

Consuming Objectification and Accepting Inequality

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Poster Session link:

<https://meet.google.com/jbo-bpmp-byu>

1. Introduction

- Objectification: seeing, portraying or treating people as objects, that can be owned or used (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Nussbaum, 1995)
- Objectifying messages are omnipresent in marketing and ever more prevalent (e.g., Ward, 2016).



- The systematic exposure to such objectifying messages:



Induces consumers to objectification of other people (e.g., Karsay, Matthes, Platzer, & Plinke, 2018)



Reduces their feelings of empathy for others (e.g. Wright & Tokunaga, 2016)

- Empathy is key in moral judgements regarding inequality



People's tolerance towards inequality increases when feelings of empathy reduces (Goudarzi, Pliskin, Jost, & Knowles, 2020).

- To implement policies to reduce inequality citizens should be receptive to them (Cheng, Chan, & Yeung, 2019; Hennes, Nam, Stern, & Jost, 2012).

4. Results

Study 1. Correlational data

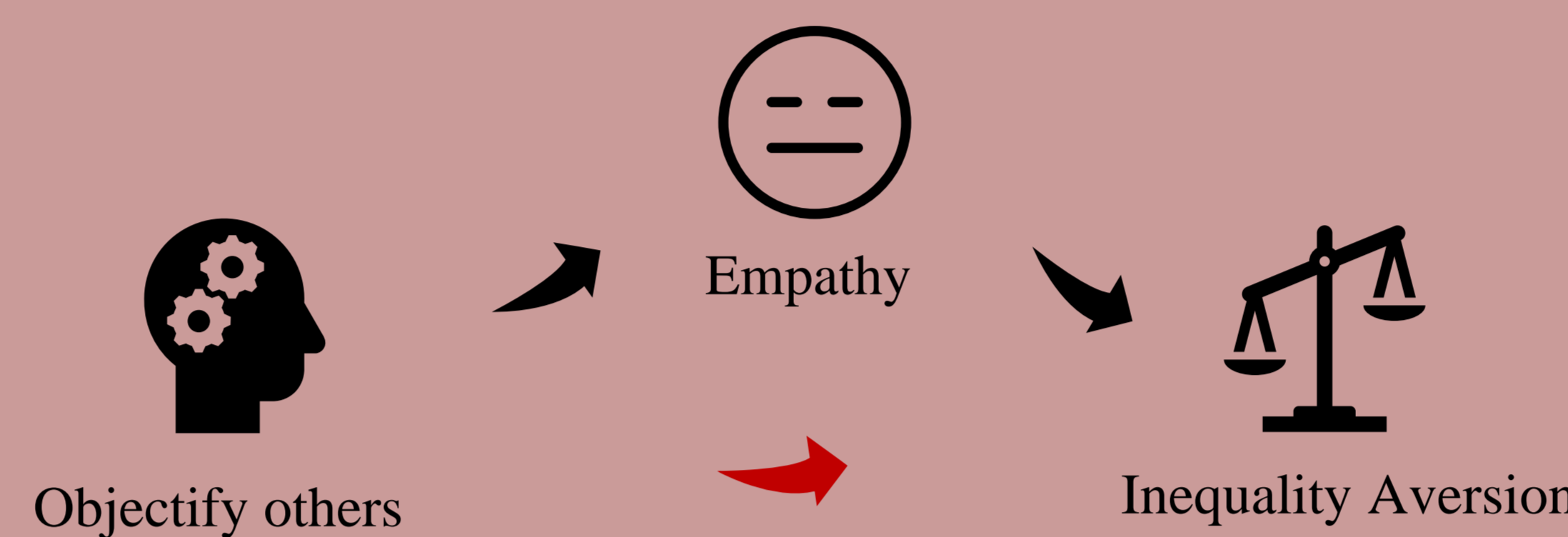
- Participants with larger tendency to objectify women (from now on Objectification) showed lower levels of Inequality Aversion and Empathy.
- Mediation analysis suggests that empathy might mediate the effect.

