PERCEIVED SEXISM AND WELL-BEING:
Components and Concepts among Young Women in Japan's English-speaking Community

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1 Introduction

The current study examined the construct of perceived sexism and the mediating roles of individual differences in psychological responses to psychological well-being. This study targeted a specific group of young female individuals from higher education and socioeconomic status: the English-speaking community of Japan and Vietnam, whose higher education level and progressiveness led them to higher vulnerabilities to sexism (Wang & Sekiyama, 2024; Ishikawa et al., 2004; Walker, 1997).
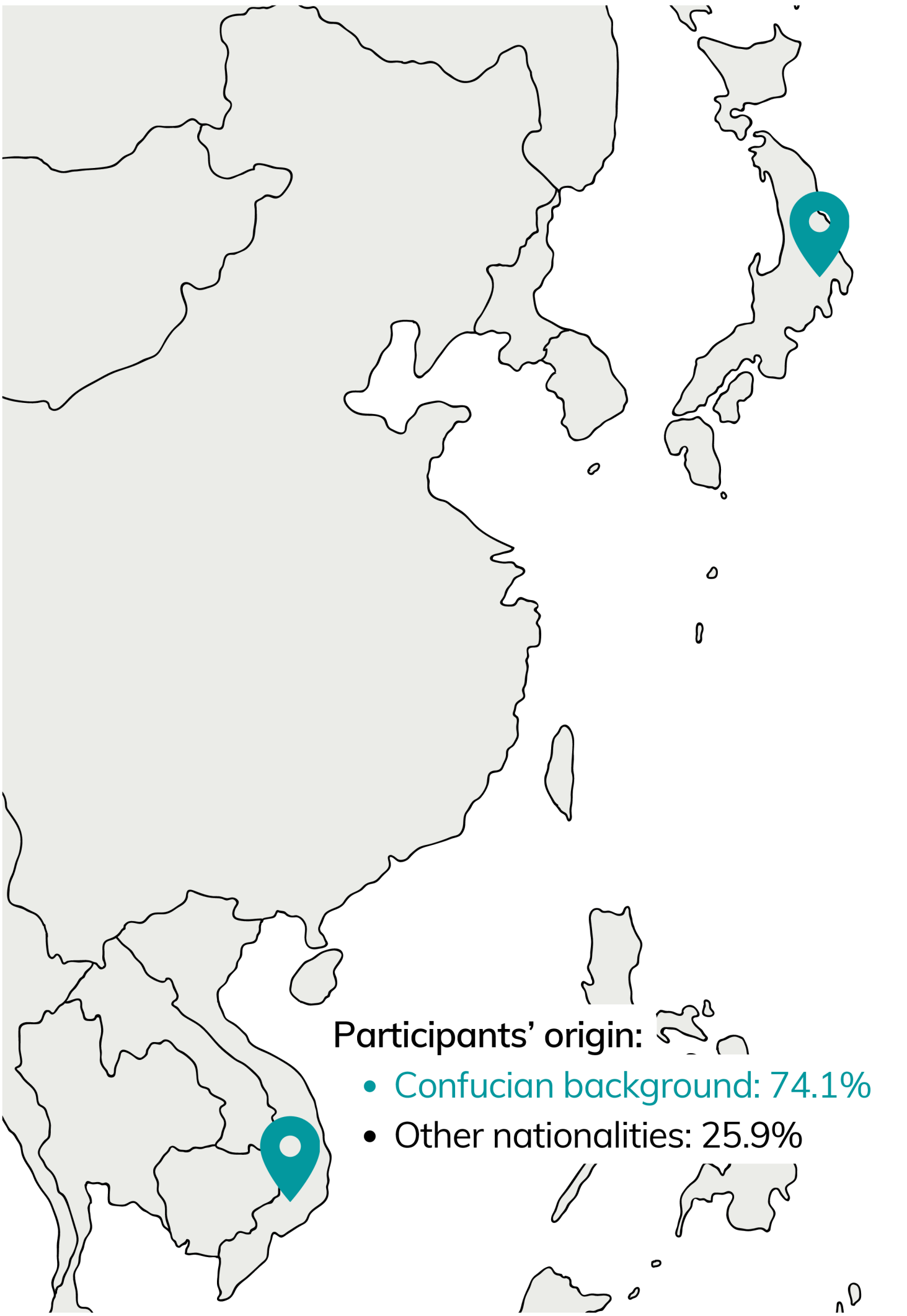
Participants' origin:
- Confucian background: 74.1%
- Other nationalities: 25.9%

