participant, their cultural background or motivational state can distort the response, for example, when participants show an acquiescent response bias (van Herk et al., 2004).

An acquiescent response bias is problematic for those who interpret the results of questionnaires because acquiescence inflates the prevalence of affirmative responses. Thus, a person, product, policy or stimulus can seem more popular (or score higher on any other measured attribute) on questionnaire items than in people's actual sentiment. Although much research has been dedicated to design measures to prevent or quantify such acquiescence (e.g. Krautz & Hoffmann, 2018), a large part of these measures are limited to certain types of questions (e.g. knowledge-based items; Krautz & Hoffmann, 2018) or are costly to administer because they involve the addition of substantial numbers of items (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001; Couch & Keniston, 1960).

Despite its impact on questionnaire response, little is known about individual differences that favour acquiescent responding. Identifying such differences could point to individuals or populations for whom questionnaires might especially benefit from using corrective measures against acquiescence. To shed light on this issue, we investigate whether people high in habitual trust (i.e. high trust on the trait-level, also referred to as dispositional or generalized trust) might be more likely to acquiesce compared to people low in habitual trust.

2 | ACQUIESCENT RESPONSE BIAS

Because research in the social sciences relies heavily on questionnaires, any systematic distortion of responses has been of vital interest for researchers, and has thus received considerable attention (Paulhus, 1991). One of the most pervasive response biases is the tendency to answer affirmatively to questions regardless of their content, or acquiescent responding (van Herk et al., 2004; Krautz & Hoffmann, 2018; Paulhus, 1991; Winkler et al., 1982).

One might argue that acquiescence distorts questionnaire results mainly when interpreting absolute values (e.g. what percentage of consumers consider buying an electric car?). Yet, acquiescence also poses a problem when comparing different groups (e.g. are older voters more likely to support Brexit?) or in correlational research (e.g. does age correlate with support of tougher immigration policies?). In these cases, acquiescence can distort results when the groups that are compared differ in their tendency to acquiesce (Johnson et al., 2005; Krautz & Hoffmann, 2018; Narayan & Krosnick, 1996), or when acquiescence manifests in spurious correlations (Kuru & Pasek, 2016; Posten & Steinmetz, 2018; Steinmetz & Posten, 2017).

Given its detrimental effects to the validity of research results, the question arises what fosters acquiescence. Previous research has identified several individual and cultural differences that influence acquiescence. Regarding individual differences, people who are conscientious, deferent, less educated or older may be more likely to acquiesce (Hibbing et al., 2019; Hinz et al., 2007; Narayan & Krosnick, 1996; Schuman & Presser, 1996). Regarding cultural differences, acquiescence is more prevalent in collectivistic cultures as well as in those cultures with higher power distance (Dolnicar & Grün, 2007; Hoffmann et al., 2013; Smith, 2004). In our research, we go beyond existing research by holding some of these important correlates of acquiescence constant: we recruit samples within the same culture (Studies 2–5) and highly similar in age and education (Study 5). Building on work that has demonstrated individual differences as determinants of acquiescence, we test whether individual differences in habitual trust are a previously unthought-of factor that relates to an individual's tendency to acquiesce.

3 | HABITUAL TRUST

We propose that an individual's level of habitual trust might correlate with their agreement with questionnaire items based on motivational as well as cognitive mechanisms that accompany habitual trust.

On a motivational level, habitual trust has been described as a catalyst of social interaction (Arrow, 1974), enabling individuals to seek company, to share resources and to cooperate (Fukuyama, 1995; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994), leading them to approach each other (Slepian et al., 2012)––or, more generally speaking, to affiliate. Other research has shown that, if people are motivated to affiliate, they are more likely to show acquiescent responding (Steinmetz & Posten, 2017). By implication, people high in habitual trust might experience more affiliation motives (e.g. Evans & Revelle, 2008). Therefore, they might also be more likely to show acquiescent responding. This is because in responses to (written and anonymous) questionnaires, habitual trust can hardly manifest in approach behaviour, as the question-asker is remote and unknown. In such instances, we expect that the affiliation motive of people high in habitual trust manifests in acquiescent response behaviour.

On a cognitive level, habitual trust has been identified as a mental state and trait that critically shapes human thinking (for a review see Mayo, 2015). Trusting humans resume to their default processing styles (Schul et al., 2008), including strategies of positive hypothesis testing (Mayo et al., 2014), searching for similarities (Posten & Gino, 2021) and congruent thinking (Kleiman et al., 2015). Thus, habitual trust in and of itself fosters cognitive reasoning styles that lead to congruent thinking (Kleiman et al., 2015). Acquiescent responding can be conceptualized as one consequence of thinking in terms that are congruent with the question asked. Understanding questionnaire items with an easy access to congruent information might likely lead to the confirmation of their content, and therefore to agreement.

In the present research, we set out to test whether people's habitual trust relates to their tendency to acquiesce. We base this hypothesis on the motivational and cognitive correlates of habitual trust discussed above. In line with previous research on acquiescence (e.g. Steinmetz & Posten, 2017), we expect this pattern to hold across diverse question types, that is, on Likert scales but also on dichotomous items. Finally, we build on the notion that habitual trust is rather stable across a diverse range of interaction contexts (Helm, 2004). In other words, someone high in habitual trust will express this tendency when interacting with many people, instead of only with friends or strangers. Based on this reasoning, we expect that people high in habitual trust acquiesce more across different interaction contexts (e.g. communication with in- or outgroups).

4 | THE PRESENT RESEARCH

To test our hypothesis that habitual trust relates to acquiescence, we report six studies (total $N = 775,84$). Studies 1–4 test our hypothesis that habitual trust correlates with acquiescence across different item types, whereas Study 5 tests whether this pattern holds across different communication contexts (i.e. in- vs. outgroups). Study 1 re-analyses large-scale cross-country survey data to investigate the relationship of habitual trust with acquiescence in the World Values Survey. Studies 2a and 2b test the basic relation of habitual trust with acquiescence in traditional personality surveys in a more controlled setting.

Furthermore, Study 2b speaks to the question whether social desirability might serve as an alternative explanation. The subsequent studies use different measures of habitual trust (Studies 4–5) and more behavioural measures of acquiescence (Studies 3–5) to broaden the generalizability. Study 3 tests whether habitual trust correlates with agreement with questions with monetary consequences for others, while Study 4 explores whether habitual trust correlates with choices of default options, resulting in consequences for the decision-makers themselves. Study 5 tests whether the relation of habitual trust and acquiescence manifests when responding to binary quiz statements endorsed by in- versus outgroup members. A summary of key sample and survey characteristics for all studies is reported in the supporting online materials (Table S.1).

We expect a medium-size relation between habitual trust and acquiescence of $r = .300$ in line with previous studies using similar measures of response bias (Steinmetz & Posten, 2017). Based on a power analysis of a medium effect of $r = .300$ with a desired power of 0.80 and a two-tailed alpha level of 0.05, G*Power suggested a sample size of 82 participants per study to detect the predicted relation between habitual trust and acquiescence (Faul et al., 2007). We decided to predetermine a conservative sample size of at least 100 participants per study (or per between-subjects condition in Study 5). All studies exceed these minimum sample sizes.

We did not inspect the data before the entire data set was collected. We report all measures and manipulations. No data were excluded from analysis in any of our studies. De-identified data, analysis scripts and materials can be found on the Open Science Network (OSF; osf.io/7fh5p/).

