**Faculty Call for Research Assistant Application**

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| **Part I – Outline of research project** |

**Academic field:** Psychology and Sociology

**Research topic:** Objectification, Culture, Cognition, Clothing

**Brief description of project and research assistant duties:**

This project aims to deepen our understanding of the phenomenon of objectification—perceiving and treating individuals as objects—by exploring its cultural and religious underpinnings. Previous research has predominantly focused on Western participants and targets, often in contexts emphasizing minimal clothing. This study proposes that objectification is not solely a bottom-up perceptual process but is also influenced by cultural beliefs surrounding women’s clothing choices.

We hypothesize that cultural representations of women’s attire, such as the hijab (a Muslim head covering stereotypically associated in Western cultures with a lack of agency), can impact perceptions of agency (i.e., the extent to which a woman’s clothing is seen as a deliberate personal choice). Specifically, we aim to investigate how these representations facilitate objectification processes among Western participants.

This research is expected to significantly enhance our understanding of objectification and its cultural dimensions. Furthermore, it will provide valuable insights into the challenges and societal costs associated with the acculturation of Muslim migrants, offering implications for immigration policy and social integration efforts.

The research assistant will play a key role in this project, contributing to the design of questionnaires, collecting data, and reporting preliminary findings.

**Sponsoring professor:** Elisa Puvia

**Professor’s e-mail address:** elisa.puvia@johncabot.edu

**Semester of assistantship**: Fall 2025

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| **Part II – Mentoring plan** |

**Full description of research assistant’s regular duties:**

The research assistant will regularly engage in various tasks crucial to the project. They will contribute to the development and validation of research tools, such as surveys and questionnaires, ensuring these align with the study’s objectives. A significant part of their role will involve conducting literature reviews to synthesize existing research on objectification, cultural beliefs, and perceived agency, providing a strong theoretical foundation for the project. The assistant will also facilitate data collection by recruiting participants and administering surveys, adhering to the study's ethical and procedural guidelines. Additionally, they will assist with initial data analysis and interpretation, working closely with the faculty supervisor to identify emerging patterns. The assistant will participate in regular meetings to discuss project progress, troubleshoot challenges, and refine research strategies. Finally, they will support the preparation of progress reports and presentations, summarizing findings.

**Description of the work to be completed by the end of the research assistant’s 45 hours of work:**

By the conclusion of the 45-hour assistantship, the research assistant is expected to have achieved several key milestones. They will have prepared a finalized draft of the survey or questionnaire to be used in the study. Depending on the study’s progress, the assistant will have facilitated participant recruitment and ensured that a sufficient number of responses have been collected. They will have compiled and organized the raw data in preparation for more detailed analysis, ensuring its accuracy and consistency. To conclude their work, the assistant will prepare a concise presentation or summary document outlining their contributions and progress, which will be reviewed by the faculty supervisor.

**Statement addressing how the faculty research will help the student research assistant develop their research skills:**

This research assistantship provides the student with a valuable opportunity to enhance a wide range of research skills while working on a professional academic project. By participating in the design and validation of survey instruments, the student will develop expertise in creating robust research tools, a vital skill in both academic and applied research contexts. Through hands-on involvement in data collection and management, they will gain practical experience in organizing and handling data with precision. The project also offers the chance to engage with cross-cultural research, allowing the student to navigate and address the unique challenges inherent in studying diverse populations and cultural frameworks. Moreover, by conducting literature reviews, the assistant will refine their ability to critically evaluate existing research and integrate these insights into a coherent academic narrative. Collaboration with the faculty supervisor will further expose the student to the professional dynamics of research, potentially leading to co-authorship opportunities or the chance to present findings at academic conferences. These experiences will provide the student with a solid foundation for future academic or professional endeavors in the field.