

”Exploring the Relationship Between Sexual Orientation and Moral Reasoning”

Saturday, September 13, 2025 2:10 PM (20 minutes)

ABSTRACT

Recent research has indicated higher levels of morally relevant personality traits—psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism (collectively known as the Dark Triad)—among non-heterosexual individuals. However, little is known about how sexual orientation may influence moral reasoning. In this study, we examined moral reasoning using the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ-30) in a sample of 31 non-heterosexual individuals (20 males, 3 asexual; mean age = 35.12, SD = 10.04) and 90 heterosexual individuals (16 males; mean age = 32.8, SD = 11.04). Additional variables known to predict moral evaluation—interoceptive awareness (assessed via the MAIA-2), disgust sensitivity (DS-R), empathy (QCAE), and emotional processing (TAS-20)—were also measured. After applying Bonferroni corrections, results revealed a significantly lower overall MFQ-30 score among non-heterosexual participants ($M = 87.29$, $SD = 13.96$) compared to heterosexual participants ($M = 97.74$, $SD = 17.61$), with significant differences specifically in the Authority/Respect and Purity/Sanctity subscales. Furthermore, consistent with existing literature, positive correlations were found between MFQ-30 scores and subscales of the DS-R, QCAE, and MAIA-2 among heterosexual individuals. While the small sample size of the non-heterosexual group and gender imbalance within the heterosexual group limit the generalizability of the findings, the results offer preliminary evidence that non-heterosexual orientation may be associated with lower endorsement of certain moral foundation values. Emotional and cultural influences could help explain these differences.

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Session Classification: Lunch and poster 3

Track Classification: Social cognition