We report two-tailed tests across all studies. To communicate results as clearly as possible, we report non-standardized values within simple regression analysis for Studies 2–5. However, habitual trust remains a significant predictor of response bias in all these studies when using standardized (z-transformed) variables and when controlling for gender and age (and ethnicity or nationality if measured) within hierarchical regressions analyses (see SOM, Tables S.3–S.5).

5 | STUDY 1

If habitual trust indeed predicts acquiescence, this could imply that answers in––even large-scale––questionnaires might be distorted due to differences in individual propensities to trust. As a first step to investigate whether habitual trust predicts agreement with questionnaire items, we turned to the latest data set of the World Values Survey (Haerpfer et al., 2020).[1] The WVS measures across different countries a broad range of opinions and beliefs on topics such as leisure time, gender equality or divorce. The WVS also assesses individuals' levels of habitual trust. These data can therefore provide an initial test of our

hypothesis. We expect that participants' scores on the habitual trust measure correlate with their responses to questions about a range of other topics, which would indicate that a relationship exists between habitual trust and acquiescence.

5.1 | Method

The data set of the WVS (WVS7 dataset; Haerpfer et al., 2020) contains responses of 76,897 participants (analysed data sets: 76,523; 40,081 female, $M_{age} = 43.01$; $SD = 16.36$) from 51 countries across the globe. Data were gathered via face-to-face interviews, postal surveys, self-administered online surveys and telephone interviews.

To approach the question of whether habitual trust relates to acquiescence, we first combined the habitual trust items in the WVS (Cronbach's $\alpha = .75$). The WVS measures habitual trust with two item types: one binary item ('Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?'; 1 = *most people can be trusted;* 2 (recoded as 0) = *need to be very careful*), and six items assessing habitual trust toward specific groups ('I'd like to ask you how much you trust people from various groups. Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group completely, somewhat, not very much or not at all? Your family, your neighbourhood, people you know personally, people you meet for the first time, people of another religion, people of another nationality'; 1 = *trust completely*, 2 = *trust somewhat*, 3 = *do not trust very much*, 4 = *do not trust at all; reverse-coded*). Variables were standardized (z-transformed) before being averaged to the compound habitual trust measure to account for differences in scale range and response item means.

Next, regardless of question content, we combined responses to all other questions in the survey that fulfilled the following criteria: items assessing agreement directly (e.g. 'One of my main goals in life has been to make my parents proud'; 1 = *strongly agree*; 4 = *strongly disagree*), items on a unipolar concept (e.g. 'How interested would you say you are in politics? Are you…'; 1 = *very interested*; 4 = *not at all interested*) or items in which the answer alternatives suggested a unipolar construct (e.g. 'Taking all things together, would you say you are'; 1 = *very happy*, 4 = *not at all happy*). We did not include bipolar items (e.g. '…What do you think should international organizations prioritize, being effective or being democratic'; 1 = *being effective*, 10 = *being democratic*). Overall, we included 144 out of all 290 questions and standardized (z-transformed) them before averaging them. Averaging across all positively worded items in the WVS as a measure of acquiescence is a similar approach to measuring acquiescence as in previous research (e.g. measuring the proportion of 'agree' responses in Olson & Bilgen, 2011; averaging across unrelated scales in Steinmetz & Posten, 2017). This approach allowed us to measure acquiescence independent of a specific item's content, because we summarize a large variety of items and constructs into one measure. If habitual trust predicts agreement on this aggregate measure, such a result would suggest that habitual trust correlates with acquiescence, rather than with a specific value or construct.

---

[1] The analysis reported here is a replication of an analysis we initially ran on the dataset of wave 6 of the WVS (Inglehart et al., 2014), which was the latest dataset available at that time. The results resemble each other. Results on wave 6 are reported in the SOM.

TABLE 1 Multilevel model analysis. Fixed effects estimates (top) and variance–covariance estimates (bottom) for models of the predictors of acquiescence for Study 1

Parameter	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	Fixed effects			
Intercept	−0.003 (0.013)	0.022 (0.013)	0.395* (0.165)	0.377* (0.163)
Level 1 (participant)				
Trust		0.099* (0.001)	0.099* (0.001)	0.095* (0.004)
Age		−0.000* (0.000)	−0.000* (0.000)	−0.000* (0.000)
Gender		−0.018* (0.001)	−0.018* (0.001)	−0.018* (0.001)
Level 2 (country)				
Trust			0.052 (0.055)	0.061 (0.055)
Age			−0.008* (0.003)	−0.008* (0.003)
Gender			−0.055 (0.364)	−0.002 (0.361)
	Variance–covariance estimates			
Level 1				
Residual (σ^2)	0.039* (0.000)	0.036* (0.000)	0.036* (0.000)	0.036* (0.000)
Level 2				
Intercept (σ^2)	0.008* (0.002)	0.007* (0.002)	0.006* (0.001)	0.006* (0.001)
Trust slope (σ^2)				0.001* (0.000)

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses. Residual ($\sigma2$) = residual variance estimate. Intercept ($\sigma2$) = variance estimate of intercept. Trust slope ($\sigma2$) = variance estimate of trust slope.

*$p < .050$, for the remaining variables $p > .05$.

5.2 | Results

As expected, overall, trust correlated positively with agreement across all 144 questions ($r = .248, p < .001$).

To account for the nested structure of the data, with participants being clustered within countries, we ran a two-level multilevel regression analysis predicting acquiescence from habitual trust. Because the predictor variable of habitual trust was the average of several items, we used this estimate even for participants who omitted responses. We applied the same principle to the acquiescence measure. Level 1 missing data were deleted listwise. No level 2 data (i.e. country information) were missing.

Within the multilevel regression analysis (Table 1), the results of the null predictor Model 1 indicate a need for multilevel modelling as the level 2 significant estimate of intercept variance provides evidence for clustering. Including the critical predictor variable habitual trust and the covariates age and gender as fixed level 1 predictors in Model 2 with randomly varying intercepts showed that habitual trust and the co-variates significantly predicted acquiescence. To account for the effects of these three variables on the country level 2, we added their respective group means as fixed level 2 predictors into Model 3. On the country level, only the covariate age had a significant effect. All level 1 effects (including habitual trust) remained significant. Model 4 adds randomly varying habitual trust slopes to Model 3, allowing us to capture random components associated with habitual trust varying across countries. Providing evidence for significant variance in habitual trust slopes on the country level, habitual trust predicted acquiescence significantly at the individual level. Overall, the multilevel regression analysis consistently demonstrated habitual trust to be a significant predictor of acquiescence on the individual level. This shows that people with high habitual trust acquiesce more even when differences on the country level are controlled for.

5.3 | Discussion

The results show that habitual trust predicts agreement with a wide range of questionnaire items. This correlation could stem from a true underlying relation of habitual trust and almost 150 different questions in the WVS. Alternatively, the correlation could point to our expected relation between habitual trust and responses to the different questions that is caused by acquiescence. Study 1 does not allow us to test which explanation holds. To address this limitation, Study 2a tests the relation between habitual trust and more specific measures of acquiescence used by previous research.

6 | STUDY 2A

Study 2a examined whether habitual trust predicts acquiescence, which was assessed by asking participants to indicate their agreement with statements from a widely used self-construal scale (Singelis, 1994). This scale has previously been used to measure acquiescence (Steinmetz & Posten, 2017) as it consists of two typically uncorrelated subscales that measure independent and interdependent self-construal, respectively (Singelis, 1994; Singelis et al., 1999).

Acquiescence was measured through the agreement with the overall scale that averages the two subscales. Thereby, a non-meaningful scale emerged that captures a general response bias rather than a meaningful personality trait. To measure participants' habitual trust, they answered questions from a classic personality inventory, the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 2008).