rho	Inequality Aversion	Empathy
p value	.68	1
Empathy	< .0001	
Objectification	-.17	-.14
	.002	.01

Spearman's rank correlation

Path a:

$$b = -.16, p = .005$$

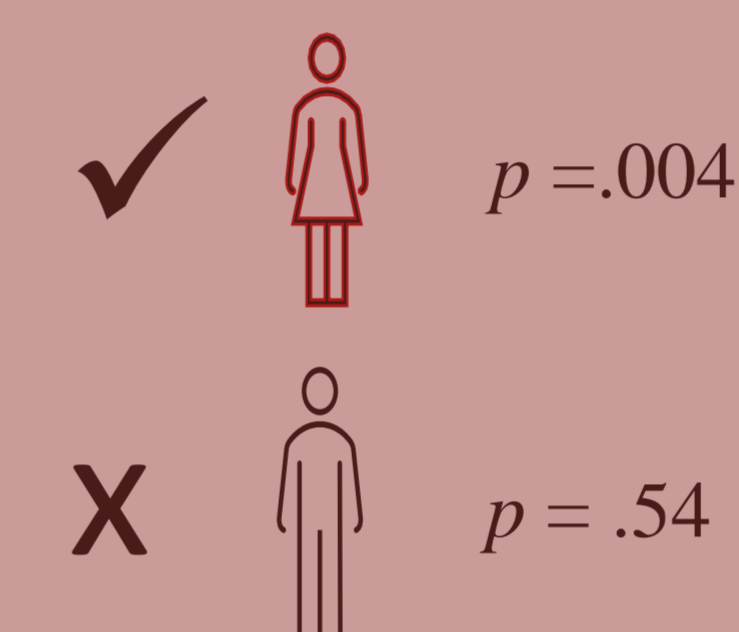


Path b:

$$b = .65, p < .0001$$

indirect effect = CI [-0.169, -0.031]

Pretest: Women in the objectification condition objectified other people compared with those in the control condition ($p = .004$). However, this was not the case for male participants ($p = .54$). This difference by genders is consistent with previous research (Gervais, Holland, & Dodd, 2013)

