

Research Question

Does cooperation promote prosocial behavior more than competition?

Background

Prosocial Behavior

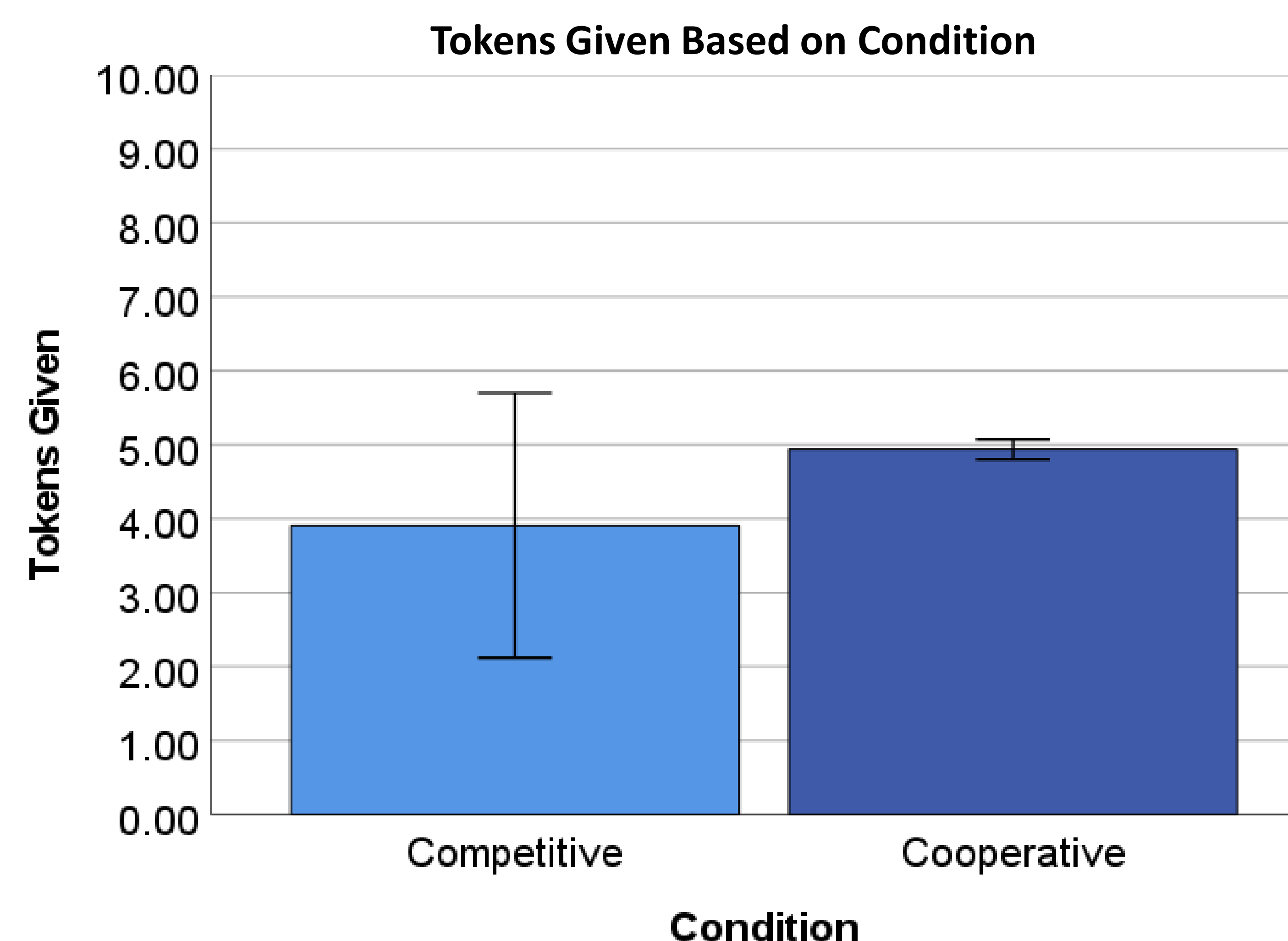
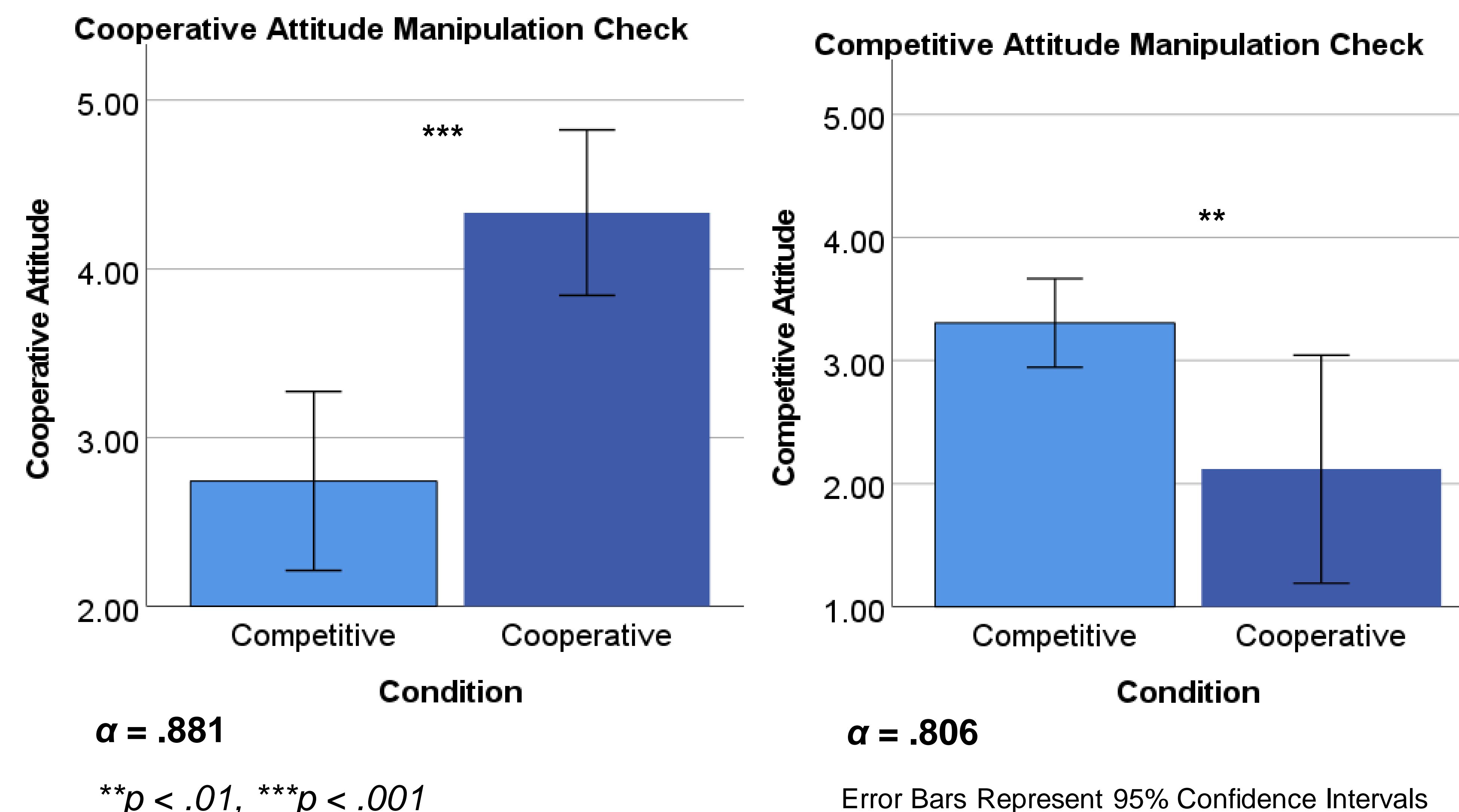
- Acting prosocially (i.e., helping another individual while incurring a cost to oneself) appears to be an evolutionarily destructive trait (Delton et al., 2010).
- However, it is apparent that social functioning relies on such prosocial behaviors
- Scientists have been encouraged to elucidate the factors that promote and discourage prosocial behavior.
- Many studies have examined the effects of ingroup favoritism, gossip, and reputation management as ways to promote/discourage prosocial behavior (Everett, Faber & Crockett, 2015; Milfune, Hashimoto & Yamagishi, 2010; Wu, Balliet & Van Lange 2016)
- Our study looks to examine the effects of competition and cooperation on prosocial behavior.

