



# Epistemic Arrogance and Need for Uniqueness: Correlational and Experimental Evidence

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## What is Epistemic Arrogance?

Epistemic arrogance is the belief that one has special access to truth, a unique monopoly on understanding truth, and that one's beliefs are superior to others.

## Epistemic Arrogance Scale

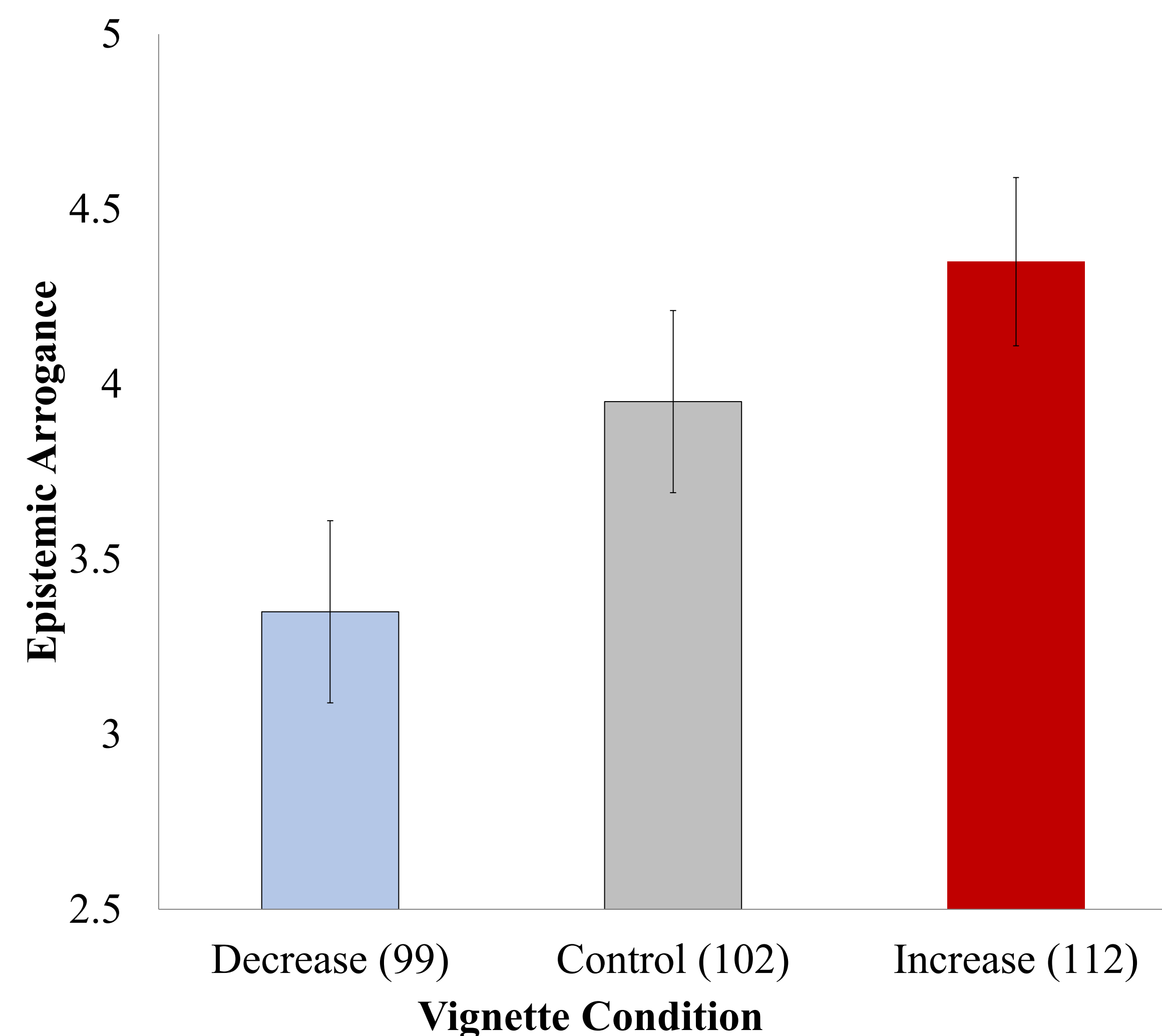
Please respond to the following, indicating how much you feel each of the statements are true for you:

