

The effect of stereotype congruence on credibility assessments of sexual minority asylum claims: psychological mechanisms and intersectional influences

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Psychology at the Frontiers: Asylum Interviewing and Decision Making [Psych-AID]

Focus of the present study

**Credibility
assessment:**

Evaluating the
facts



**“Genuinely”
LGBTI?**

Main hypothesis

Stereotype-congruent claimants will be perceived as more credible than stereotype-incongruent claimants.

Specifically, we expect feminine-presenting gay men and masculine-presenting lesbians to be rated as more credible than their gender-conforming counterparts.

Design

Mock asylum officials

Between-subjects
factorial design:

2 (stereotype: congruent
vs. incongruent) × **2** (gay
men vs. lesbians)

3 regions

Africa, Middle East, and
Latin America

**383 participants from
the UK**

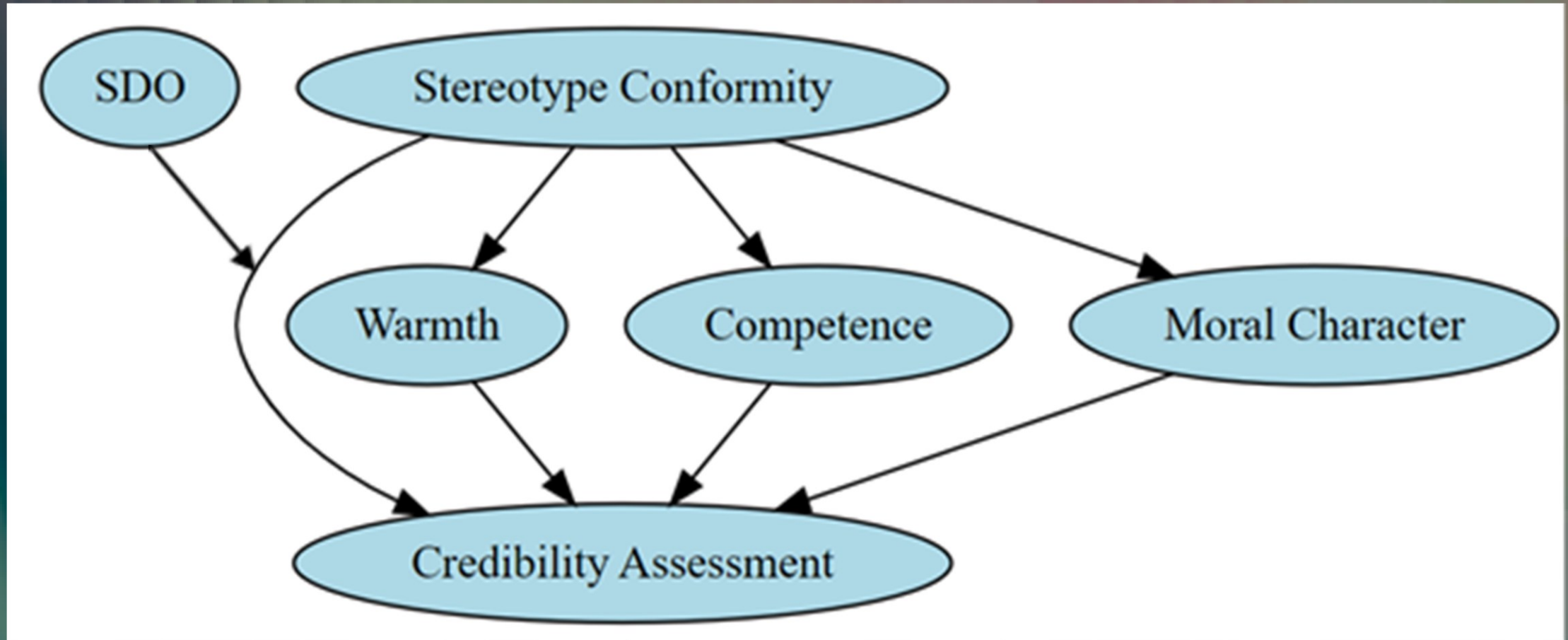
207 women and 176
men, mean age = 44

Mechanisms to stereotyping

Asylum seekers:
Warmth,
competence,
moral character

Participants:
Social
dominance
orientation (SDO)

Conceptual model



AI-manipulated pictures



**Gender-
conforming**

Stereotype-congruent
**Gender-
nonconforming**

Casefile

D has made a refugee claim on the basis that he faces persecution on account of his homosexuality. Case law has established that people with a well-founded fear of persecution on account of their sexual orientation fall within the refugee definition. Country-of-origin information supports the claim that sexual minorities in D's country have a well-founded fear of persecution. At his asylum interview, D testified as to the following:

