

Introduction

Experimental manipulations have been effective at reducing attitudes toward violence (Nunes et al., 2022). However, some research found that this was true only for participants low in trait-aggressiveness (Cárdaba et al., 2016). These manipulations were intuitive, in the sense that they presented negative information about violence. A paradoxical thinking approach (Hameiri et al., 2014, 2018), in which exaggerated pro-violence statements are presented, may be more effective at reducing attitudes toward violence with people higher in trait-aggressiveness.

Current Studies

- We looked at intuitive and paradoxical manipulations.

Methods

Participants

Intuitive Manipulation

- 160 male Canadian university students, mostly single and White, mean age of 19.8 years

Paradoxical Manipulation

- 228 male Canadian university students, mostly single and White, mean age of 19.8 years

Measures

- Physical Aggression Scale of the Aggression Questionnaire (PA-AQ; Buss & Perry, 1992)
- Evaluation of Violence Questionnaire (EVQ; Nunes et al., 2021)

Procedure

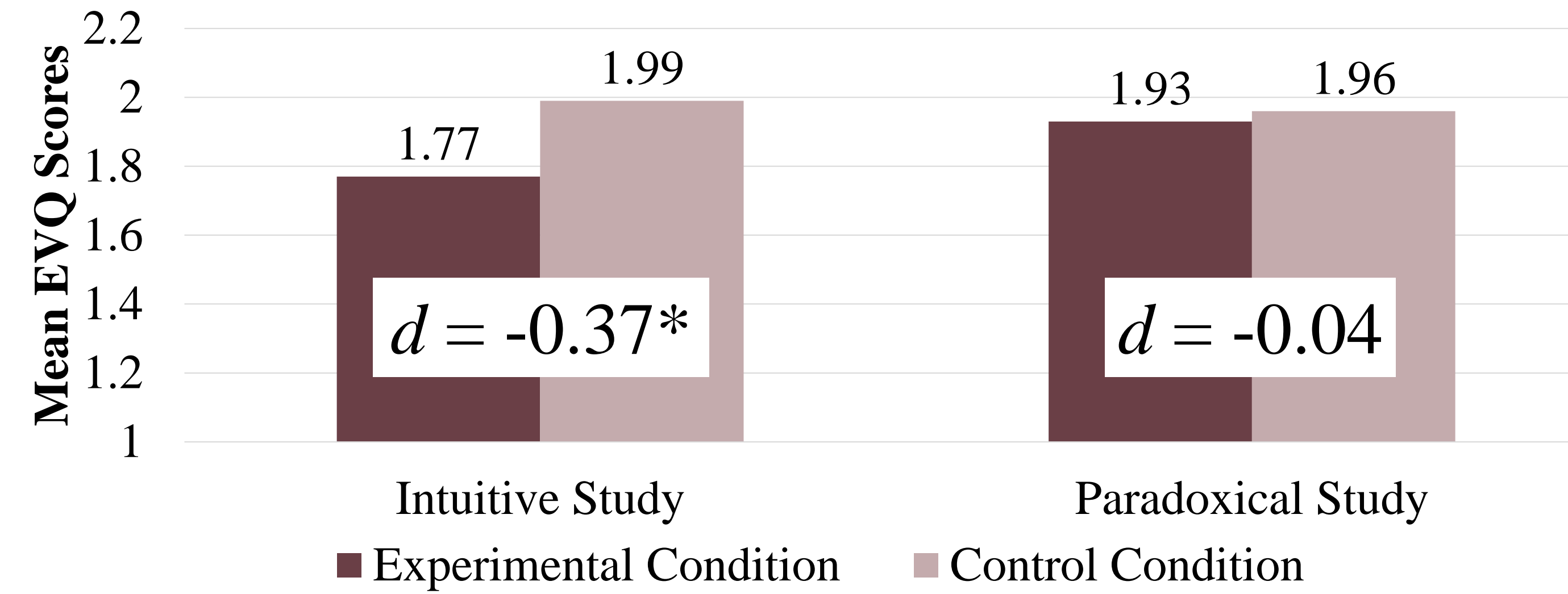
- Online studies
- Demographics Questionnaire → PA-AQ → Random assignment to conditions → EVQ → Attention Check
 - Intuitive manipulation: Participants viewed photos and information presenting the negative impacts of violence.
 - Control condition: Participants viewed photos and information about the Grand Canyon.
 - Paradoxical manipulation: Participants viewed mock Tweets presenting extreme pro-violence statements.
 - Control condition: Participants viewed mock Tweets about the Grand Canyon.