- 1) Because of my understanding of truth, I am better able to navigate the social world than most
- 2) One thing that distinguishes me from others is that I uniquely understand what is true about the world
- 3) I have a unique capacity to understand truth
- 4) Compared to most people my understanding of truth is special
- 5) Unlike most people, I have a firm grasp on the world and my place in it
- 6) Many of my beliefs are more consistent with what is true than what the average person thinks
- 7) I know my beliefs are true because they have served me well
- 8) I have special access to truth

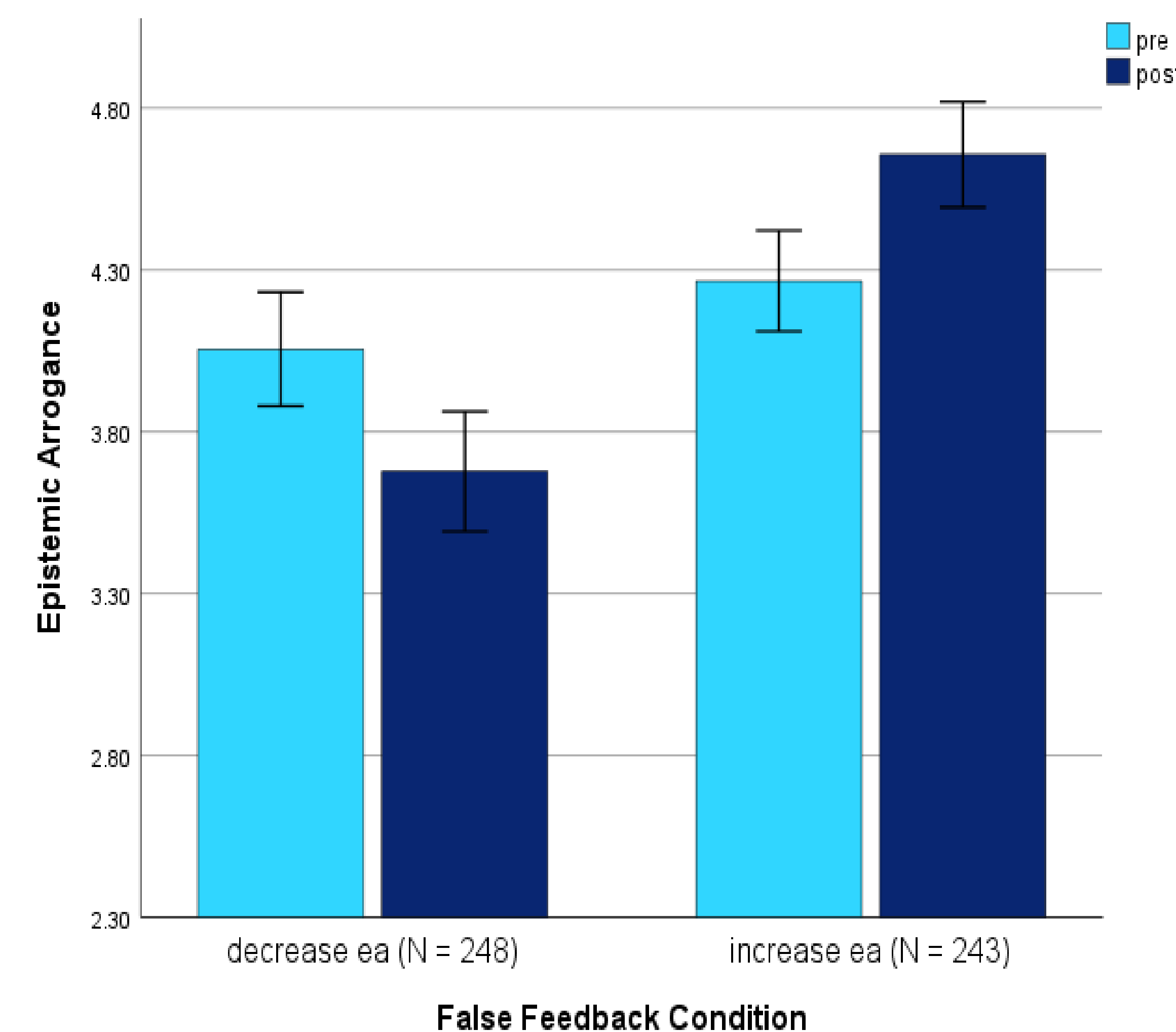
## Goals of the Present Study

- In 5 previous studies, we found that epistemic arrogance positively predicted need for uniqueness  $r=.36, p<.001$ .
- The goal of the current study is to determine if the relationship between epistemic arrogance and need for uniqueness was simply correlational, or if it was causal.
- We utilized our experimental paradigm to test our prediction that increasing epistemic arrogance (by describing how people who think they know more than others are usually right) would causally lead to higher uniqueness vs. decreasing it (by describing how people who think they know more than others are usually wrong).
- Both the original experimental paradigm and the false feedback paradigm successfully manipulated epistemic arrogance.
- Increased epistemic arrogance in the vignette paradigm resulted in increased need for uniqueness. In the false feedback paradigm, however, the change in need for uniqueness was statistically insignificant.