6.1 | Method

6.1.1 | Participants and design

Two-hundred and one participants (93 female, M_{age} = 36.91; SD = 12.26) took part in the study via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) in exchange for $0.40.

6.1.2 | Materials and procedure

First, to measure acquiescence, we measured participants' general agreement with statements on a psychological scale that measures self-construal (Singelis, 1994; Singelis et al., 1999) on two typically uncorrelated subscales: independent (e.g. 'I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects') and interdependent self-construal (e.g. 'If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible'). For each subscale, participants responded to 12 items (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). We computed the mean of all 24 items across the two subscales (M = 4.84, SD = 0.71, range 2.96–6.54, Cronbach's

α = .82) to obtain a concept-free measure of acquiescence (Steinmetz & Posten, 2017).

Second, to measure participants' habitual trust, we used the trust items of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 2008; NEO-PI-R). This measure consists of five items assessing habitual trust (e.g. 'I think that most of the people I dealt with are honest and trustworthy') and three items assessing habitual distrust (e.g. 'I'm suspicious when someone does something nice for me'). The habitual distrust items were reverse coded for the overall NEO-PI-R trust scale, which showed to be highly reliable when combined (M = 3.29, SD = 0.98, range 1.00–5.00, Cronbach's α = .93).

By using such a balanced scale (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001), we expect that our results are not caused by a common factor underlying both the habitual trust measure and the acquiescence measure, but instead point to a relation between habitual trust and acquiescence.

Note that the order of the scales (first response behaviour, then habitual trust) addresses the alternative explanation that simply responding to the habitual trust items primes participants with habitual trust.

6.2 | Results

As expected, participants' habitual trust correlated (r = .272) significantly with their agreement with the items of the combined Singelis scale, β = .272, SE = 0.050, t(199) = 3.990, p < .001, 95% CI[0.139, 0.409] (Figure 1). To ensure that this relation does not stem from a high
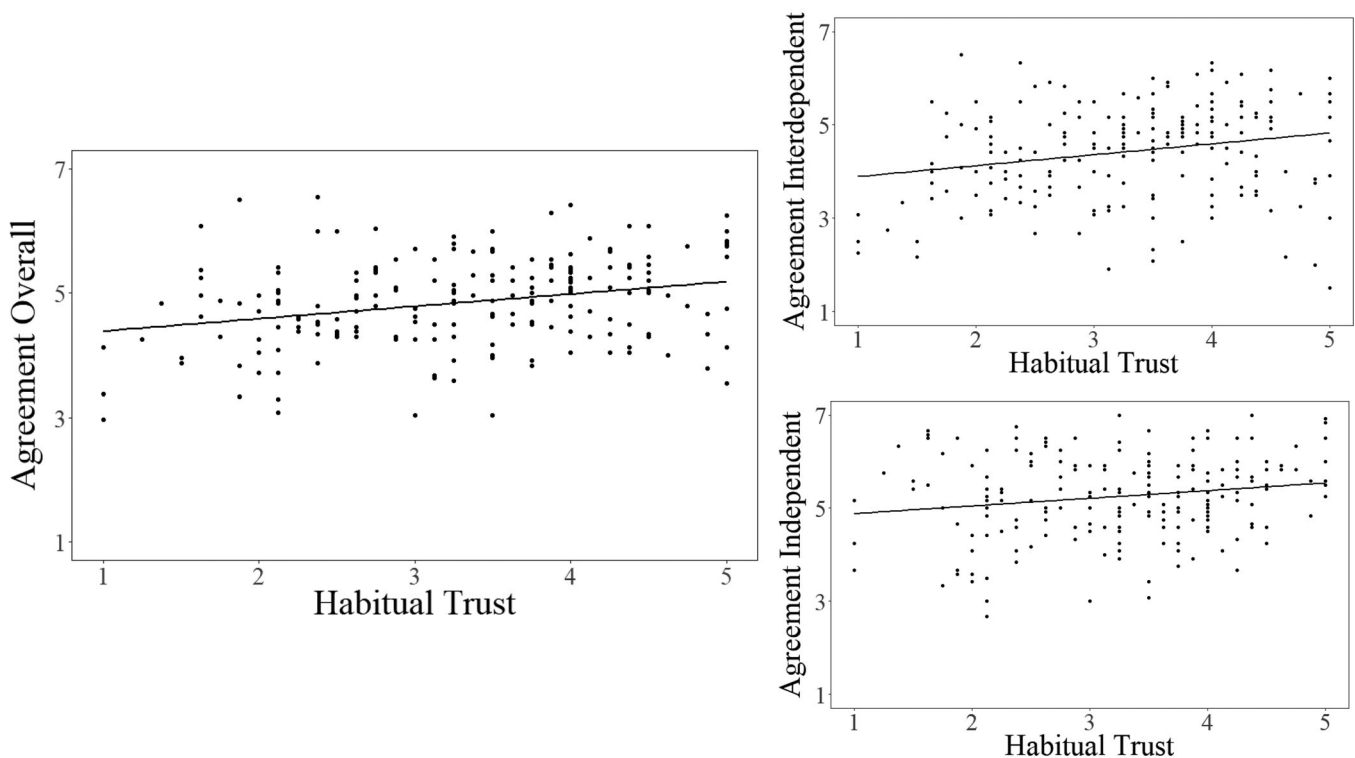

FIGURE 1 Agreement with the overall Singelis Scale (left) as well as the interdependent subscale (top right) and the independent subscale (bottom right) as a function of habitual trust

correlation of habitual trust and one particular self-construal subscale, we further correlated habitual trust with both subscales separately. The higher participants' level of habitual trust was, the higher they construed themselves to be interdependent ($r = .226$, $\beta = .226$, $SE = 0.072$, $t(199) = 3.267$, $p = .001$, 95% CI[0.0930, 0.364] as well as independent ($r = .183$, $\beta = .183$, $SE = 0.063$, $t(199) = 2.619$, $p = .010$, 95% CI[0.040, 0.321]).

6.3 | Discussion

Study 2a shows that habitual trust affects responses on an acquiescence measure that is comprised of two typically uncorrelated subscales of a personality measure. We argue that this finding can be explained by a relationship between habitual trust and acquiescence. However, two alternative explanations exist. For one, habitual trust could be conceptually related to both dimensions of self-construal measured in the scale. This explanation would imply that people who are habitually trusting might construe themselves as independent as well as interdependent. A second alternative explanation is that a common variable underlies the high score on habitual trust, interdependent and independent self-construal. One possible variable could be social desirability. People who portray themselves as trusting could want to portray themselves as well as being interdependent and independent at the same time, which both could be perceived as rather positive characteristics. Study 2b addresses both alternative explanations.

7 | STUDY 2B

Study 2b aims to address the two possible alternative explanations for the results of Study 2a: a potential relation between habitual trust and construing the self as independent and interdependent as well as social desirability as a common variable underlying these variables. In Study 2b, we asked participants to respond to the combined Singelis Scale for the average American––instead of for themselves. This should exclude any true relation between habitual trust and self-construal––as the self is not involved in the construal process. Simultaneously, such indirect questions (about others) have been shown to reduce the tendency to answer in a socially desirable manner because answers would not reflect the self (Fisher, 1993). Furthermore, to account for any order effects of the presentation of the Singelis Scale and the NEO-PI-R habitual trust measure (Costa & McCrae, 2008), in this study, participants first responded to the habitual trust measure and then to the Singelis Scale.