Results

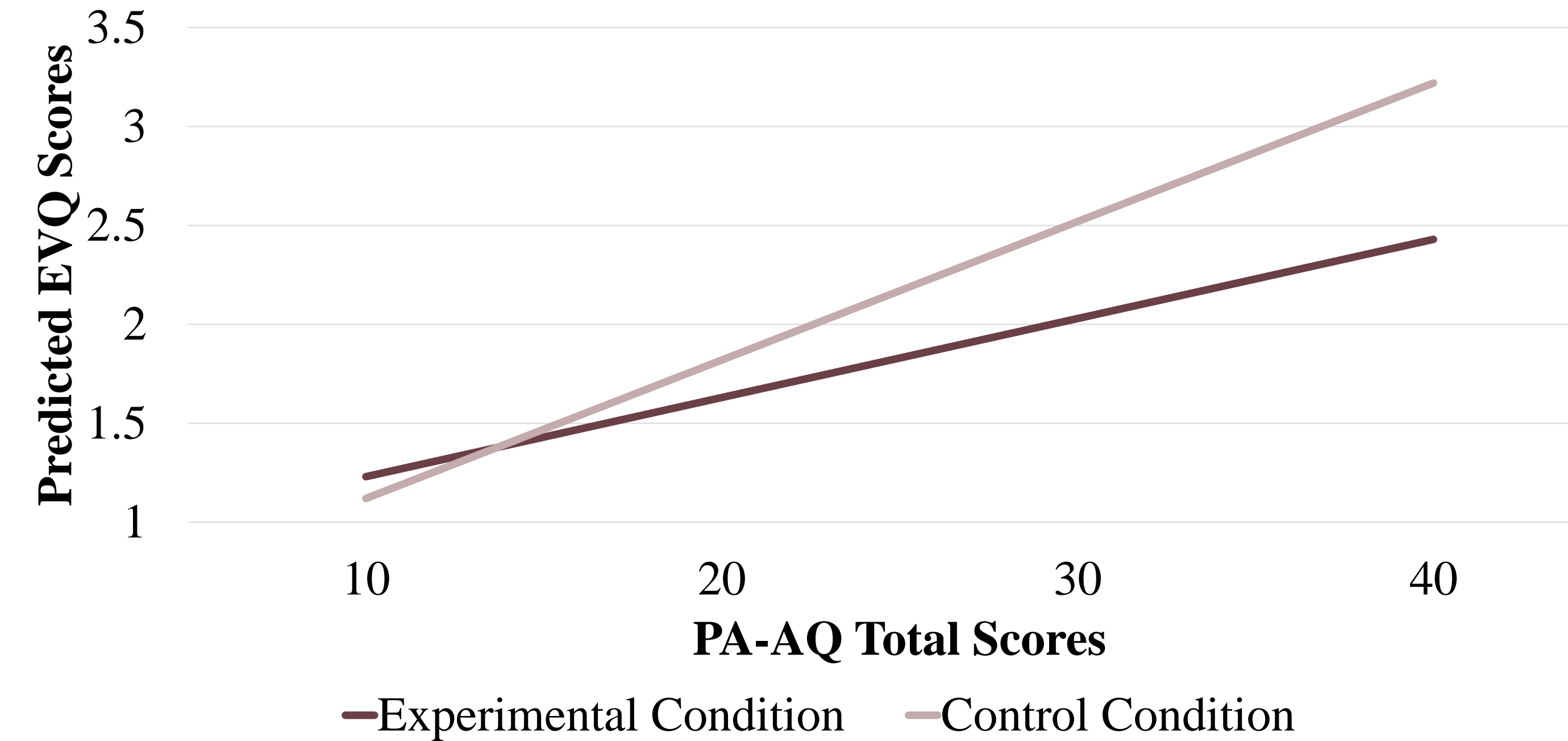
Analyses

- Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted on condition and EVQ total scores to determine if manipulations decreased evaluative attitudes toward violence.
- Hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to determine if trait-aggressiveness moderated EVQ total scores.

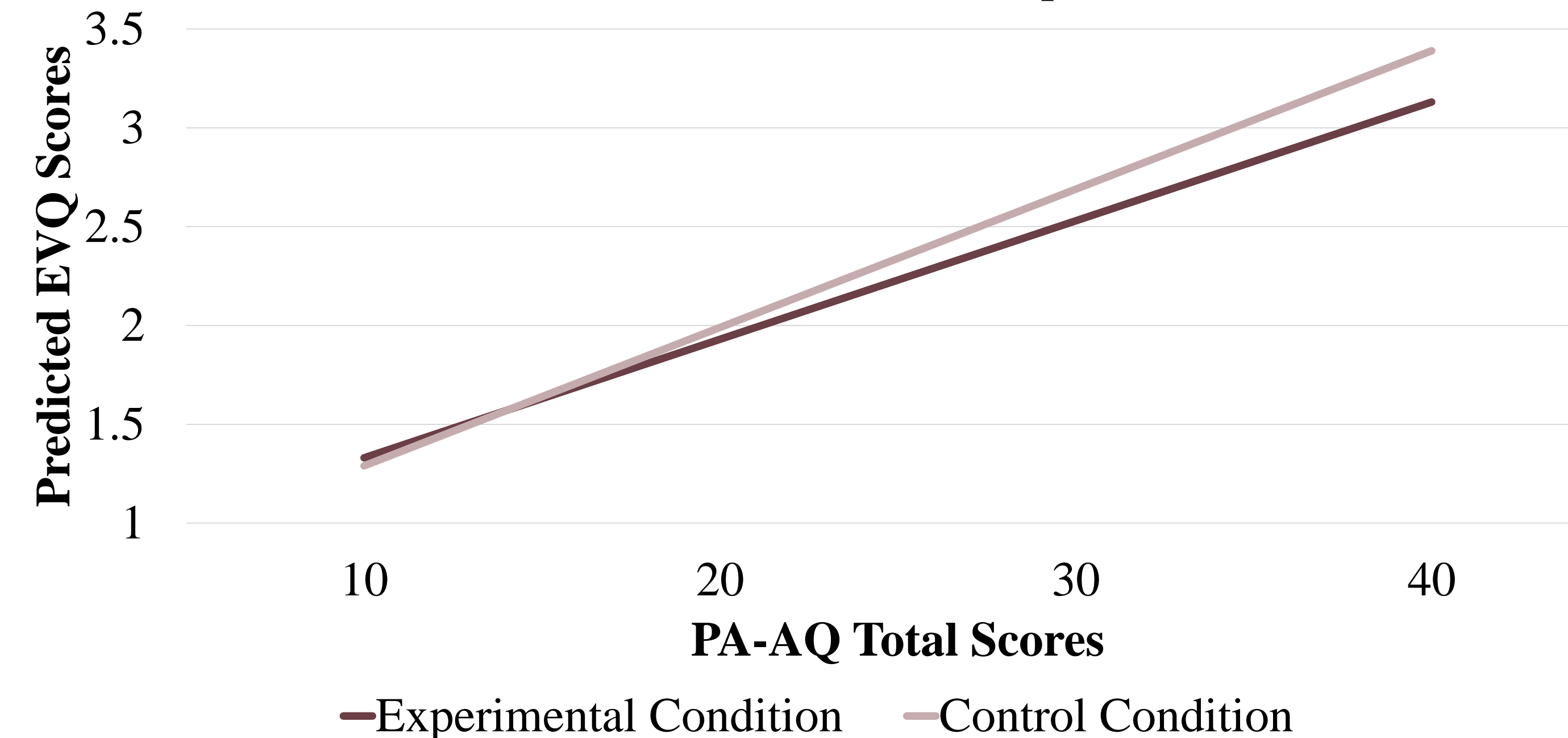
Effect of Manipulations on Evaluative Attitudes Toward Violence (EVQ)