Predictions

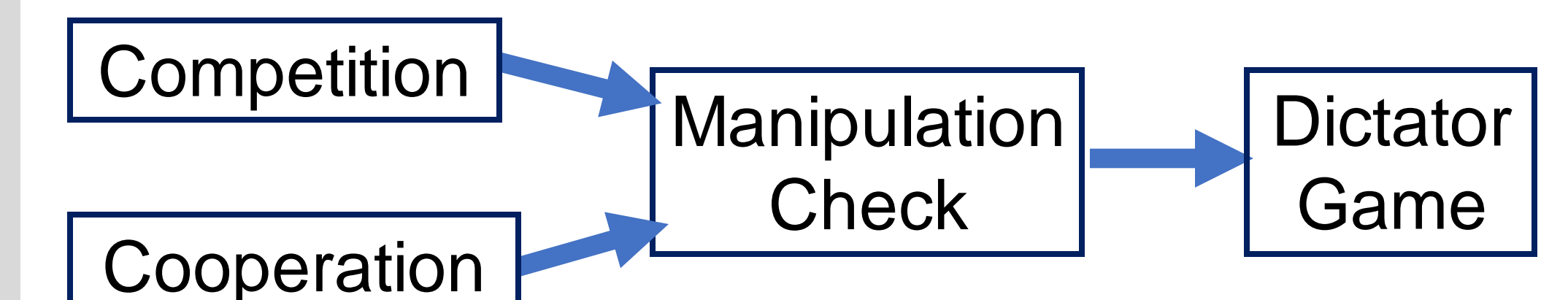
H1: We predict that participants in the competitive condition will score higher on a measure of competitiveness and those in the cooperative condition will score higher on a measure of cooperation following the manipulation.

H2: We predict that participants in the competitive condition will give fewer tokens (be less generous/prosocial) than those in the cooperative condition.

Results



Procedure Outline



Participants:

Elmhurst College Students
N = 27, 25.9% male; 70.4% female; 3.7% other

Dictator Game: N_{competitive} = 11 N_{cooperative} = 16
Manip Check: N_{competitive} = 7 N_{cooperative} = 6

Discussion

- Our findings support our first hypothesis, and our second hypothesis was trending in the expected direction but not significant.
- Our study shows that through fostering a cooperative environment one can better promote selfless behaviors.
- Our first limitation was that only a subset of our sample completed the state measure of cooperativeness and competitiveness.
- Our second limitation is our sample size; we were not able to gather data from as many participants as we had hoped.

References

- Delton, A. W., Krasnow, M. M., Cosmides, L., & Tooby, J. (2011). Evolution of direct reciprocity under uncertainty can explain human generosity in one-shot encounters. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 108(32), 13335-13340.
- Everett, J. A., Faber, N. S., & Crockett, M. J. (2015). The influence of social preferences and reputational concerns on intergroup prosocial behaviour in gains and losses contexts. *Royal Society Open Science*, 2(12), 150546.
- Mifune, N., Hashimoto, H., & Yamagishi, T. (2010). Altruism toward in-group members as a reputation mechanism. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 31(2), 109-117.
- Wu, J., Balliet, D., & Van Lange, P. A. (2016). Reputation management: Why and how gossip enhances generosity. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 37(3), 193-201.