7.1 | Method

7.1.1 | Participants and design

Two hundred participants (82 female, $M_{age} = 35.68$; $SD = 11.57$) took part in the study via MTurk in exchange for $0.40.

7.1.2 | Materials and procedure

First, participants filled in the NEO-PI-R ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 0.90$, range 1.00–5.00, Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$), as they did in Study 2a, as our measure of habitual trust. We then measured acquiescence by combining both subscales of the Singelis Scale ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.70$, range 2.50–6.79, Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$), which participants answered for the average American as target person (e.g. 'It is important for the average American to maintain harmony within their group'). Again, responses were measured on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (= *strongly disagree*) to 7 (= *strongly agree*).

7.2 | Results

As expected, participants' habitual trust correlated significantly ($r = .314$) with their agreement with the Singelis Scale for the average American, $\beta = .314$, $SE = 0.052$, $t(198) = 4.659$, $p < .001$, 95% CI[0.180, 0.443] (Figure 2). As in Study 2a, this relation was not driven by a relation between habitual trust and a particular subscale. Instead, habitual trust correlated significantly with their agreement with the interdependent subscale, $\beta = .334$, $SE = 0.062$, $t(198) = 4.993$, $p < .001$, 95% CI[0.201, 0.462] as well as their agreement with the independent subscale, $\beta = .204$, $SE = 0.060$, $t(198) = 2.937$, $p = .004$, 95% CI[0.067, 0.338].

7.3 | Discussion

Studies 2a and 2b show that habitual trust correlates positively with agreement with items on a content-free measure of acquiescence. In both studies, the NEO-PI-R showed a high reliability (Cronbach's αs > .90); and it further consists of positively coded items measuring habitual trust as well as reverse-coded items measuring habitual distrust. Thus, the relation between habitual trust and acquiescence that we find is unlikely to be itself a spurious correlation caused by acquiescence on both scales, because in such a case the reverse-coded items should not show the same pattern (when reversed) as the positively coded items.

Although it is possible that highly trusting people are also more independent and interdependent at the same time, this explanation is unlikely to hold for Study 2b, in which participants answered the same questions for an average person instead of for themselves. Studies 3–5 further address this potential alternative explanation by using different measures of habitual trust and of acquiescence. The acquiescence measures capture more behavioural aspects of acquiescence, instead of responses to typical surveys, to increase the generalizability of our results. Studies 3 and 4 furthermore test whether habitual trust also predicts affirmative responding if the response bears consequences for others or for the self, respectively.
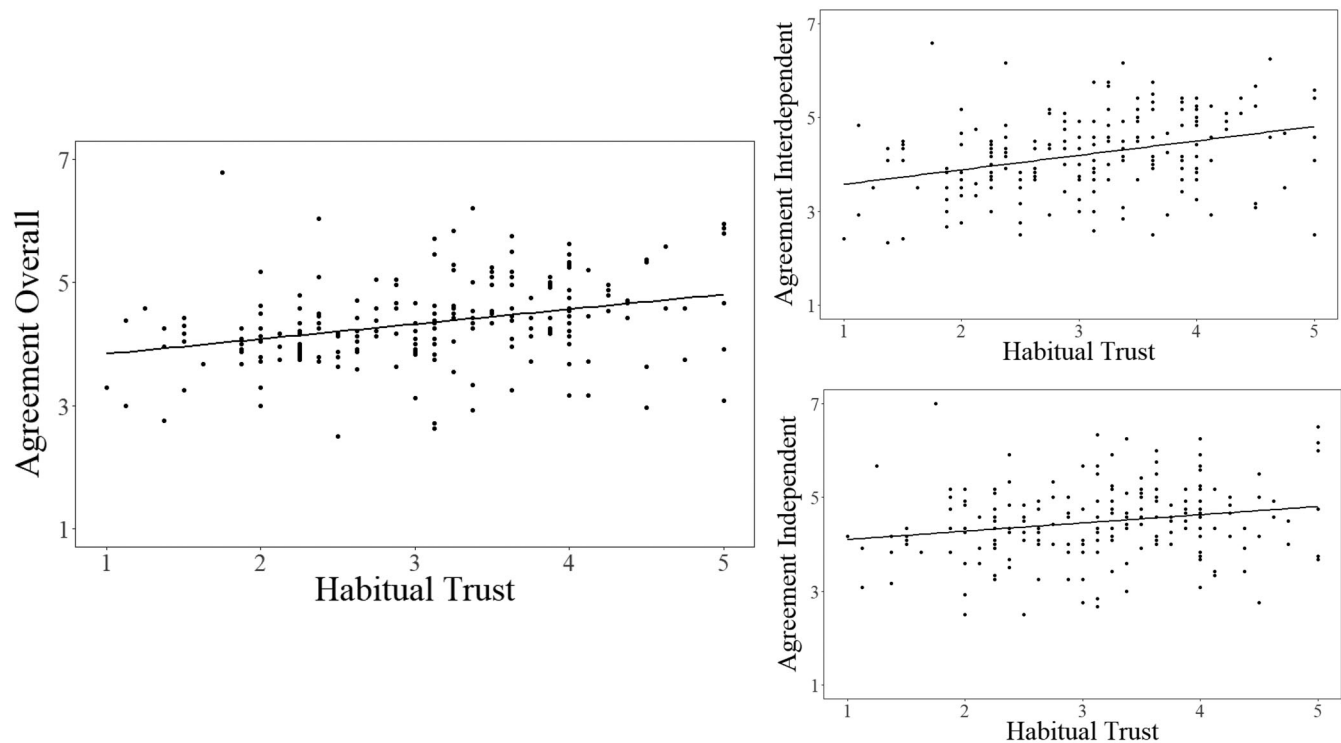
FIGURE 2 Agreement with the overall Singelis Scale (left) with the average American as target person as well as the interdependent subscale (top right) and the independent subscale (bottom right) as a function of habitual trust

8 | STUDY 3

Study 3 tested whether habitual trust influences acquiescence when the response can be consequential for others. If responses have consequences for others, people might be more invested in giving 'true' responses, which might eliminate acquiescence. However, if the relation between habitual trust and acquiescence persists under consequential circumstances, this finding would indicate that trusting individuals acquiesce not merely to please the question asker, but that they are convinced of their agreement (possibly because they searched for information that is congruent with agreement). To test this hypothesis, we asked participants whether they would agree with granting bonus payments to other people.

8.1 | Method

8.1.1 | Participants and design

Two hundred participants (81 female, $M_{age} = 36.16$; $SD = 10.66$) took part in the study via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) in exchange for $0.35. We pre-registered the data collection and analysis plan for this study at https://aspredicted.org/nn7w9.pdf.

8.1.2 | Materials and procedure

To measure habitual trust, participants responded to the same habitual trust scale as in Studies 2a and 2b ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.87$, range 1–5, Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$). Responses were measured on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (= strongly disagree) to 5 (= strongly agree). To measure acquiescence, we told participants that they would be evaluating movie reviews written by other MTurk workers. Specifically, we explained that these workers had been instructed to write about a movie they liked, and to write a few sentences that might persuade others to also watch the movie. Further, participants read that some movie reviews were better than others, and that we wanted to award a $5 bonus to workers who had done a good job. Because we were unable to award a $5 bonus to all workers who had written movie reviews, we asked participants to read ten reviews and to rate for each review whether they thought the worker who had written the review deserved the $5 bonus for this work (1 = definitely not; 7 = definitely yes). Participants learned that workers whose reviews many participants found to be worthy of a bonus would receive $5. We used the average of the ten ratings as our measure of acquiescence ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.32$, range 1.00–7.00, $\alpha = .91$). The display order of the habitual trust measure and the acquiescence measure was counterbalanced across participants.