Predicted EVQ Total Score Values by PA-AQ Total Scores and Condition (Intuitive Manipulation)



Predicted EVQ Total Score Values by PA-AQ Total Scores and Condition (Paradoxical Manipulation)



Results (cont.) and Discussion

Intuitive Manipulation

- Effective overall at making evaluative attitudes toward violence more negative ($d = -0.37$).
- The model including the interaction between condition and trait-aggressiveness was significant ($\Delta R^2 = .020, p = .020$), indicating that trait-aggressiveness did moderate the effect of condition on evaluative attitudes toward violence.
- Findings are consistent with those of Nunes and colleagues (2022), but opposite of those of Cárdbaba and colleagues (2016). This could be because of...
 - low PA-AQ scores.
 - differences in manipulation approach.
- Future research should use a population with more diverse trait-aggressiveness scores, use a longitudinal design, and further explore explanations for the conflict between the current findings and those of Cárdbaba and colleagues (2016).

Paradoxical Manipulation

- Not effective overall at making evaluative attitudes toward violence more negative ($d = -0.04$).
- The model including the interaction between condition and trait-aggressiveness was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .003, p = .34$), indicating that trait-aggressiveness did not moderate the effect of condition on evaluative attitudes toward violence.
- Findings conflict with those of Hameiri and colleagues (2018). This could be because of...
 - low PA-AQ scores.
 - differences in media presented to participants.
 - level of investment from participants.
 - differences in research design.
- Future research should incorporate videos in the manipulation, use a population with a more direct attachment to the manipulation, and use a multi-wave longitudinal design.

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Hawthorn, D. M. L., Moller, S. A., Pedneault, C. I., & Nunes, K. L. (2023, June 23-25). *The effects of intuitive and paradoxical manipulations on evaluative attitudes toward violence* [Poster presentation]. 5th North American Correctional and Criminal Justice Psychology Conference (N5), Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Abstract

In two studies, we tested the effects of an intuitive message listing negative consequences of violence and a paradoxical manipulation presenting exaggerated pro-violence statements counterintuitively meant to make evaluative attitudes toward violence more negative. Cisgendered male students from Carleton University ($N = 160$ for the intuitive study; $N = 228$ for the paradoxical study) completed a measure of trait-aggression, were randomly assigned to either the experimental or the control conditions, and completed a measure of evaluative attitudes toward violence. The intuitive message made evaluative attitudes toward violence significantly more negative compared to the control message ($d = -0.37$, 95% CI [-0.68, -0.05]). The interaction between condition and trait-aggressiveness was significant ($(\Delta R^2 = .020$, $p = .020$), indicating that trait-aggressiveness was a moderator. In contrast, the paradoxical manipulation did not make evaluative attitudes toward violence significantly more negative compared to the control condition ($d = -0.04$, 95% CI [-0.30, 0.22]). Furthermore, the interaction between condition and trait-aggressiveness was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .003$, $p = .34$), indicating that trait-aggressiveness was not a moderator. These results suggest that the intuitive message is effective at making evaluative attitudes toward violence more negative, primarily for more aggressive men, whereas the paradoxical manipulation is not effective overall.

Keywords: attitudes, evaluative attitudes, cognition, violence, violent behaviour, intuitive manipulation, paradoxical manipulation, aggression, aggressiveness

References

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