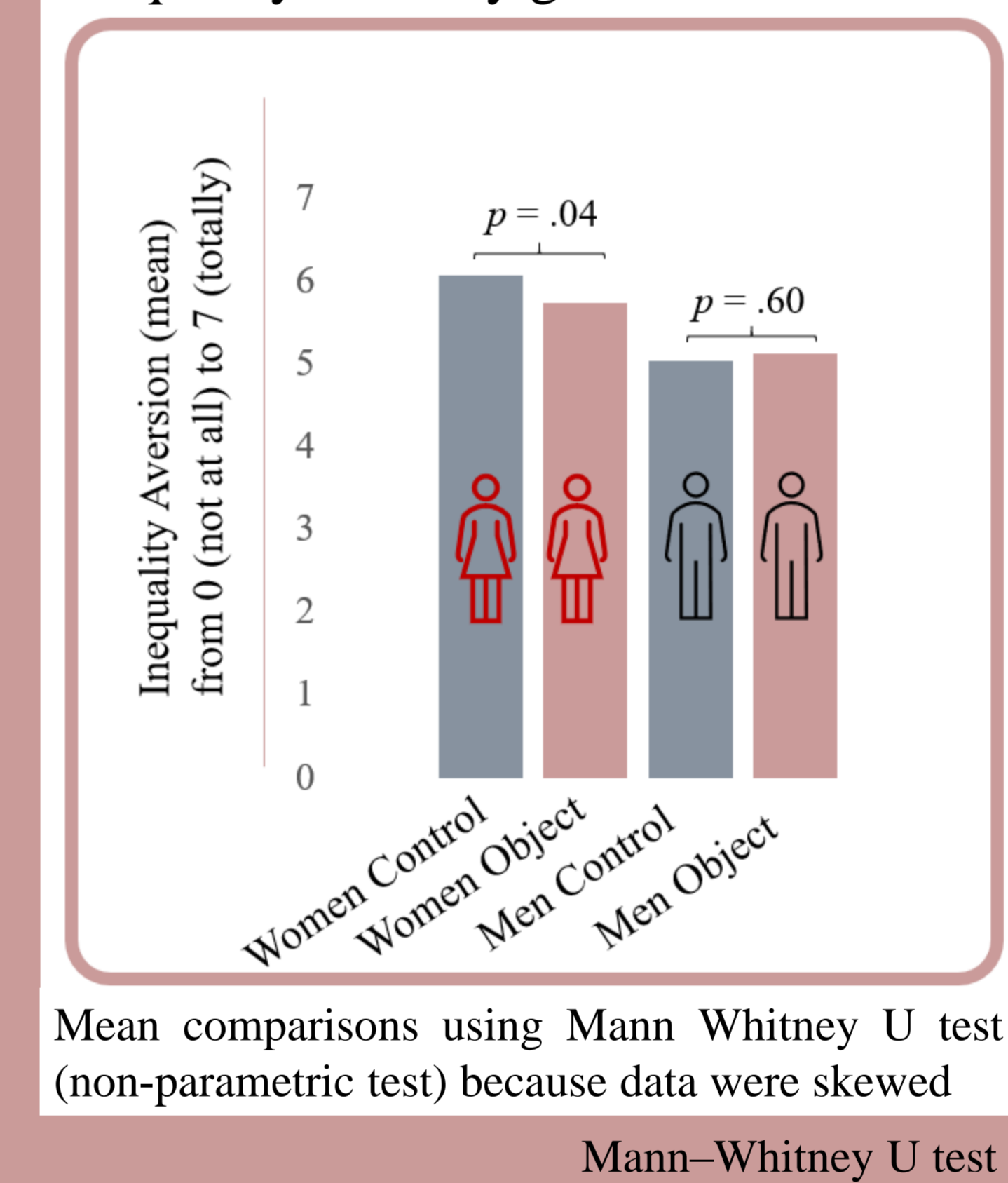


Study 2. Causal effect (preferences) and the role of Empathy as a mediator

Consistent with our hypothesis and pre-test:

- Women that previously objectified other people felt less disturbed by inequalities than those in the control condition ($p = .04$).
- Males showed no difference between conditions ($p = .60$).

Inequality avers.by geder and condition



Mean comparisons using Mann Whitney U test (non-parametric test) because data were skewed
Mann-Whitney U test

Mediation analysis only with **female participants** (n = 193):