## Manipulating Epistemic Arrogance

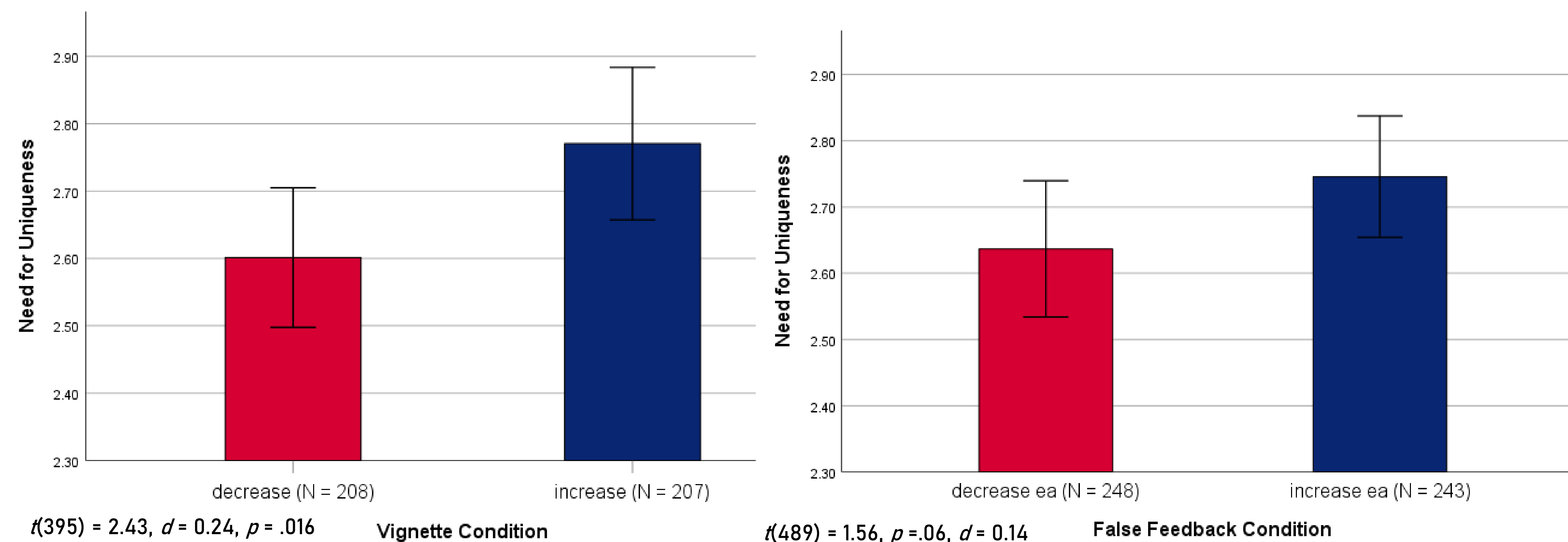


