

RWA, The Big Five and Micro-aggressions Toward LGB Parents

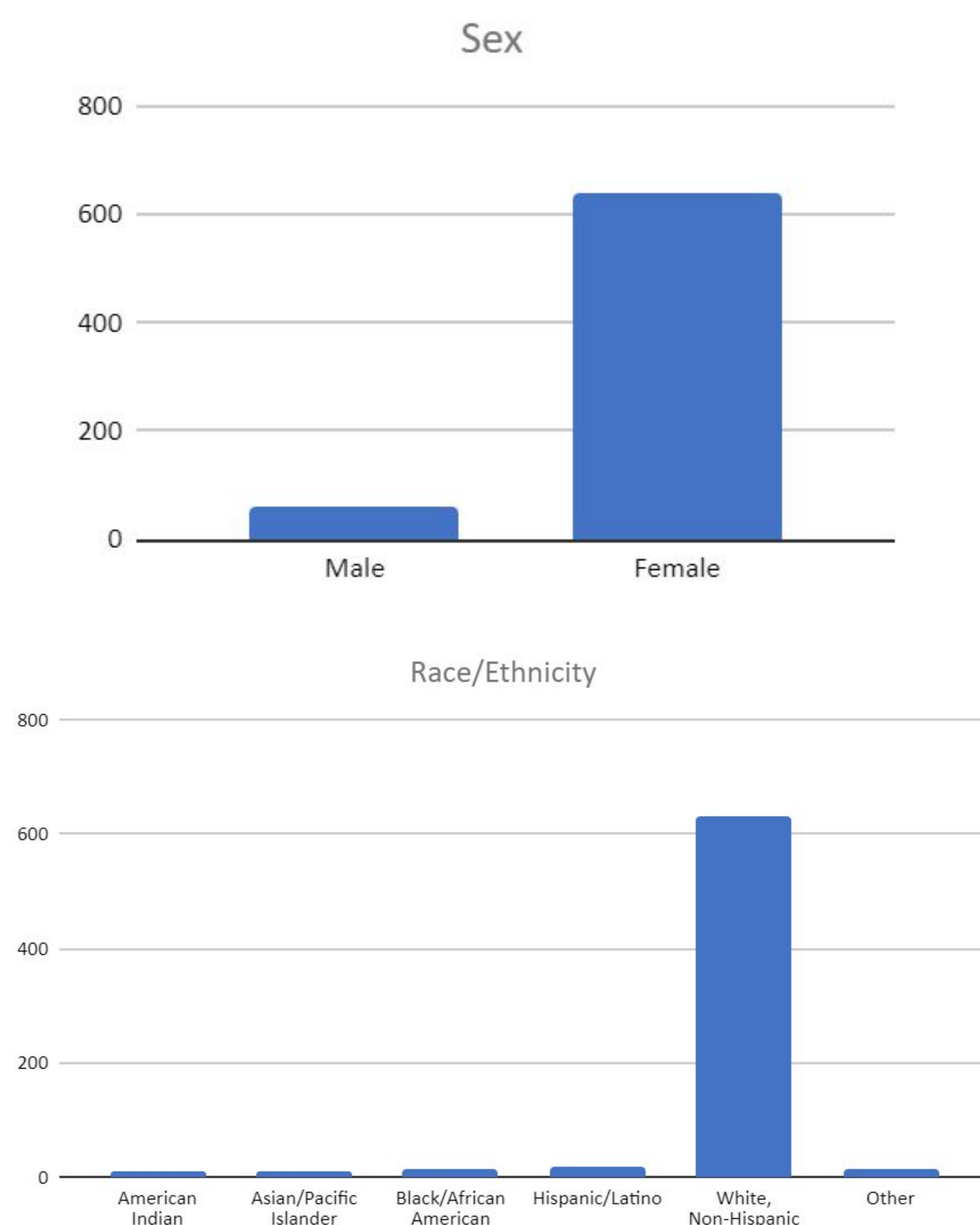
Introduction

Research has found that the Big Five factors (Costa & McCrae, 1992) are indirectly related to prejudice through the personality trait Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA; Altemeyer, 1981; Ekehammar et al., 2004). It is observed that some Big-Five traits predict RWA scores. Further, there is evidence that RWA is linked to prejudice (Ekehammar et al., 2004). People who score high on RWA typically demonstrate prejudice toward out-groups such as the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community (Roth & von Collani, 2007). One form of prejudice that has been described more recently in the literature is micro-aggressions and people's willingness to endorse the use of micro-aggressive statements toward lesbian, gay, and bisexual people. The current study will examine the relations among prejudicial attitudes toward the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community, micro-aggressions, and personality traits. It is predicted that the relationship between personality traits and willingness to endorse micro-aggressions will be mediated by RWA.

