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How Demographics Influence Self-Image

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Background

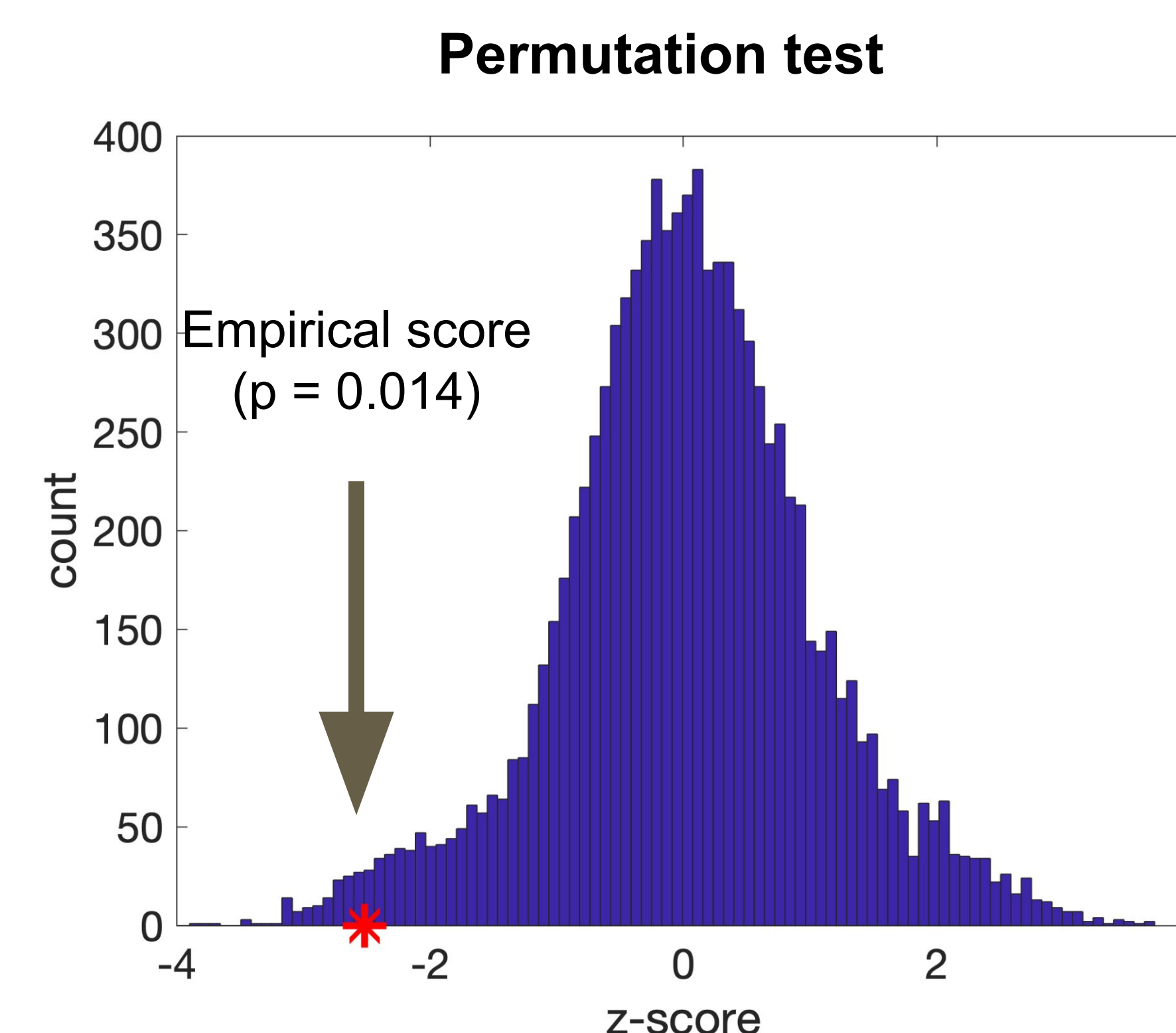
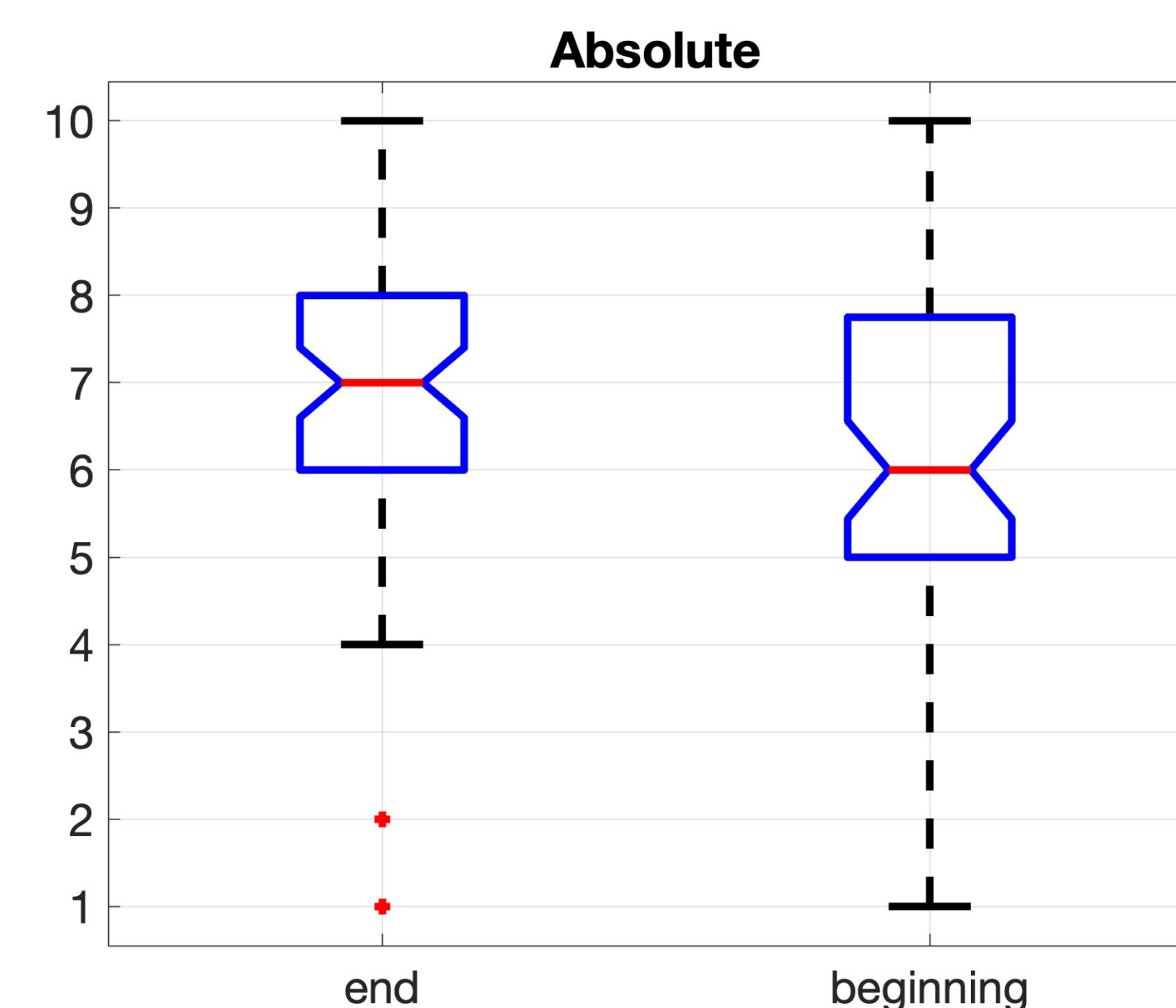
- Mixed results on whether placement of demographic questions impacts non-demographic survey questions (Teclaw et al., 2011)
- Priming with demographics can possibly induce stereotype threat (Hughes et al., 2016)
- Attractive celebrity images impact mood and body image (Brown, 2016)