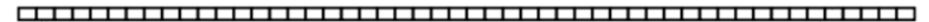
He grew up in a small town in a Middle Eastern country. He always felt different from other boys, even as a young child. He preferred playing with girls. He recalls first being sexually attracted to other boys starting around age 12, but he was too scared to act on those feelings. When he was 17, he was approached by an older boy in the neighborhood, who was rumored to be gay. They had a sexual relationship in secret, which continued on and off for about four months. D's mother became suspicious and confronted him and D admitted that he thought he was gay. The mother responded that she was not surprised and had always suspected this. She told D that he must be careful and hide this while he lived at home - especially from his father, a senior police officer who scorned homosexuals. She told him that maybe things could be different when he left their town for university. He broke off his secret relationship and even agreed to date a female friend of his cousin - though that did not last long.

Credibility ratings

The only question that needs to be answered in this case is whether it is more credible than not that D is homosexual. This means one does not need to be 100% certain, but based on all the available information, D's claim should be believed if it's more likely true than false.

Based on the statements and evidence above, in your view, has D established that it is more credible than not that he is gay?

0% - Not credible 50% Credible - 100%



(Place a mark on the scale above)

How confident are you, on the above statements and evidence, that D is gay?

0% - Not confident 50% Confident - 100%

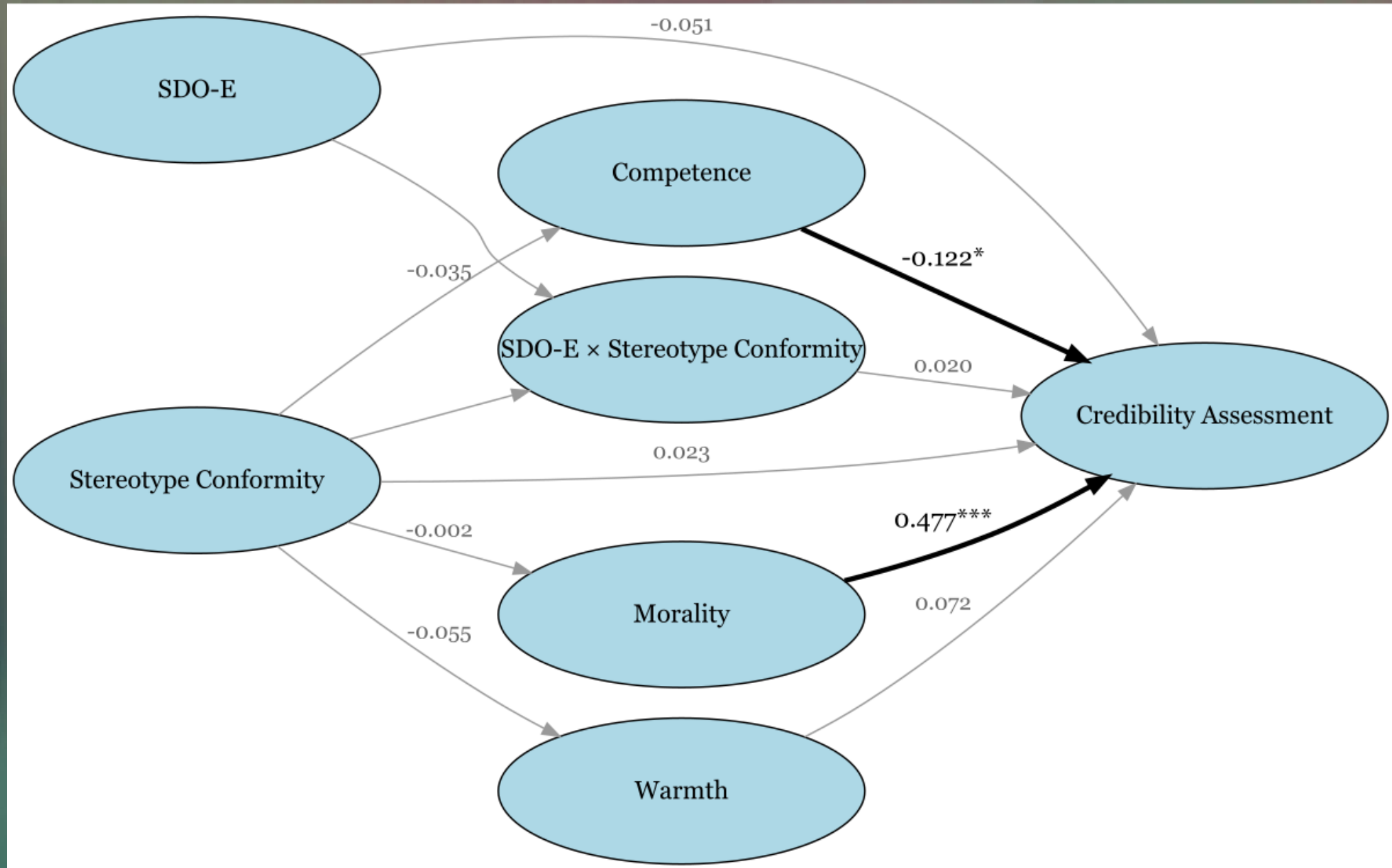


(Place a mark on the scale above)

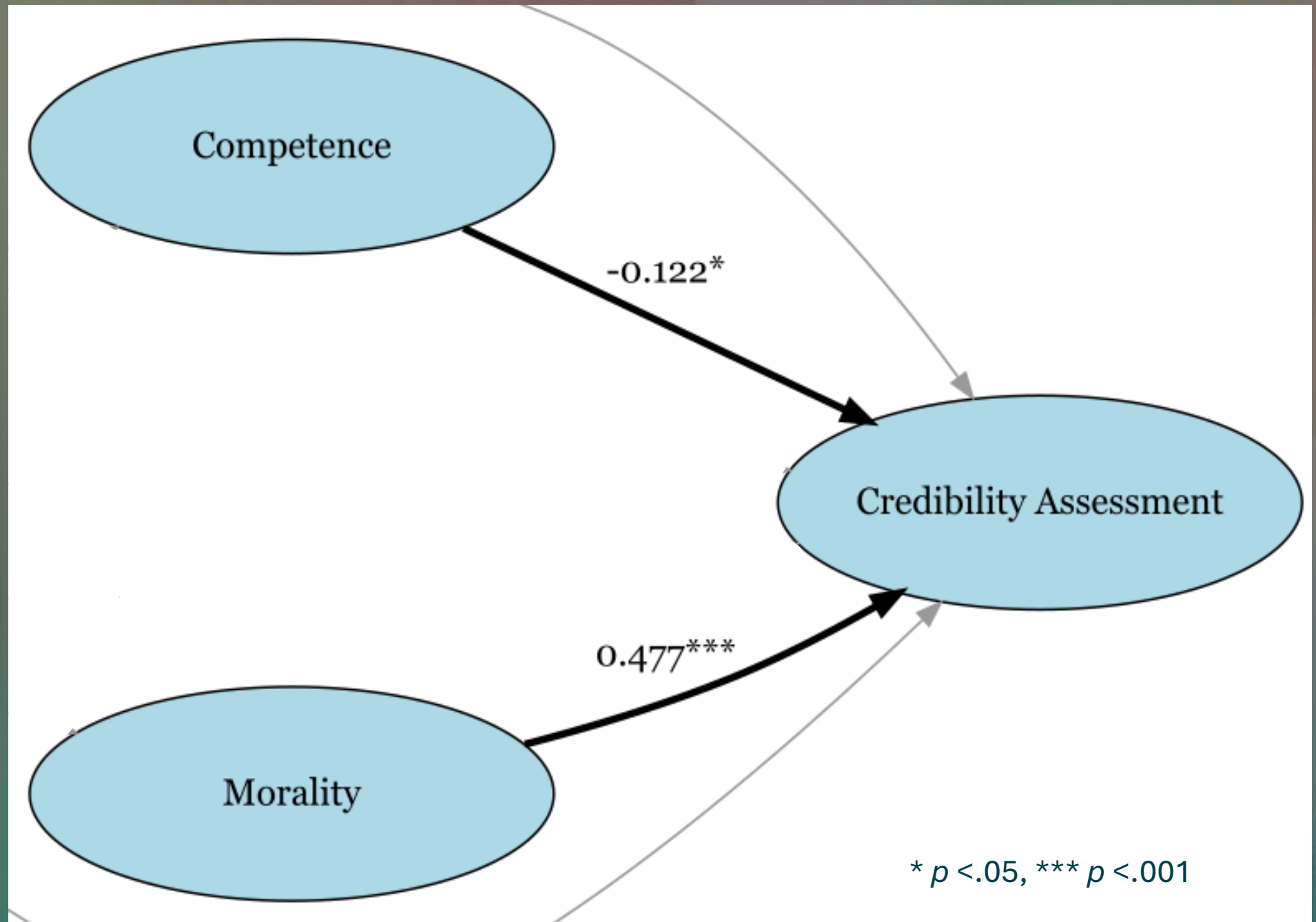
Mean ratings of key variables

Measure (1-9)	Gay (n = 190)	Lesbian (n = 193)
Warmth	5.30 (1.29)	5.60 (1.30)
Competence	5.39 (1.32)	5.70 (1.21)
Moral character	4.05 (1.68)	4.37 (1.66)
Credibility (0-100%)	61.1 (23.4)	63.5 (24.9)