8.2 | Results

As expected, participants' habitual trust correlated (r = .127) marginally significantly with their agreement with bonus payments for other workers. In a regression, habitual trust showed a marginally significantly relation to agreement with bonus payments, β = .127, SE = 0.107, $t(198)$ = 1.805, p = .073, 95% CI[−0.012, 0.265]. Although we expected a stronger, conventionally significant relation, we take this finding as tentative evidence supporting our hypothesis.

8.3 | Discussion

The findings of Study 3 suggest, albeit marginally significantly, that habitual trust might relate to acquiescent responding even when the participant is aware that their response is consequential for other people. Thus, simply making people aware of the consequences of their answers might not be enough to fully prevent acquiescence or its relation with habitual trust.

One may wonder whether acquiescence in this study can be inferred from increased agreement with the bonus payment, as participants' task was to discriminate between more or less deserving reviews. Indeed, 'true' responses free of acquiescence should produce lower overall means, as some reviews should be rated as very low on the deservingness scale, whereas other reviews should be rated as very high on this scale. However, acquiescence would produce overall higher means on the scale (as we observe), because participants would test the hypothesis that a review is deserving, as this is the direction in which the question is posed. Acquiescence thus means to agree with such questions more than warranted by one's 'true' response, thereby leading to higher overall means. Therefore, we infer acquiescence from an overall agreement in this study, and not from responses that discriminate maximally between reviews.

We next test a special case of acquiescence, namely whether people who are trusting are more likely to acquiesce to default settings.

9 | STUDY 4

Study 4 tested whether habitual trust influences acquiescence when the outcome of the response is consequential for the self in the context of staying with a default option (versus switching to an alternative) as a measure of acquiescence. Research has shown, in a variety of contexts, that people tend to choose pre-set options, for instance if they feel that the choice architect endorses the default option (Jachimowicz et al., 2019). This explanation seems relevant in the context of individual differences in habitual trust. Someone high in habitual trust would presumably also trust a given choice architect and show acquiescence by following endorsed choices. Thus, we expect that habitual trust relates to staying with a default option as a behavioural measure of acquiescence that manifests in agreeing to a pre-chosen option.

9.1 | Method

9.1.1 | Participants and design

Two-hundred and eighteen (107 female, M_{age} = 36.98; SD = 10.83) took part in the study via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) in exchange for $0.15.

9.1.2 | Materials and procedure

First, to measure habitual trust, participants responded to the general trust scale developed by Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994). This scale consists of six items measuring habitual trust (e.g. 'Most people are trustworthy', M = 3.42, SD = 0.86, range 1.00–5.00, Cronbach's α = .90), from 1 = *strongly disagree* with 5 = *strongly agree*. We used this scale to vary the way in which we measure habitual trust across studies.

Second, we told participants that as part of this study, they would evaluate a print advertisement. We gave them the option to choose one of two ads to evaluate before actually seeing the ads. The two ads were simply identified with a number (i.e. ad number 392 and 576). We varied between-subjects which of the two ads was the default, and we subsequently collapsed across the two ad numbers. Specifically, participants read: 'By default, we ask you to view and evaluate Advertisement number 392 [576] from our Advertisement selection. However, if you prefer, you can also view and evaluate Advertisement number 576 [392]. You will only see the ad once you made a choice. What would you like to do?' Next, participants chose between 1 = *stay with the default ad number 392 [576]* and 2 = *switch to ad number 576 [392]*.

Note that participants needed to actively choose the default (or non-default) option, instead of choosing the default simply by not making a selection. Thereby, we precluded that ease of choice was responsible for the expected relation between habitual trust and default choice, as the choice for the default was just as effortful (i.e. making a selection) as the choice for the non-default. Thus, a relation between habitual trust and choice for the default would suggest that people who trust others also trust the (perceived) endorsement of the choice architect and therefore choose the default.

To maintain our cover story, participants were next shown a randomly selected ad (out of two possible options) for Snickers Bars. They were then asked to briefly describe their thoughts about the ad in an open-ended essay question.

9.2 | Results

As expected, participants' habitual trust correlated (r = −.170) significantly with the choice of the default ad. In a logistic regression, habitual trust predicted choice of the default ad, Exp(β) = .595, 95% CI[0.395, 0.896], p = .013, R^2 = .047. Note that smaller values donate choice of the default, whereas larger values denote the choice to switch.

9.3 | Discussion

Study 4 shows that habitual trust is predictive of acquiescence in one of the strongest paradigms of choice architecture. The higher the level of habitual trust, the more likely it is that participants opt for the default option. By employing a binary choice paradigm, Study 4 furthermore shows that the relation of habitual trust and acquiescence found in Studies 1–3 holds for settings beyond Likert-type scales. Study 4 also uses a different habitual trust scale than Study 1 and Studies 2a–3, generalizing the finding for a third measure of habitual trust.

Study 5 further examines the generalizability by testing our hypothesis that the relation between habitual trust and acquiescence holds across different contexts. Because previous research shows that habitual trust is stable across various interaction contexts (Colquitt et al., 2007; Rotter, 1967), we expect that the relation between habitual trust and acquiescence holds when interacting with per se trustworthy versus untrustworthy others.

10 | STUDY 5

In Study 5, we measured binary agreement with various true-false statements presented in a quiz as our measure of behavioural acquiescence. In addition, we varied whether participants believed that the statement came from an ingroup versus outgroup member to test whether the relation between habitual trust and acquiescence holds across interaction partners that differ in their a priori trustworthiness. We expect that people who trust others agree with their statements both when the other person is per se more trustworthy (ingroup member) or less trustworthy (outgroup member).[2]

10.1 | Method

10.1.1 | Participants and design

We recruited 242 participants (102 female, 1 unspecified; $M_{age} = 24.52$, $SD = 4.75$) on the Campus of a German university in exchange for a chocolate bar or coffee voucher.

10.1.2 | Materials and procedure

Participants read 20 statements (e.g. 'The Australian Ayers Rock is longer than the Golden Gate Bridge') that were allegedly claimed to be true by a student.[3] Thus, each participant read 20 statements endorsed by one student. The name of the student was randomly chosen for each participant out of a pool of a total of 20 names to preclude any confounding effects due to using one particular name. To manipulate group membership (between subjects), half of the names were typical German names, and half were typical Arabic names. For each statement, participants decided whether to 'agree' or to 'not agree'. As a measure of acquiescence, we divided the number of agreed-with statements by the number of not agreed-with statements to account for any missing values. By using this measure, we infer acquiescence from the greater ratio of agreed-with statements. We expect that participants higher in habitual trust are more likely to trust the student's endorsement and thus to agree with the statements.

Afterward responding to the statements, participants rated how trustworthy they perceived each of the 20 names to be (0 = *not at all trustworthy*; 10 = *completely trustworthy*). As our measure of habitual trust, we used participants' rating of the respective name of the student who had claimed the statements that they had read. The other 19 ratings served as fillers. Thus, although all participants rated 20 names, we only used the one rating of the specific name they had seen as our habitual trust measure.