- Empathy might mediate the effect

$$b = -0.47, p = .05$$



Objectify others



Empathy

$$b = .65, p < .0001$$



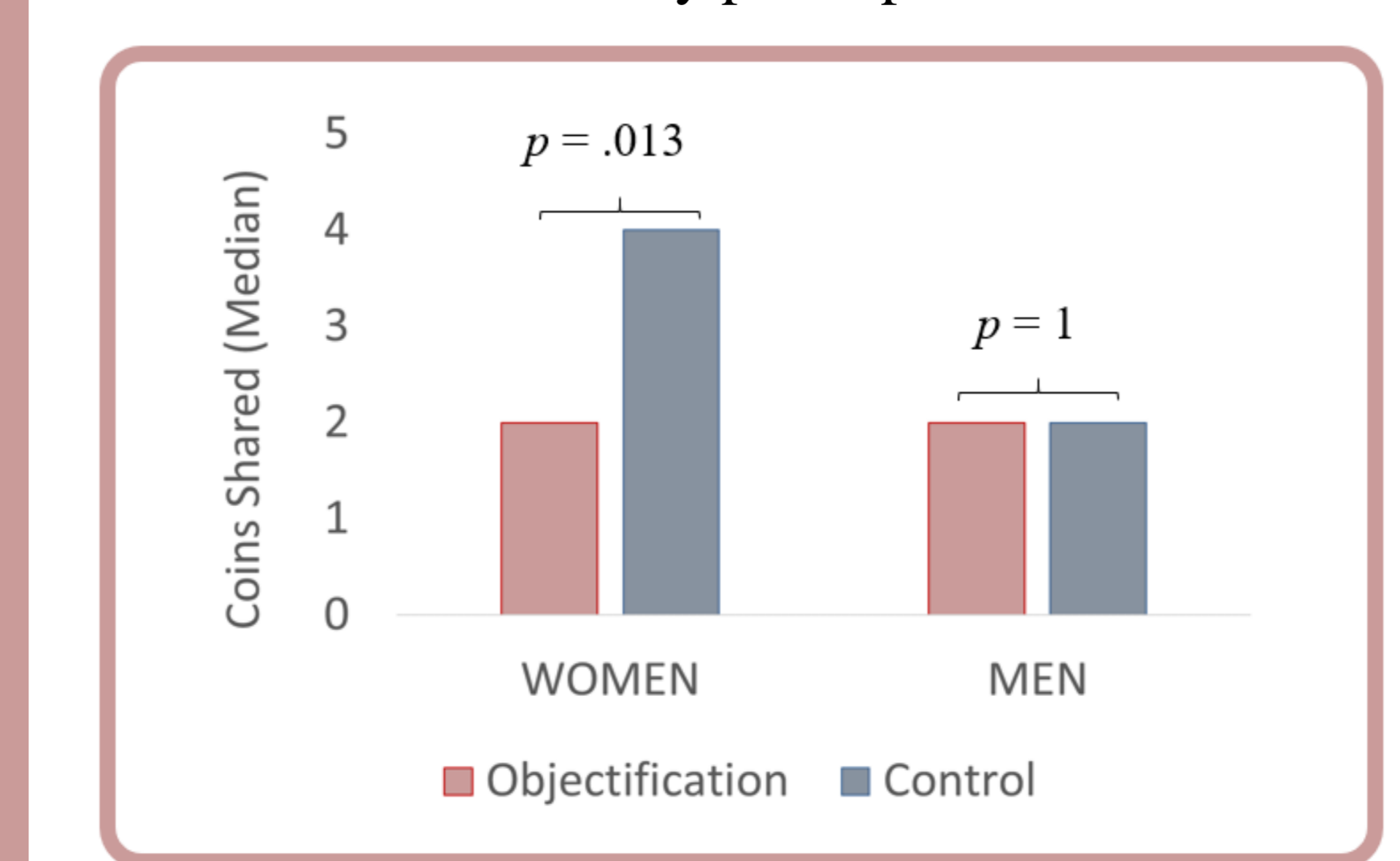
Inequality Aversion

c (total effect) = 95% CI [-.27, -.05]

Indirect effect = 95% CI [-0.30, -0.014]

Study 3. Causal effect (consequential)

Coins shared in the DG by participants and conditions



Quantile regressions (q50)

Consistent with our hypothesis and pre-test:

- Women that previously objectified other people showed less inequality aversion in future interactions.

Quantile regression for women participants (q50): $b = -2, SE = .79, p = .013, 95\%$ bootstrapped (5.000) CI [-3.56, -0.44].

We compare medians because there are concentration of values in 0 and 5.

5. Discussion

Conclusions of this paper:

- Objectify others reduces inequality aversion.
- This effect could be mediated by reduced feelings of empathy.