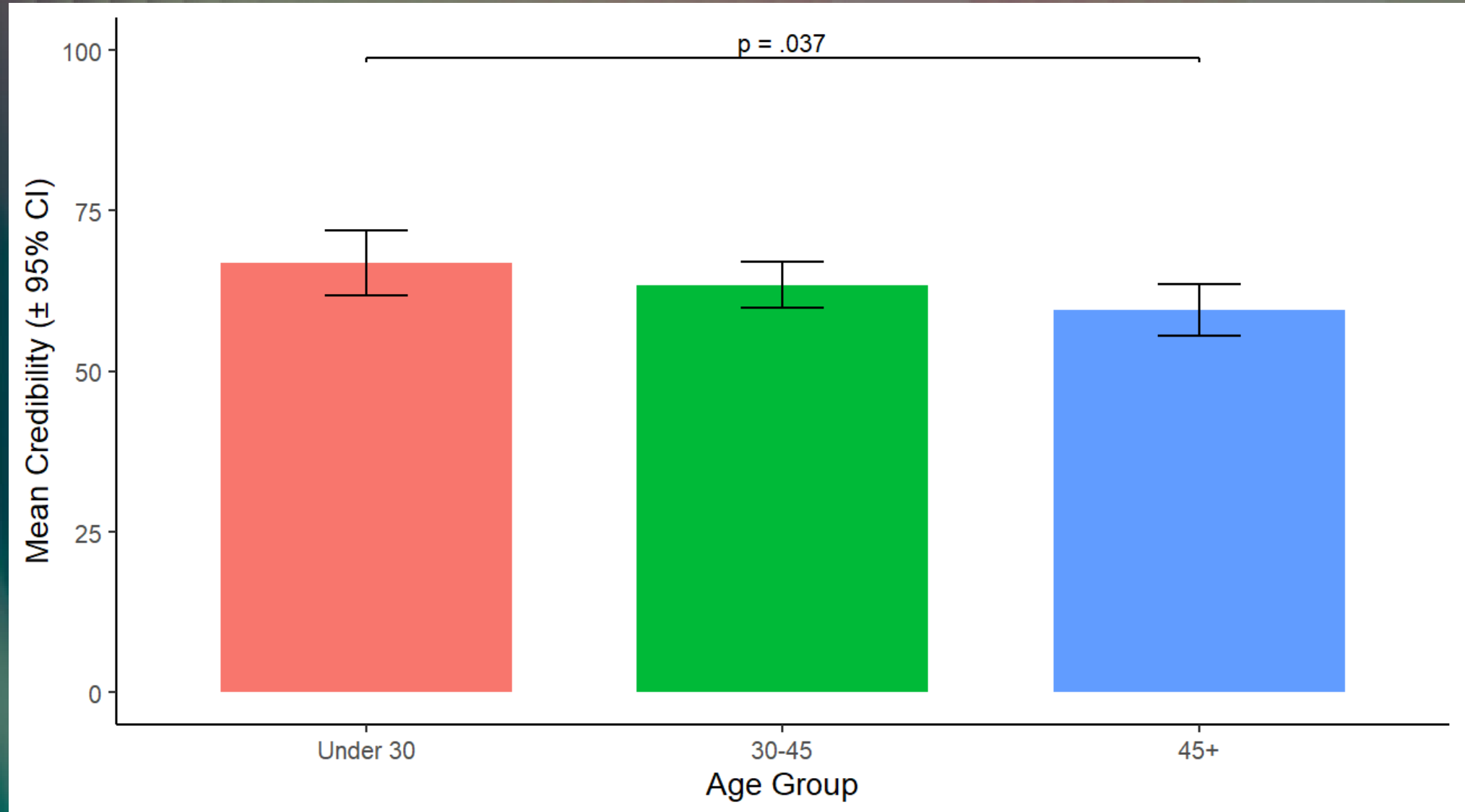
Results



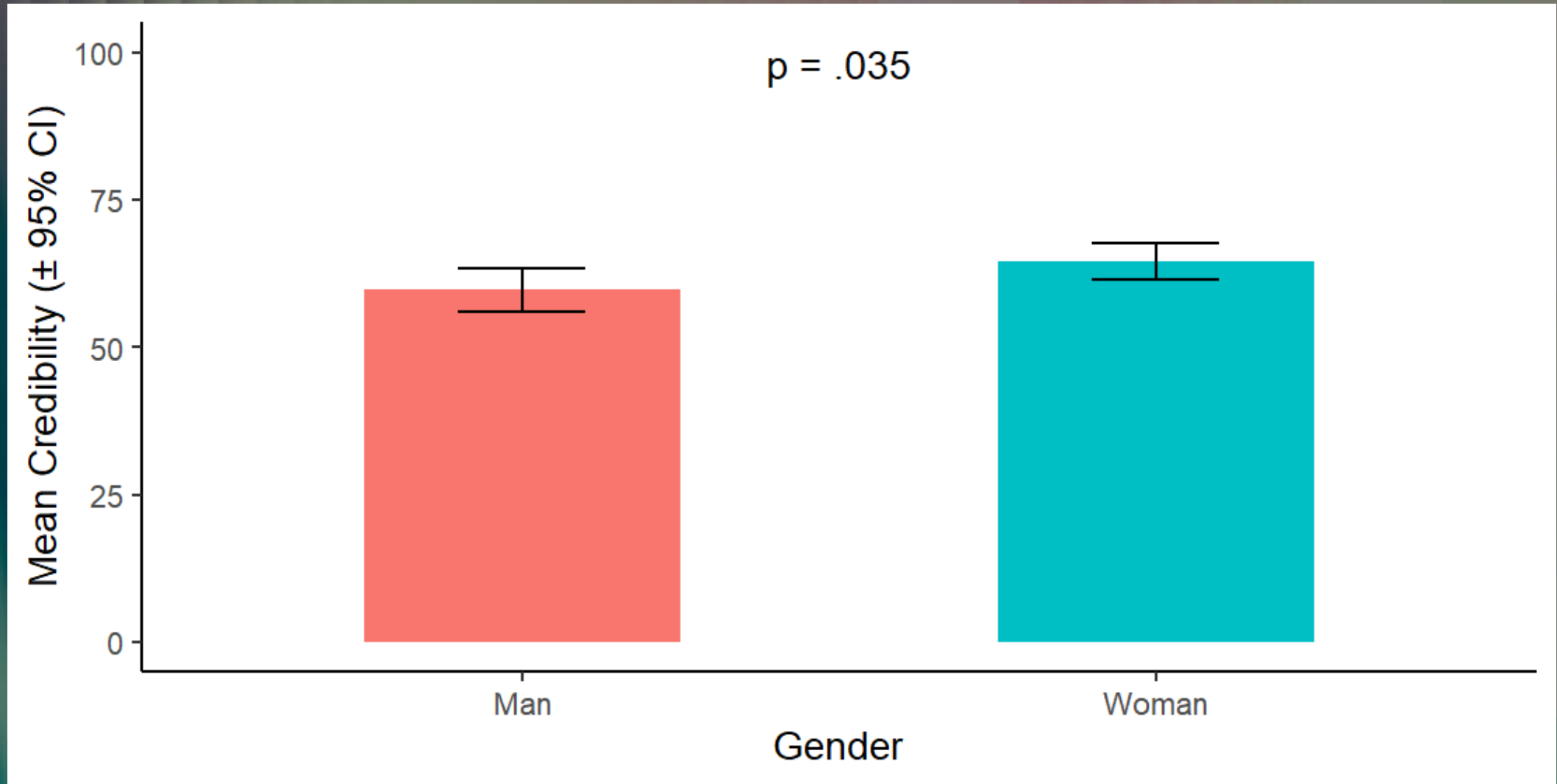
Results



Credibility by participant age group



Credibility by participant gender



Discussion

- Morality strongly boosts credibility
- Competence surprisingly reduces credibility
- No clear stereotype effect found
 - Possible reasons: subtle manipulation, focus on case details
- Intersectionality remains crucial

Next

Exploring participants' reasoning for their credibility ratings.

“Although I could see all of the inconsistency/forgeries in D's application I did feel she explained the reason why she did these things in a credible way and that lead me to believe she really was a lesbian who was scared to return to her home.” (Woman, 54)

“There are many inconsistencies in her story when it comes to establishing whether she is actually homosexual. There is also a history of lying and created fraud documents. All this together does not make her story very credible.” (Man, 50)

Thank you!

Any questions?