$t(395) = 2.43, d = 0.24, p = .016$

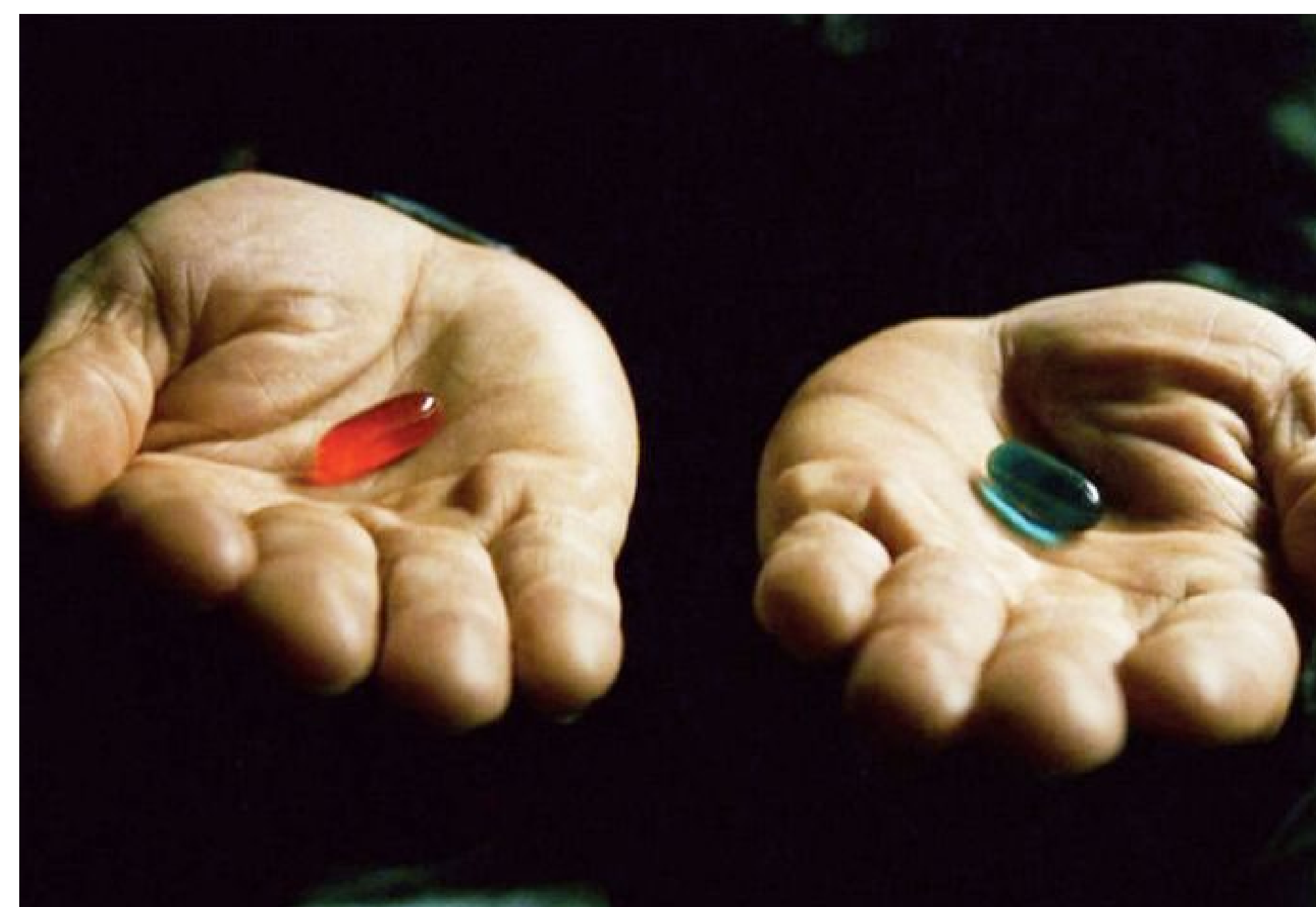
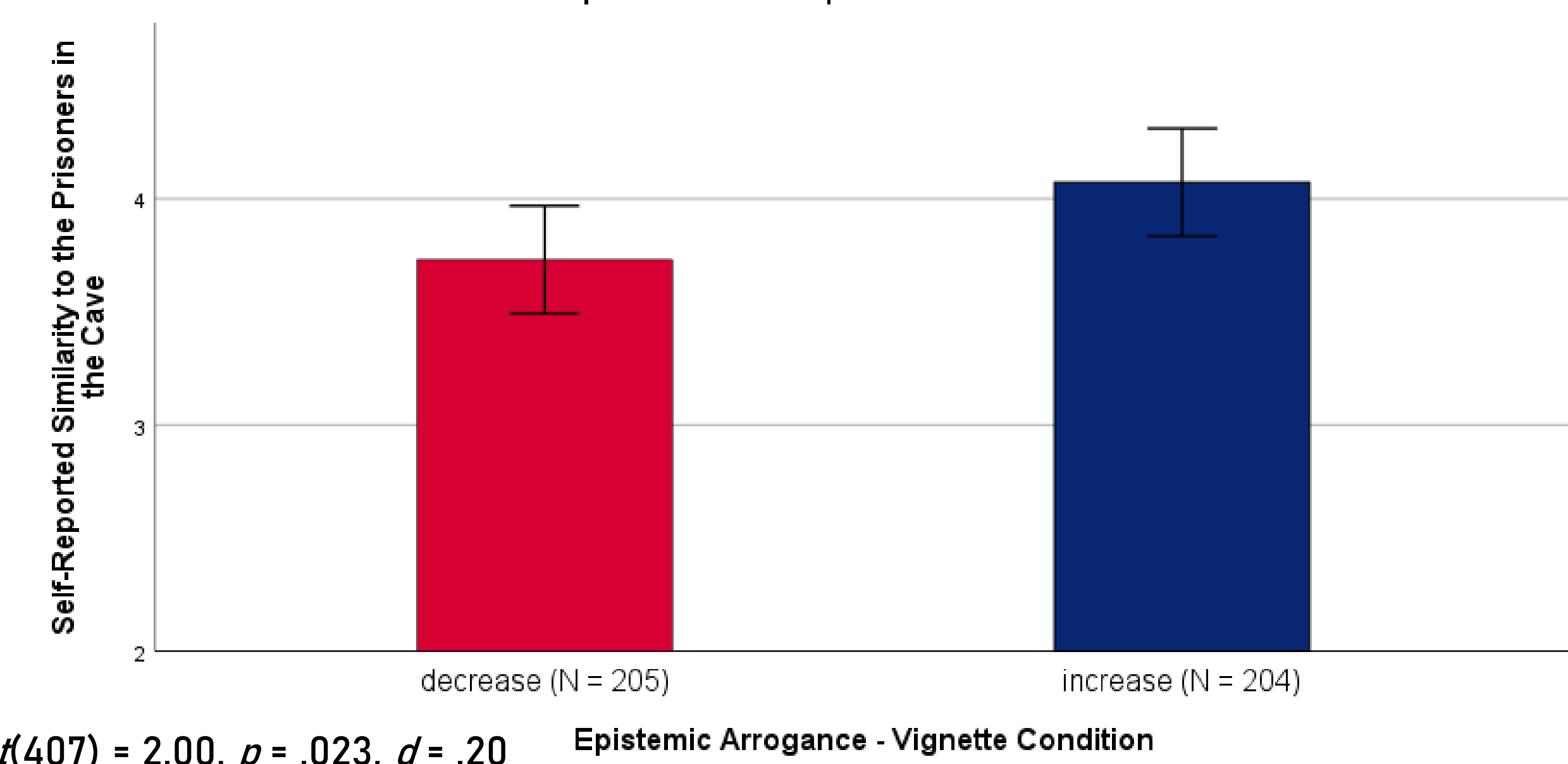