Implications:

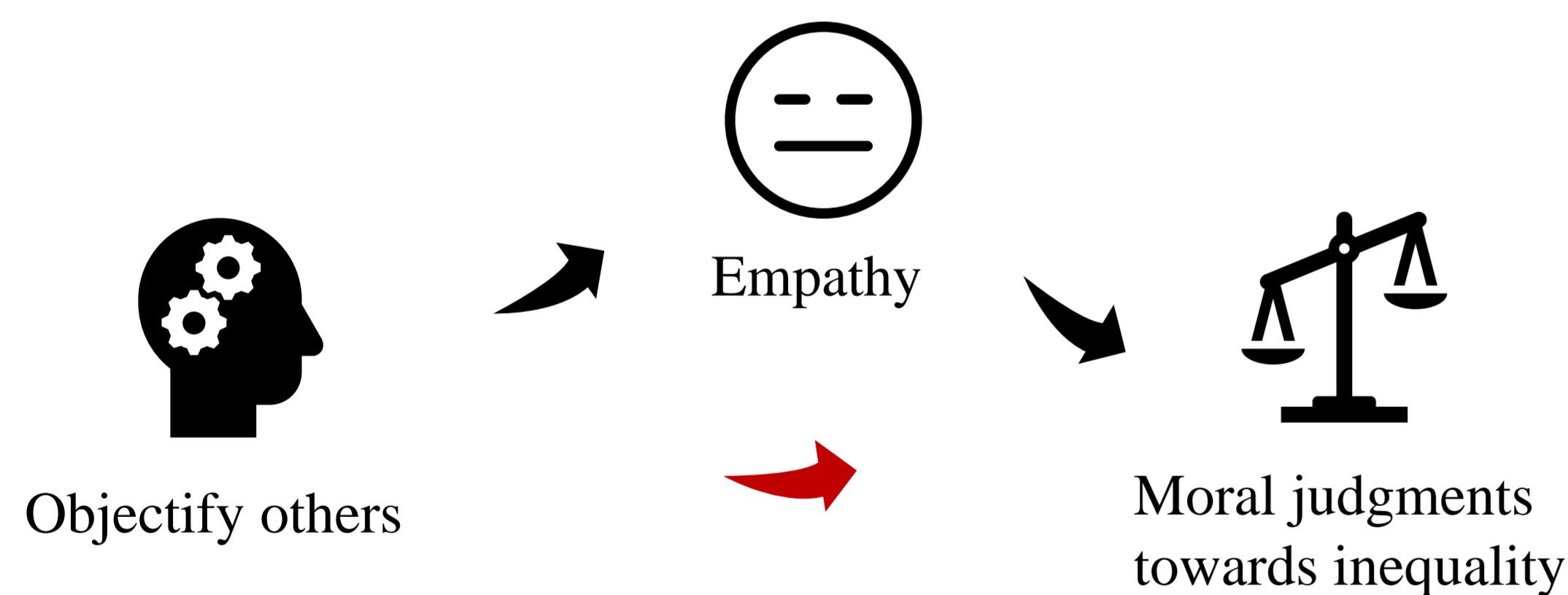
Large economic inequalities are growing in most parts of the world (Alavedo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, & Zucman, 2018)

Large economic inequalities harm people's health and wellbeing (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015).

The results of this paper suggest that policies and actions aiming to reduce objectification in marketing are desirable.

2. Hypotheses of this paper:

- Objectify others decreases inequality aversion
- this relationship is mediated by decreased feelings of empathy with others.



3. Methods

Study 1 (online, n = 313, 51% women), with correlational data we study the relationship between objectification and inequality aversion (self-reported). We test empathy as a mediator.

Studies 2 and 3 examine the causal effect of objectification on inequality aversion. **Pre-test** (online, n = 247, 52% women): we verify whether our manipulation induces participants to objectify other people.

Study 2 (online, n = 337, 57% women): after the manipulation, we measure participants' inequality aversion and empathy as in Study 1 (self-reported).

Study 3 (laboratory, n = 131, 56% women): after the manipulation, participants play the dictator game as a measure of inequality aversion (coins shared).

6. References

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Pictures:

- <https://www.pexels.com/es-es/foto/actitud-adulto-atractivo-bonita-982585/>
- <https://www.pexels.com/es-es/foto/abdominales-actitud-adentro-blanco-y-negro-1942533/>

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