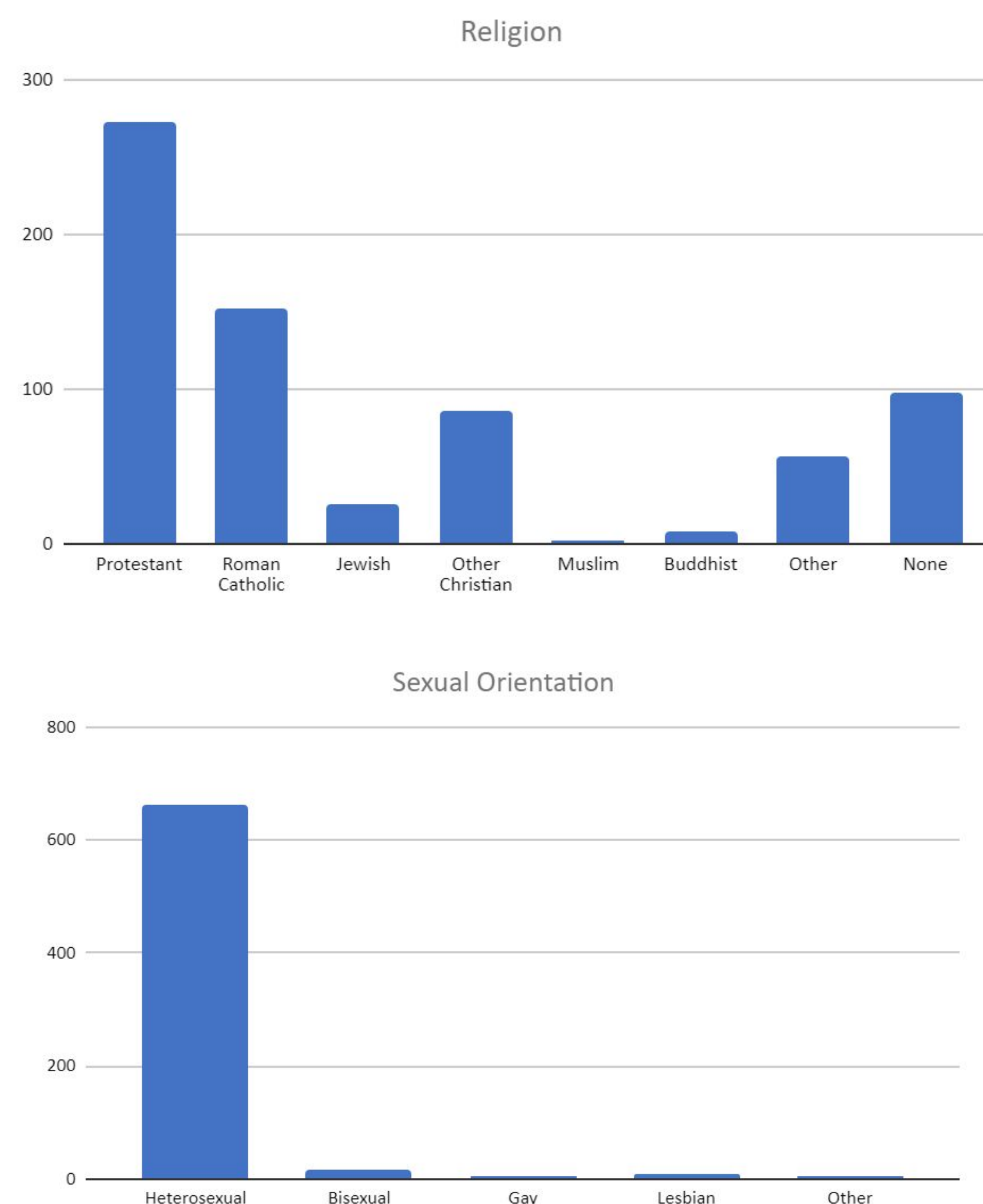
Participants

$N = 700$

Age: ($M = 56$, $SD = 12.5$)



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Method

Micro-aggression recognition survey. A 5-point scale which investigates how likely one might endorse certain statements was developed. Examples include: “I would feel compelled to tell a student’s gay fathers to stop holding hands at school, especially when children are around” and “It would be easier on students if their bisexual parents chose opposite-sex partners” (Herbstrith, 2020).

Personality measures. The Big Five Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and Right-wing authoritarianism scale (Altemeyer, 1981) were used.

Procedure

Participants consisted entirely of teachers from different grade levels at different districts; the study was advertised through Facebook. Participants were given a Microaggression Recognition Survey to complete along with the Big Five Inventory and Right-wing authoritarian scale to measure personality.

Results

Figure 1 shows intercorrelations. Using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013), direct and indirect effects of RWA were estimated for Openness to Experience and Microaggression Perpetration. Bootstrapping (5000 samples) generated confidence intervals for the indirect effects. Figure 1 shows that RWA mediated the Openness –Microaggression relation. The indirect effect of Openness on Microaggression ($ab = -0.14$) was significant, as 95% CL (-0.16, -0.12) did not include 0. The direct effect of Openness on Microaggression Perpetration remained significant (-0.12 , $t = 2.67$, $p < .01$) after accounting for RWA, indicating partial mediation.