$F(1, 489) = 59.73, p < .001, \eta^2 = .109$

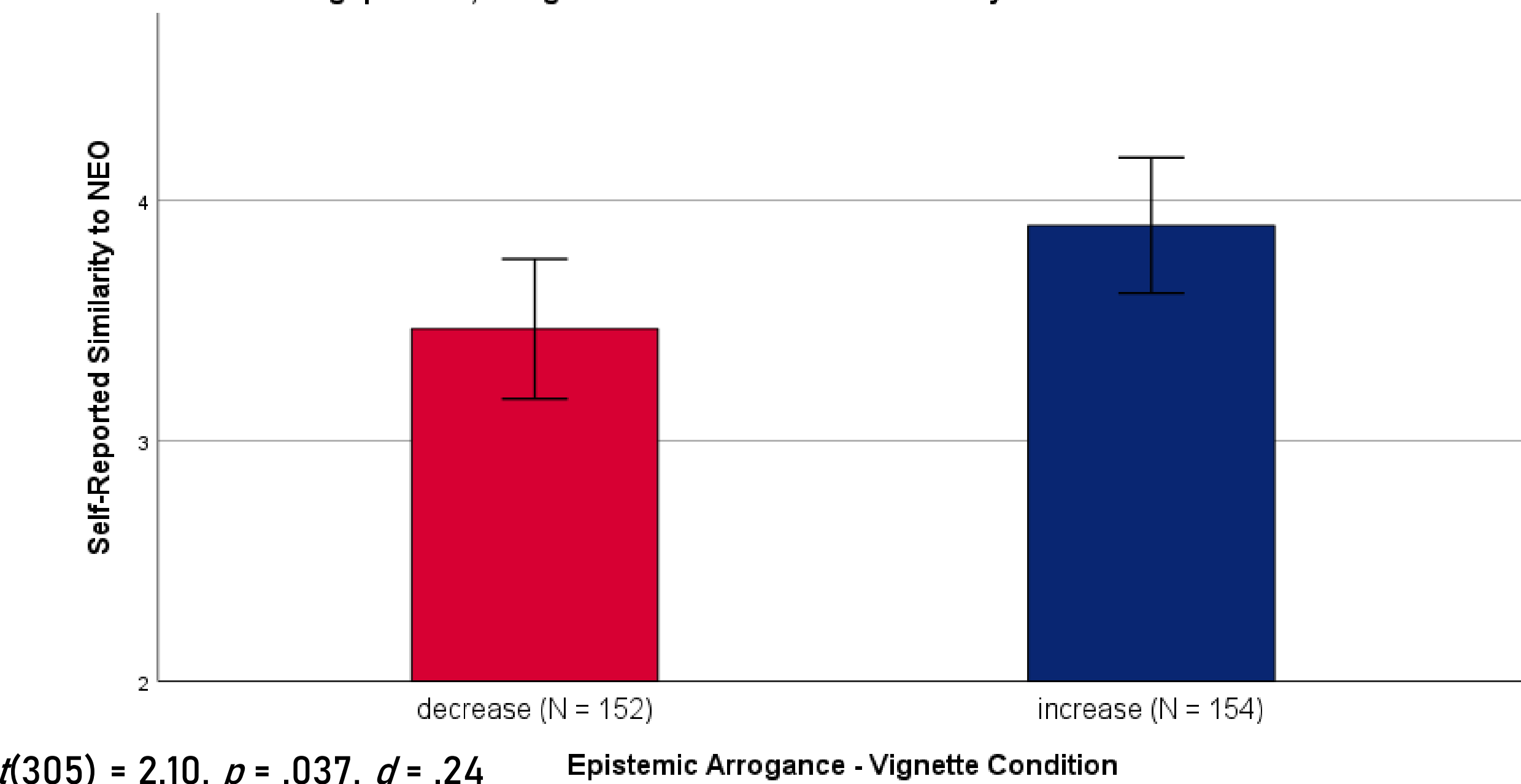
## An Increase in Epistemic Arrogance Results in an Increase in Need For Uniqueness



In Plato's allegory of the cave, a group of humans spend their entire lives in a cave. They are able to see shadows cast onto the wall and believe these are the true nature of their reality. However, one day, one of the prisoners is able to escape the cave, and begins to see reality as it truly is. How much are you similar to the person who escaped the cave?



In the Matrix, NEO takes the red pill and wakes up to understanding the true nature of reality. Please respond to the following question, using the scale below. How much are you similar to NEO from the Matrix?



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