Methods

- 120 participants rated the attractiveness of 10 celebrities and also rated their own attractiveness, both on a 10-point scale
- Participants were asked to rate their eyes, nose, cheekbones, smile, overall face, hair, abdomen, body shape, overall body, and overall attractiveness
- Demographics questions were either at the beginning or end of the survey (counterbalanced across subjects)

Results

- Significant difference between self-evaluation of attractiveness and ratings of celebrity attractiveness ($p < .00001^*$)
- Participants who had the beginning version of the survey rated their overall attractiveness significantly lower than participants who had the end version ($p = .006^*$)
- This effect was stronger in women than in men ($p = .001^*$ for women, Cohen's $d = -0.76$; $p = 0.377$ for men, Cohen's $d = 0.41$)
- *One-sided Wilcoxon Rank Sum Test (else two-sided)



Conclusions

- Priming participants with demographics influences them to rate themselves as less attractive
- Women may be more likely to be impacted by demographic priming
- Celebrities' attractiveness may influence one's ratings of self attractiveness

Future Directions

- Recruit more representative population
- Analyze different demographic groups

References

- Brown, Z., & Tiggemann, M. (2016). Attractive celebrity and peer images on instagram: Effect on women's mood and body image. *Body Image, 19*, 37–43. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2016.08.007>
- Hughes, J., Camden, A., & Yangchen, T. (2016). Rethinking and updating demographic questions: Guidance to improve descriptions of research samples. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research, 21*(3), 138–151. <https://doi.org/10.24839/2164-8204.jn21.3.138>
- Teclaw, R., Price, M., & Osatuke, K. (2011). Demographic question placement: Effect on item response rates and means of a veterans health administration survey. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 27*(3), 281–290. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-011-9249-y>