10.2 | Results

We expected that participants who perceived the target name as more trustworthy would also agree with a larger number of statements. We conducted a linear regression analysis predicting acquiescence from the habitual trust measure (centred; $M = 6.02$, $SD = 2.39$), target condition (−1 = Arabic name, 1 = German name) and their interaction. As expected, habitual trust had a main effect on acquiescence, $\beta = .149$, $SE = 0.061$, $t(212) = 2.117$, $p = .035$, 95%, ($r = .158$, $p = .020$), 95% CI[0.011, 0.299], confirming our expectations. The main effect of the target condition on acquiescence was not significant, $\beta = .028$, $SE = 0.060$ $t(212) = 0.395$, $p = .693$. No significant interaction between habitual trust and target condition on acquiescence emerged, $\beta = −.018$, $SE = 0.061$, $t(212) = −0.261)$, $p = .795$.[4]

As a check whether participants perceived differences between the Arabic and German names, we compared the mean trustworthiness ascribed to all the German names ($M = 6.60$, $SD = 1.79$) and all the Arabic names ($M = 5.53$, $SD = 1.99$). This comparison revealed that the German names were overall perceived as more trustworthy, $t(241) = 9.521$, $p < .001$, 95% CI[0.849, 1.291]. Note that this analysis took into account participants' ratings of the name they saw (this single rating serves as our measure of habitual trust), averaged with the ratings of the 19 filler names that they rated. The observed difference between German and Arabic names indicates that the communication context manipulation was effective and is in line with the finding

---

[2] Note that the primary analysis focused on the association between habitual trust and response bias. Testing for a moderation effect, we could have detected a difference in slopes of $\Delta\beta = .369$ with 80% power and $\alpha = .05$ given the present sample size. In line with the small-telescope approach, the given sample size would have allowed us to detect a difference in slopes of $\Delta\beta = .200$ with a power of 33% (Lakens et al. 2018; Simonsohn, 2015).

[3] In reality, all statements were true and we informed participants of this after the study.

[4] We also conducted the same analysis including only those participants who indicated that their nationality was German to ensure that the Arabic [German] names were outgroup [ingroup] names for them. This analysis excluded 43 participants. The results remain the same: habitual trust had a main effect on acquiescence, $\beta = .174$, $SE = 0.069$, $t(176) = 2.529$, $p = .012$. The main effect of target condition on acquiescence was not significant, $p = .822$. No significant interaction between habitual trust and target condition on acquiescence emerged, $p = .745$.
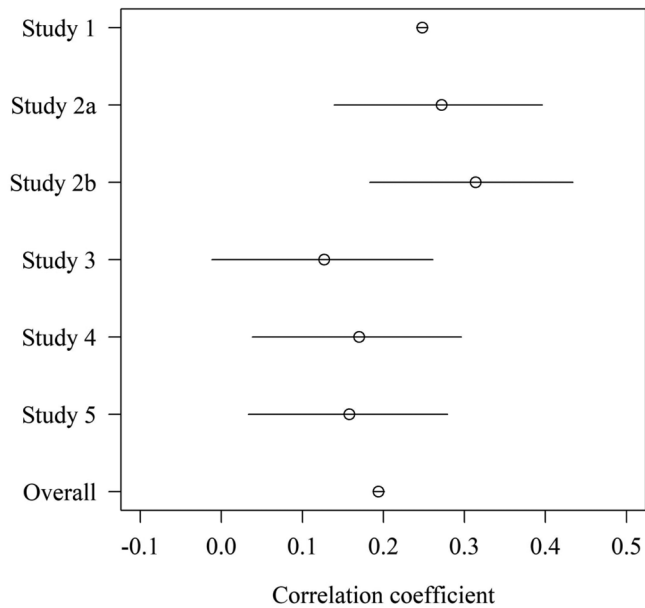
FIGURE 3 Forest plot of the correlation coefficients (with 95% confidence intervals) included in our meta-analysis

that mere group membership suffices to manipulate trustworthiness (Foddy et al., 2009).

10.3 | Discussion

The results of Study 5 show that the relationship of habitual trust and acquiescence holds when the statements to which participants responded had been endorsed by an ingroup (deemed more trustworthy) or by an outgroup (deemed less trustworthy). Thus, across different interaction partners, the more people trusted a particular partner, the more they acquiesced. Although both contexts differed in the level of perceived trustworthiness, participants' individual level of habitual trust predicted agreement across both contexts.

11 | META-ANALYSIS

In our studies, we find the same relation between habitual trust and acquiescence across a diverse set of measures (see Figure 3). This approach mirrors existing literature, which has employed a variety of measures to assess acquiescence and has not converged towards one singular measure of this response style. Nevertheless, to account for the potential heterogeneity of our measures of acquiescence, we performed a meta-analysis of the mean effect sizes (i.e. correlation coefficients) across all of our studies (Goh et al., 2016). We did not weight the effect sizes by sample sizes because the sample size of Study 1 is much larger than those of the other studies, such that weighting the effect sizes by sample size would distort the results. For the analysis, we z-transformed the correlation coefficients and transformed them back to Pearson correlation coefficients for presentation purposes. Across

the studies, habitual trust was a significant predictor of acquiescence $(M r = .194), p < .001.$

12 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

Habitual trust entails the motivation to affiliate with others (e.g. Evans & Revelle, 2008; Slepian et al., 2012) and the cognitive tendency to think in congruent terms (Kleiman et al., 2015; Mayo, 2015; Mayo et al., 2014; Posten & Mussweiler, 2013). Both a motivation to affiliate (Steinmetz & Posten, 2017) and a congruent thinking style should foster answering affirmatively to questions irrespective of the question content. Across six studies, we demonstrate that, indeed, people who are habitually trusting answer more affirmatively. Using four different measures of habitual trust, six studies consistently demonstrated that people who are habitually trusting show an acquiescent response bias. Habitual trust predicted people's acquiescent responding to questions addressing various aspects of life (Study 1), response scales as used in classic psychological questionnaires (Studies 2a and 2b) and when evaluating others' work determining their monetary outcomes (Study 3). Over and above response scales, individual levels of habitual trust also predicted the choice of default options (Study 4) and agreement in a forced-choice setting, in which participants could only agree or disagree (Study 5). The relation of habitual trust and acquiescence held across responses to ingroup or outgroup members (Study 5). Notably, the relation even showed in contexts that should be unaffected by social desirability concerns (Study 2b).

12.1 | Alternative explanations and limitations

Our approach of using a variety of acquiescence measures might have limitations. Specifically, the correlations of the habitual trust and acquiescence measures differ between our Studies 1–2b that use more traditional survey questions to assess acquiescence (rs between .248 and .314) and our Studies 3–5 that use more behavioural manifestations of acquiescence (rs between .127 and .170). Thus, the relation between habitual trust and acquiescence might be more pronounced (and thus potentially more problematic for researchers) who use survey batteries, whereas more behavioural measures might be less affected. The smaller correlations between habitual trust and such behavioural measures might stem from the fact that participants might have been aware of the consequences of their responses for others (Study 3) and for the self (Study 4). This awareness might have increased the motivation to respond accurately, which might reduce but not fully eliminate acquiescence. Such awareness of consequences might be reduced when people respond to survey questions. Future research could test whether instructions that highlight the importance of surveys for public policy or for research would reduce the relation between habitual trust and acquiescence.