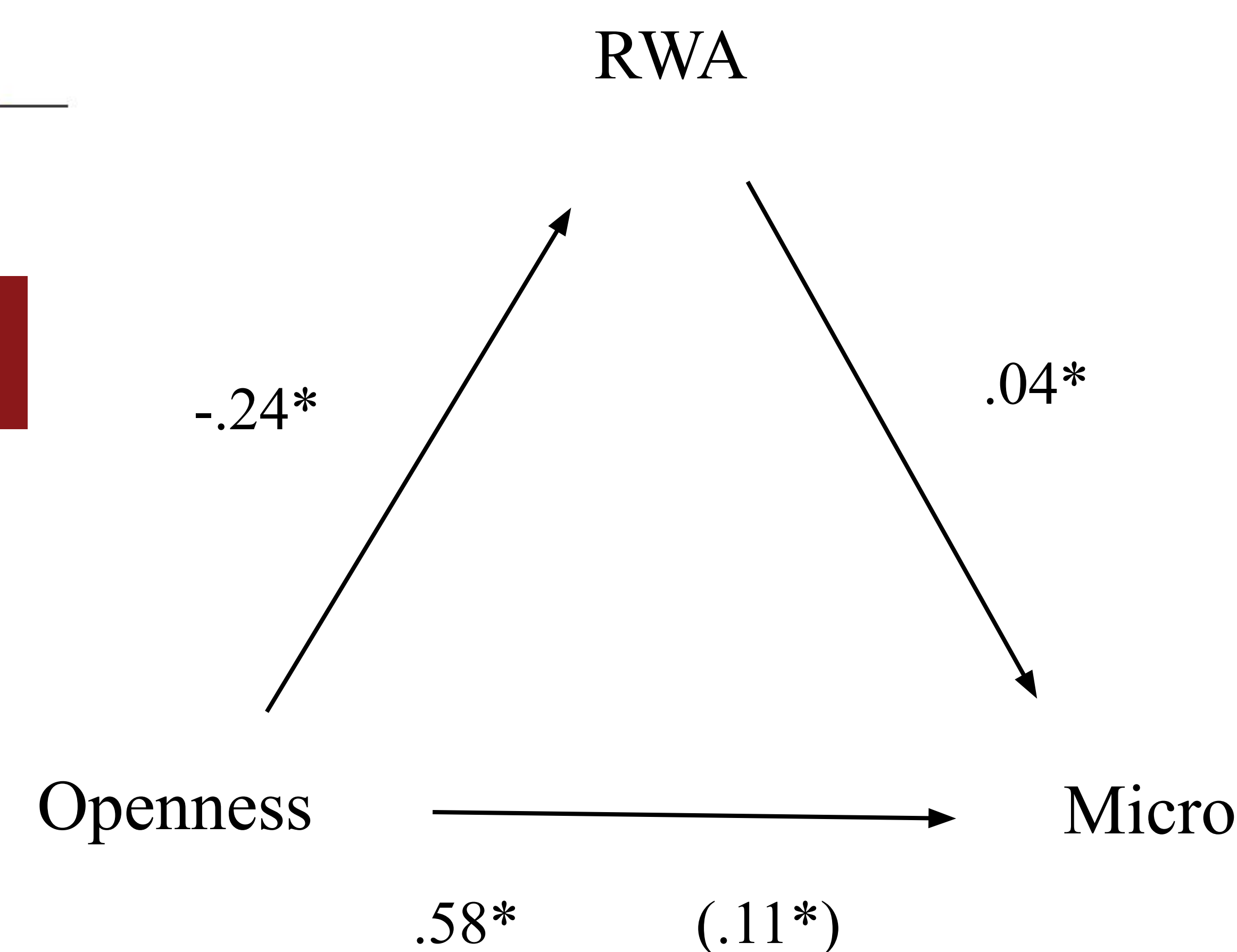


Figure 1. Standardized regression coefficients for the relation between Openness and Microaggression Perpetration as partially mediated by RWA. The standardized regression coefficient that shows the direct effect of Openness on Microaggression Perpetration is in parentheses. Model 2 $R^2 = 0.32$. $*p < .01$.

Openness and Micro-aggressions show a slightly positive correlation, $r(698) = .11$, $p < .01$; Openness and RWA show a slightly negative correlation, $r(698) = -.24$, $p < .01$; RWA and Micro-aggressions show a slightly positive correlation, $r(698) = .04$, $p < .01$.

Discussion

The study provided evidence for the interrelations among personality traits and people's tendencies to endorse micro-aggressive statements about LGB parents. This is important because it suggests that micro-aggressions and explicit prejudicial behavior share similar relations to RWA and Openness to Experience. This finding may shift our understanding of micro-aggressions as unintentional, "harmless" behavior. This study also demonstrated that people's scores on RWA partially mediated the relationship between people's scores on Openness to Experience and their endorsement of micro-aggressive statements about LGB parents. According to this study, RWA plays a significant role in people's willingness to endorse micro-aggressive statements. This is important because there is some evidence that RWA can be reduced via psycho-educational interventions, thereby reducing the likelihood to commit micro-aggressions.

Limitations. Social desirability might have interfered with the answers to the survey and personality measures. In regards to the descriptive statistics, few men participated in the study. Additionally, the study lacked ethnic/racial diversity.

References. Available upon request.