2 Methodology

Pilot study *N* = 16 → briefing / informed consent → Survey *N* = 201 → debrief / informed consent → Interviews *N* = 10

Survey *N* = 201:
- 15 minutes
- Via Google Form
- Compensation: 500 JPY

Interviews *N* = 10:
- 30 minutes
- Via Google Meet
- 2000 JPY

*Procedures approved by the International Christian University's Research Ethics Committee in July 2023 & funded by the Japan ICU Foundation (JICUF) Grant, Fall Cycle 2023 - 2024
*Data was analyzed using JAMOVI 2.5.2

3 Results

- Contexts as predictors of perceived sexism: education was found to be the only significant predictor of perceived exposure to sexism (β = .553, p = .005) when controlled for individual differences in cognitive and emotional patterns.

- Furthermore, victimized responses type consistently showed a significant negative impact on the overall well-being of young women who were single (β = -1.21, p = .035), especially Generation Z who were born after 1996 (β = -1.52, p = .003) and those who identified themselves as women (β = -1.52, p = .002).

- A positive effect of villainized responses on overall well-being was found among other nationalities, but was not significant among the Confucian participants.

- Confucian & powerlessness: r(199) = .156, p = .027 => young women from areas such as Vietnam, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan,... felt more powerless being assigned as females.

- Confrontation & age: r(114) = .156, p = .027 => older participants have more thoughts of confronting sexist treatment.

- Perceived sexism and 02 tendencies of individual responses:
Victimized responses (sadness, shame, insecurity, disappointment) & Villainized responses (anger, confrontation, comparison, unfairness, (de)normalization, powerlessness)

Table 1

Cronbach's α for Subscales of the Perceived Exposure to Sexism Measurement

Subscales	Cronbach's α	Item	If item dropped Cronbach's α
Section 1			
Efficacy, competence for caretaking roles and femininity	.697	E1 (H) "You will never be able to do this as well as a boy could."	.637
		E2 (B) "For this problem, you should ask for help from a man."	.641
		E3 (B) "As a girl/woman, you should have the ability to do this better than others."	.660
		E4 (B) "You don't need to try that hard at (school/work); it's not your main job."	.659
		E5 (B) "You would make a great wife/girlfriend!"	.664
		E6 (B) "Wow you even do this (cooking, cleaning & other caretaker's tasks) better than (other females)!"	.679
Assumptions on women's affective/ emotional capacity	.630	A1 (H) "You are too easily offended."	.560
		A2 (H) "You are just exaggerating the problems."	.558
		A3 (H) "You should not act in an aggressive manner"	.517
		A4 (H) "You are so understanding."	.578
		A5 (B) "You are such a gentle, delicate (girl/woman)!"	.658
Objectification of women's social role and status	.693	O1 (H) "You are not allowed to talk back at (a man)."	.640
		O2 (H) "You should know your place."	.612
		O3 (B) "You should have a man to accompany you through (hardships/a hard situation)."	.641
		O4 (B) "No matter how accomplished you are with your career, someday you will need a man in your life."	.650
		O5 (H) "Don't touch this (object/task)!"	.674
Section 2			
Cognitive patterns	.555	(C_unfairness) How often do you feel that you are treated in an unfavored way because of your gender?	.374
		(C_normalization) Have you ever felt that it is normal to be treated that way?	.555
		(C_comparison) How often do you compare yourself to your male peers?	.450
		(C_confrontation) Have you ever spoken up to confront an act of discrimination toward you/other females?	.539
Negative emotions related to being born as women	.763	(N_powerlessness) How often do you feel powerless because you were born as a female?	.757
		(N_anger) How often do you feel angry because you were treated unfairly?	.777
		(N_disappointment) How often do you feel disappointed about your own performance at school/work?	.707
		(N_insecurity) How often do you feel insecure, or unsure about your own competence?	.704
		(N_saddness) How often do you feel down?	.720
		(N_shame) How often do you feel ashamed of yourself?	.701