One might speculate whether the relation between habitual trust and acquiescence is driven by an underlying relation between habitual trust and the content of the questions that we used to assess

acquiescence. Indeed, there might be some 'true' relation between habitual trust and the content of some questions that is not attributable to acquiescence, for example, on the interdependence subscale of the acquiescence measure in Studies 2a and 2b (Zeffane, 2017). Whereas there might be a 'true' relation between habitual trust and the content of some items in acquiescence measures, such a relation cannot explain our findings as a whole. For one, we measured acquiescence in a variety of ways across our studies. Specifically, in Studies 1–2b, we measured acquiescence as the responses to traditional survey questions (i.e. the WVS and the Singelis scale). It is unlikely that habitual trust relates to all the various concepts tested in the WVS or relates to interdependence and independence at the same time. For another, we used more behavioural measures of acquiescence in several studies that had no apparent overlap with habitual trust. For example, in Study 4, participants indicated their binary preference to stay with a default ad, without measuring any trust-related personality or values questions. In Study 5, we measured acquiescence as a binary choice between judging factual statements as true versus false. The measures in Studies 4 and 5 capture not a particular psychological content but a simple choice or judgement.

An alternative explanation for the observed correlation between habitual trust and acquiescence could be that this correlation is driven by trait agreeableness (Costa & McCrae, 2008). However, whereas agreeableness might well be related to acquiescence (Hibbing et al., 2019), the trust sub-facet of agreeableness could be one of the drivers of such a relation. With the exception of compliance, the other sub-scales of agreeableness (i.e. altruism, straightforwardness, modesty and tender-mindedness) seem less likely to correlate with the measures of acquiescence that we used. For example, someone high in modesty might show less acquiescence on the scale in Studies 2a and 2b that measures positive traits and behaviour, for fear of being immodest. Compliance has indeed been shown to correlate with acquiescence (measured as deference; Schuman & Presser, 1996). Because of this finding and our findings that habitual trust correlates with acquiescence, we would expect these two sub-facets of agreeableness to be the main drivers of an observed correlation between the entire agreeableness scale and an acquiescence measure. Thus, we focus on the sub-facet habitual trust instead of the entire agreeableness scale.

We base our hypothesis on motivational and cognitive mechanisms accompanying habitual trust that foster acquiescence. However, there might be more parsimonious explanations for our findings. First, perceiving a person as trustworthy often means also to perceive the person as similar to oneself (Farmer et al., 2014; Posten & Mussweiler, 2019). Similarity in turn leads to assimilation (Mussweiler, 2003), and thus, potentially, to affirmative answering. Second, trusting a person could induce halo effects (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977) by attributing generally positive characteristics to the counterpart, for instance being knowledgeable in a quiz (such as in Study 5). However, these alternative accounts would not predict a relation between habitual trust and acquiescence in low-trust contexts (e.g. outgroup interactions in Study 5), in which the question asker is neither similar to the self nor (presumably) perceived particularly positively. As we find that habitual trust correlates with acquiescence also when interacting with less trustwor-

thy others, these alternative accounts are unlikely to explain our findings.

One limitation of our findings is that we did not directly test the motivational and cognitive mechanisms we propose by which habitual trust influences acquiescence. However, on the basis of previous research, we expect that the motivational and cognitive consequences of habitual trust (e.g. Mayo, 2015) are also operant in the case of acquiescence. Future research should nevertheless determine under which circumstances motivational versus cognitive factors play a larger role in the relation between habitual trust and acquiescence.

12.2 | Implications and future directions

Much research has been done to identify, quantify and reduce acquiescent response biases (Krautz & Hoffmann, 2018). Many of these efforts are time-costly to administer (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001; Couch & Keniston, 1960). Other approaches require creating additional items, which incur potential problems caused by common method variance (Podsakoff, 2003), or are limited to knowledge-based items (Krautz & Hoffmann, 2018). Within these approaches, most research has focused on response biases that originate from cultural differences (Krautz & Hoffmann, 2018; Marin et al., 1992).

Unlike existing approaches, the present research focuses on the detection of individuals who are more likely to acquiesce. We show that habitual trust correlates with acquiescence within a given culture (Studies 2–5: US-based MTurk workers and German students) and controlling for country differences (Study 1). Thus, we investigate individual differences that relate to acquiescence over and beyond cultural differences. Notably, habitual trust can be easily and reliably assessed by using short scales that consist of fewer than ten items (e.g. Costa & McCrae, 2008; Evans & Revelle, 2008; Rotter, 1967). With such scales, researchers could identify individuals or populations that score high on habitual trust. By assessing an individual's or a population's habitual trust, one may then have an indication of when the use of––however imperfect––existing corrective measures against acquiescent responding might be especially necessary because the likelihood of acquiescent responding could be increased.

One may further speculate whether researchers should avoid signals of explicit trustworthiness in their studies and experiments. The participant recruitment process often capitalizes on trustworthiness cues, such as university logos and researcher titles, to increase participation rates. Although our studies do not test such an effect, one may wonder whether trustworthiness cues might, however, foster the researcher's perceived trustworthiness. Our results in Study 5 suggest that the more a researcher is perceived as trustworthy, the more participants might agree with their statements (and questions). Thus, future research could test whether recruitment materials that use trustworthy cues to attract participants increase acquiescence by increasing the perceived trustworthiness of the person asking the questions. If this is indeed the case, one implication would be to use trustworthiness cues in the recruitment flyers to increase participation rates, but to ensure that the actual questionnaire (e.g.

web page or paper questionnaire) is designed in a more neutral manner, without explicit trustworthiness cues, as a means to reduce acquiescence.

13 | CONCLUSIONS

The present research is one of the first to link specific personality traits to acquiescence. We demonstrate the relation between habitual trust and agreement across a wide spectrum of question-and-answer settings, such as traditional survey questions as well as more behavioural measures of acquiescence. By showing this broad relationship, the findings point to habitual trust as a previously overlooked factor relating to acquiescence.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

ETHICAL APPROVAL
The manuscript adheres to the APA ethics code as well as national ethics guidelines.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Data, materials and analyses are available on the open science framework (osf; osf.io/7fh5p/).

ORCID
Ann-Christin Posten https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0297-4274

REFERENCES
Arrow, K. (1974). *The limits of organization*. W. W. Norton.

Baumgartner, H., & Steenkamp, J.-B. E. M. (2001). Response styles in marketing research: A cross-national investigation. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *38*, 143–156. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.38.2.143.18840

Colquitt, J. A., Scott, B. A., & LePine, J. A. (2007). Trust, trustworthiness, and trust propensity: A meta-analytic test of their unique relationships with risk taking and job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *92*, 909–927. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.4.909

Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (2008). The revised NEO personality inventory (NEO-PI-R). In G. J. Boyle, G. Matthews, & D. H. Saklofske (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of personality theory and assessment* (Vol. 2, Personality measurement and testing, pp. 179–198). Sage Publications, Inc. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849200479.n9

Couch, A., & Keniston, K. (1960). Yeasayers and naysayers: Agreeing response set as a personality variable. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, *60*, 151–174. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0040372

De Vaus, D. (2013). *Surveys in social research*. Routledge.

Dolnicar, S., & Grün, B. (2007). Cross-cultural differences in survey response patterns. *International Marketing Review*, *24*, 127–143. https://doi.org/10.1108/02651330710741785

Evans, A. M., & Revelle, W. (2008). Survey and behavioral measurements of interpersonal trust. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *42*, 1585–1593. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2008.07.011

Farmer, H., McKay, R., & Tsakiris, M. (2014). Trust in me: Trustworthy others are seen as more physically similar to the self. *Psychological Science*, *25*, 290–292. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797613494852

Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Lang, A. G., & Buchner, A. (2007). G*Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences. *Behavior Research Methods*, *39*, 175–191. https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03193146

Fisher, R. J. (1993). Social desirability bias and the validity of indirect questioning. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *20*, 303–315. https://doi.org/10.1086/209351

Foddy, M., Platow, M. J., & Yamagishi, T. (2009). Group-based trust in strangers: The role of stereotypes and expectations. *Psychological Science*, *20*, 419–422. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2009.02312.x

Fukuyama, F. (1995). *Trust: The social virtues and the creation of prosperity*. Free Press.

