TITLE: Genetic and environmental influences on sexual orientation: Moderation by childhood gender nonconformity and early-life adversity

FULL AUTHOR LIST: Olakunle Ayokunmi Oginni¹, Katarina Alanko², Patrick Jern², Frühling Vesta Rijsdijk¹

AFFILIATIONS: ¹The Social, Genetic and Developmental Psychiatry centre, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, Denmark Hill, King’s College London, ²Department of Psychology, Åbo Akademi University, FIN-20500, Åbo, Finland.

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ABSTRACT: Existing evidence indicates genetic and non-genetic influences on sexual orientation; however (Bailey et al., 2016), the possibility of gene-environment interplay has not been previously formally tested despite theories indicating this (Rind, 2013; Bem, 1996). This study investigated whether childhood gender nonconformity and early-life adversities independently moderated individual differences in sexual orientation and the relationship between sexual orientation and childhood gender nonconformity in a Finnish twin cohort. It also investigated the etiological bases of the proposed moderation effects. Sexual orientation, childhood gender nonconformity and early-life adversities were assessed using standardized questionnaires. Twin modelling was carried out using Structural Equation Modelling in OpenMx (Boker et al., 2011). The present study showed that childhood gender nonconformity and early-life adversities...
were significantly associated with increased individual differences in sexual orientation 
(β = 0.14 and 0.18 respectively, 95% CIs: 0.13-0.21) and covariance between sexual 
orientation-childhood gender nonconformity (β = 0.06 and 0.08 respectively, 95% CIs: 
0.04-0.11). Moderation of individual differences in sexual orientation was explained by 
genetic (βA = 0.50 for childhood gender nonconformity, 95% CI: 0.45-0.56) and 
individual-specific environmental influences (βE = 0.07 and 0.10 for childhood gender 
nonconformity and early-life adversities respectively, 95% CIs: 0.02-0.17) while 
moderation of the relationship between sexual orientation and childhood gender 
nonconformity was driven by individual-specific environmental influences (βE = 0.15 and 
0.10 for childhood gender nonconformity and early-life adversities respectively, 95% CIs: 
0.04-0.21). These findings suggest that etiological (genetic and environmental) 
influences on sexual orientation are dynamic and are in turn influenced by 
developmental factors.

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OpenMx: An open source extended structural equation modeling framework. 

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