Table 2

Component Loadings of Individual Responses to Sexism

	Component 1	Component 2	Uniqueness
C_unfairness		.769	.409
C_normalization		.402	.840
N_powerlessness		.554	.592
C_comparison		.654	.504
N_anger		.779	.430
N_disappointment	.859		.295
N_insecurity	.860		.304
N_sadness	.732		.460
N_shame	.711		.399
C_confrontation		.625	.663

Figure 1

Path Model of Interaction Effect between Perceived Sexism and Individual Responses on Overall Well-being of Confucian Women (Constrained)
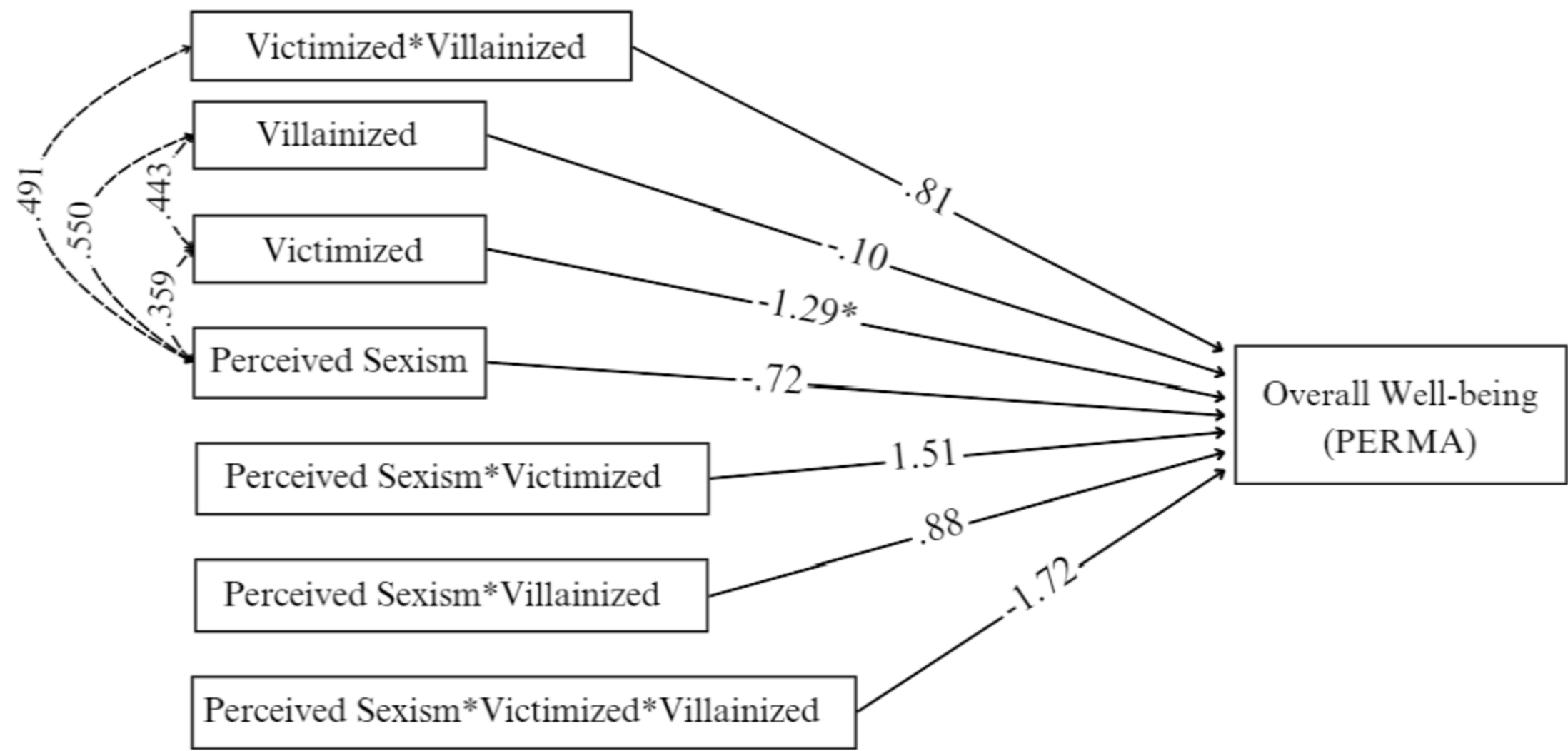
Figure 2