Goh, J. X., Hall, J. A., & Rosenthal, R. (2016). Mini meta-analysis of your own studies: Some arguments on why and a primer on how. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *10*(10), 535–549. https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12267

Haerpfer, C., Inglehart, R., Moreno, A., Welzel, C., Kizilova, K., Diez-Medrano, J., Lagos, M., Norris, P., Ponarin, E., Puranen, B. (Eds.). (2020). *World values survey: Round seven—country-pooled datafile*. JD Systems Institute & WVSA Secretariat. https://doi.org/10.14281/18241.13

Helm, A. (2004). Cynics and skeptics: Consumer dispositional trust. *Advances in Consumer Research*, *31*, 345–351.

van Herk, H., Poortinga, Y. H., & Verhallen, T. M. M. (2004). Response styles in rating scales: Evidence of method bias in data from six EU countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *35*, 346–360. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022104264126

Hibbing, M. V., Cawvey, M., Deol, R., Bloeser, A. J., & Mondak, J. J. (2019). The relationship between personality and response patterns on public opinion surveys: The Big Five, extreme response style, and acquiescence response style. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, *31*, 161–177. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edx005

Hinz, A., Michalski, D., Schwarz, R., & Herzberg, P. Y. (2007). The acquiescence effect in responding to a questionnaire. *GMS Psycho-Social Medicine*, *4*, Doc07.

Hoffmann, S., Mai, R., & Cristescu, A. (2013). Do culture-dependent response styles distort substantial relationships? *International Business Review*, *22*, 814–827. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2013.01.008

Inglehart, R., Haerpfer, C., Moreno, A., Welzel, C., Kizilova, K., Diez-Medrano, J., et al. (Eds.). (2014). *World values survey: Round six—country-pooled datafile version*. JD Systems Institute. http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp

Jachimowicz, J. M., Duncan, S., Weber, E. U., & Johnson, E. J. (2019). When and why defaults influence decisions: A meta-analysis of default effects. *Behavioural Public Policy*, *3*, 159–186. https://doi.org/10.1017/bpp.2018.43

Johnson, T., Kulesa, P., Cho, Y. I., & Shavitt, S. (2005). The relation between culture and response styles: Evidence from 19 countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *36*, 264–277. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022104272905

Kleiman, T., Sher, N., Elster, A., & Mayo, R. (2015). Accessibility is a matter of trust: Dispositional and contextual distrust blocks accessibility effects. *Cognition*, *142*, 333–344. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2015.06.001

Krautz, C., & Hoffmann, S. (2018). Cross-cultural application of a practice-oriented acquiescence measure. *International Marketing Review*, https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-03-2018-0091. https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/10.1108/IMR-03-2018-0091

Kuru, O., & Pasek, J. (2016). Improving social media measurement in surveys: Avoiding acquiescence bias in Facebook research. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *57*, 82–92. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.12.008

Lakens, D., Scheel, A. M., & Isager, P. M. (2018). Equivalence testing for psychological research: A tutorial. *Advances in Methods and*

Practices in Psychological Science, 1, 259–269. https://doi.org/10.1177/2515245918770963

Marin, G., Gamba, R. J., & Marin, B. V. (1992). Extreme response style and acquiescence among Hispanics: The role of acculturation and education. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 23, 498–509.

Mayo, R. (2015). Cognition is a matter of trust: Distrust tunes cognitive processes. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 26, 283–327. https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2015.1117249

Mayo, R., Alfasi, D., & Schwarz, N. (2014). Distrust and the positive test heuristic: Dispositional and situated social distrust improves performance on the Wason Rule Discovery Task. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 143, 985–990. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035127

Mussweiler, T. (2003). Comparison processes in social judgment: Mechanisms and consequences. *Psychological Review*, 110, 472–489. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.110.3.472

Narayan, S., & Krosnick, J. A. (1996). Education moderates some response effects in attitude measurement. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 60, 58–88. https://doi.org/10.1086/297739

Nisbett, R. E., & Wilson, T. D. (1977). The halo effect: Evidence for unconscious alteration of judgments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 35, 250–256. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.35.4.250

Olson, K., & Bilgen, I. (2011). The role of interviewer experience on acquiescence. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 75, 99–114. https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfq067

Paulhus, D. L. (1991). Measurement and control of response bias. In J. P. Robinson, P. R. Shaver, & L. S. Wrightsman (Eds.), *Measures of personality and social psychological attitudes* (pp. 17–59). Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-590241-0.50006-X

Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 885, 10–1037.

Posten, A.-C., & Gino, F. (2021). How trust and distrust shape perception and memory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000269, http://doi.apa.org/getdoi.cfm?doi=10.1037/pspa0000269

Posten, A.-C., & Mussweiler, T. (2013). When distrust frees your mind: The stereotype-reducing effects of distrust. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 105, 567–584. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033170

Posten, A.-C., & Mussweiler, T. (2019). Egocentric foundations of trust. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 84, 103820. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2019.103820

Posten, A.-C., & Steinmetz, J. (2018). Temperatur und Zustimmung—ein bisher unbekannter Zusammenhang: Einblicke für Praxis und Forschung. *Praxis der Rechtspsychologie*, 28, 137–152.

Rotter, J. B. (1967). A new scale for the measurement of interpersonal trust1. *Journal of Personality*, 35, 651–665. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1967.tb01454.x

Schul, Y., Mayo, R., & Burnstein, E. (2008). The value of distrust. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 1293–1302. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2008.05.003

Schuman, H., & Presser, S. (1996). *Questions and answers in attitude surveys: Experiments on question form, wording, and context.* Sage.

Schwarz, N. (1999). Self-reports how the question shape the answer. *American Psychologist*, 54, 93–105. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.54.2.93

Simonsohn, U. (2015). Small telescopes: Detectability and the evaluation of replication results. *Psychological Science*, 26, 559–569. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797614567341

Singelis, T. M. (1994). The measurement of independent and interdependent self-construals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20, 580–591. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167294205014

Singelis, T. M., Bond, M. H., Sharkey, W. F., & Lai, C. S. Y. (1999). Unpackaging culture's influence on self-esteem and embarrassability: The role of self-construals. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 30, 315–341. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022199030003003

Slepian, M. L., Young, S. G., Rule, N. O., Weisbuch, M., & Ambady, N. (2012). Embodied impression formation: Social judgments and motor cues to approach and avoidance. *Social Cognition*, 30, 232–240. https://doi.org/10.1521/soco.2012.30.2.232

Smith, P. B. (2004). Acquiescent response bias as an aspect of cultural communication style. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 35, 50–61. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022103260380

Steinmetz, J., & Posten, A.-C. (2017). Physical temperature affects response behavior. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 70, 294–300. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2016.12.001

Winkler, J. D., Kanouse, D. E., & Ware, J. E. (1982). Controlling for acquiescence response set in scale development. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 67, 555–561. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.67.5.555

Yamagishi, T., & Yamagishi, M. (1994). Trust and commitment in the United States and Japan. *Motivation and Emotion*, 18, 129–166. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02249397

Zeffane, R. (2017). Gender, individualism–collectivism and individuals' propensity to trust: A comparative exploratory study. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2017.57

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found in the online version of the article at the publisher's website.