Path Model of Interaction Effect between Perceived Sexism and Individual Responses on Overall Well-being of Women with Other Nationalities (Constrained)

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

4 Discussion

The outcomes might explain the inconsistency in past studies on the impact of sexism on the well-being of female individuals across cultures (Schmitt et al., 2014; Borrell et al., 2011), in which specific types of responses may have mitigated the negative influences of sexism on women's psychological well-being.

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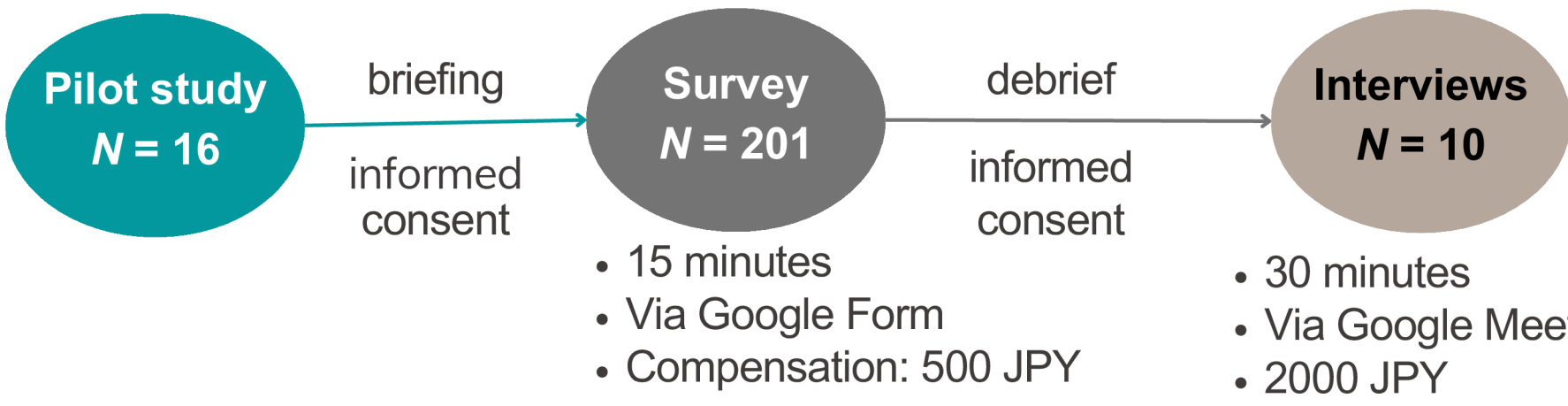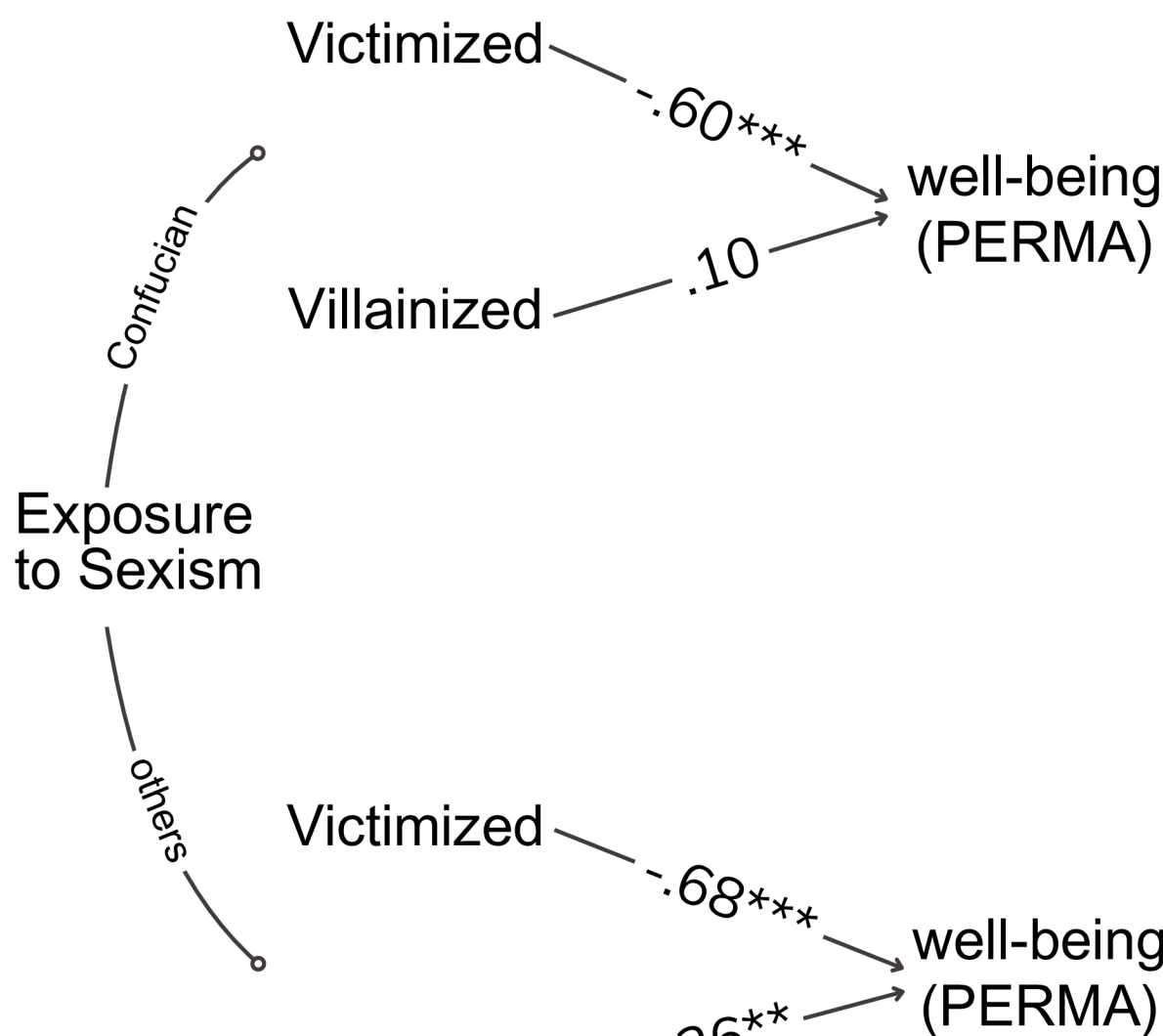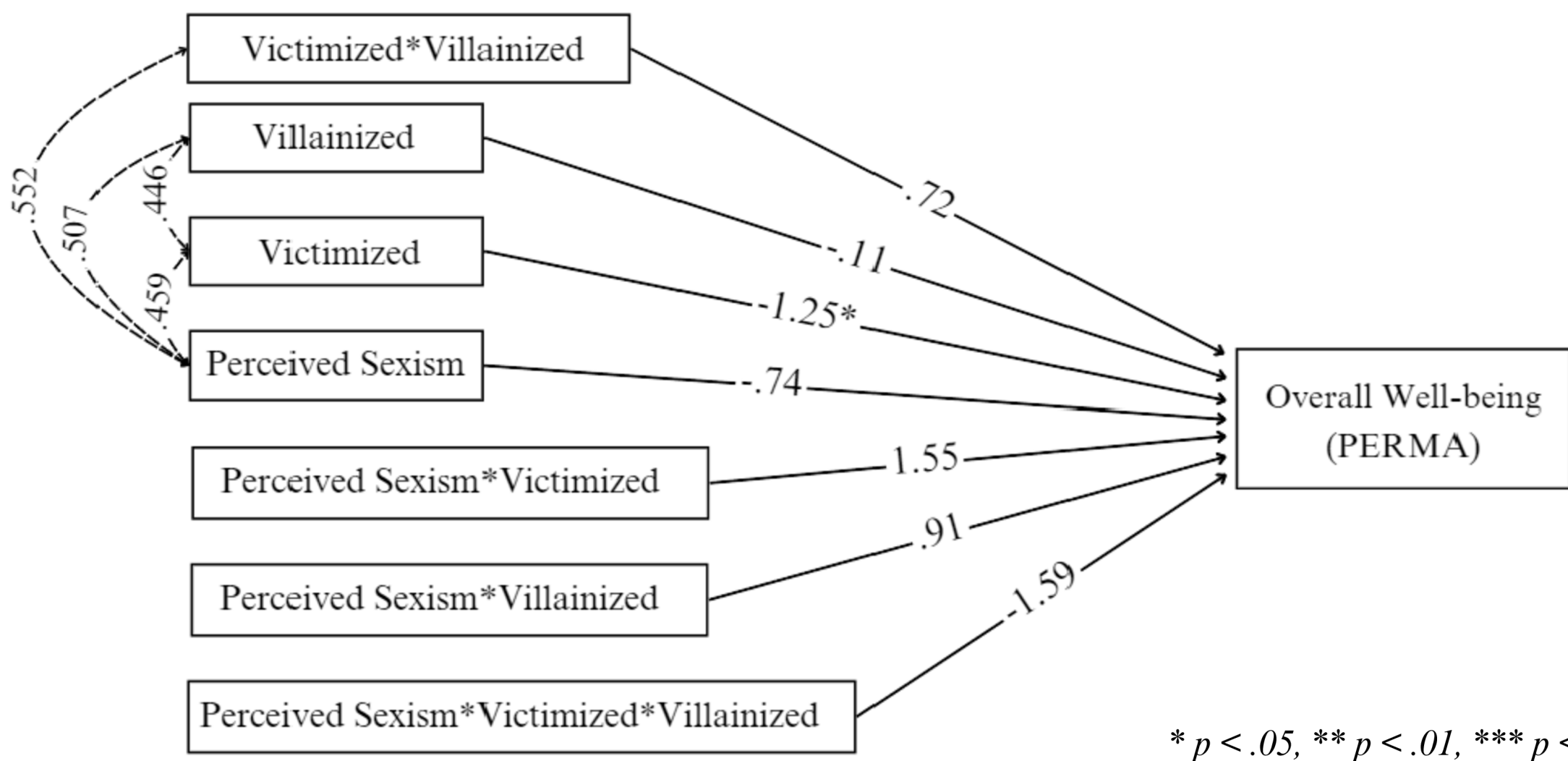
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