
Attraction and love as predictors of sexual behaviour in European adolescents

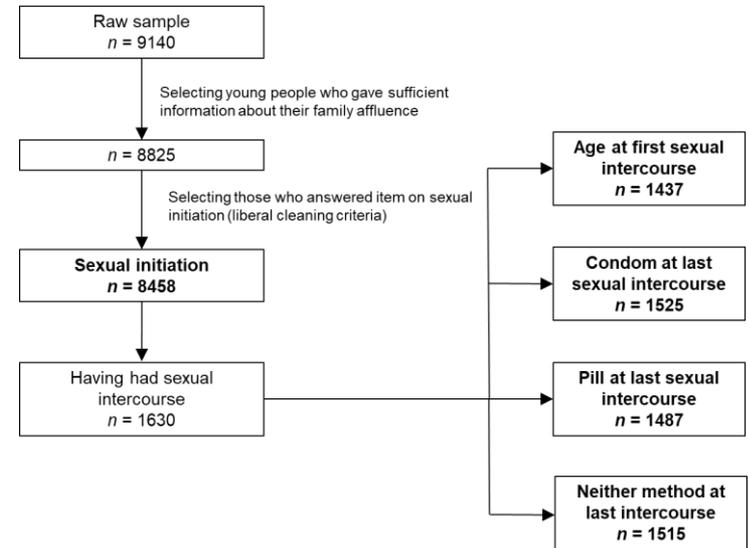
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Sexual minority status and sexual behaviour

- Violation of **sexuality-related human rights of youth**, especially sexual minority young people (SMY)
- SMY at **disproportionate risk** of early sexual initiation, sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancy involvement, non-consensual sex, sexual abuse and violence, and dating violence
- Sexual behaviour and risks of SMY are **scarcely studied**, especially outside North America
- **Inclusive sex and relationships education** is prioritised by SMY
- **Aim:** to compare SMY to their non-minority peers in terms of having had sexual intercourse, early first sex, (lack of) condom, contraceptive pill, or either method at last sexual intercourse
- Compare whether **defining SMY by love or attraction** makes a difference in the outcomes

Method

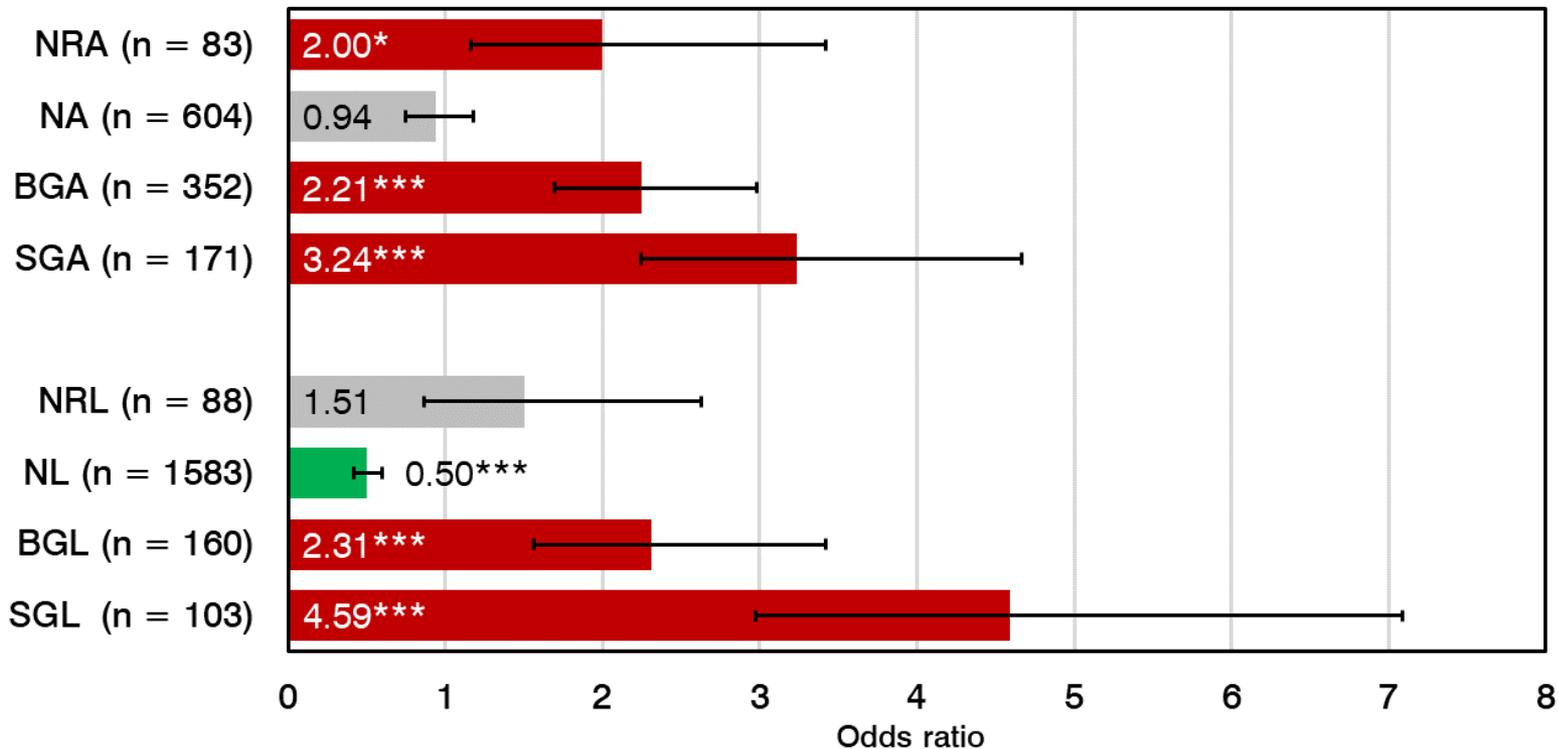
- **Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC)**, a WHO collaborative cross-cultural study
- **Nationally representative** samples of 15-year-old adolescents in France, Hungary, Ireland, Republic of Moldova, the Netherlands, and North Macedonia ($n = 8458$)
- **Attraction and love** (Költő et al., 2018)
- Having had **sexual intercourse, early first sex** (at younger than 14), not using **condom** at last intercourse or not sure, not using **contraceptive pill** at last sexual intercourse or not sure, not using **either method** or not sure (Young et al., 2016)
- Weighted binary logistic regression models, adjusted or unadjusted for country, gender and family affluence



Results

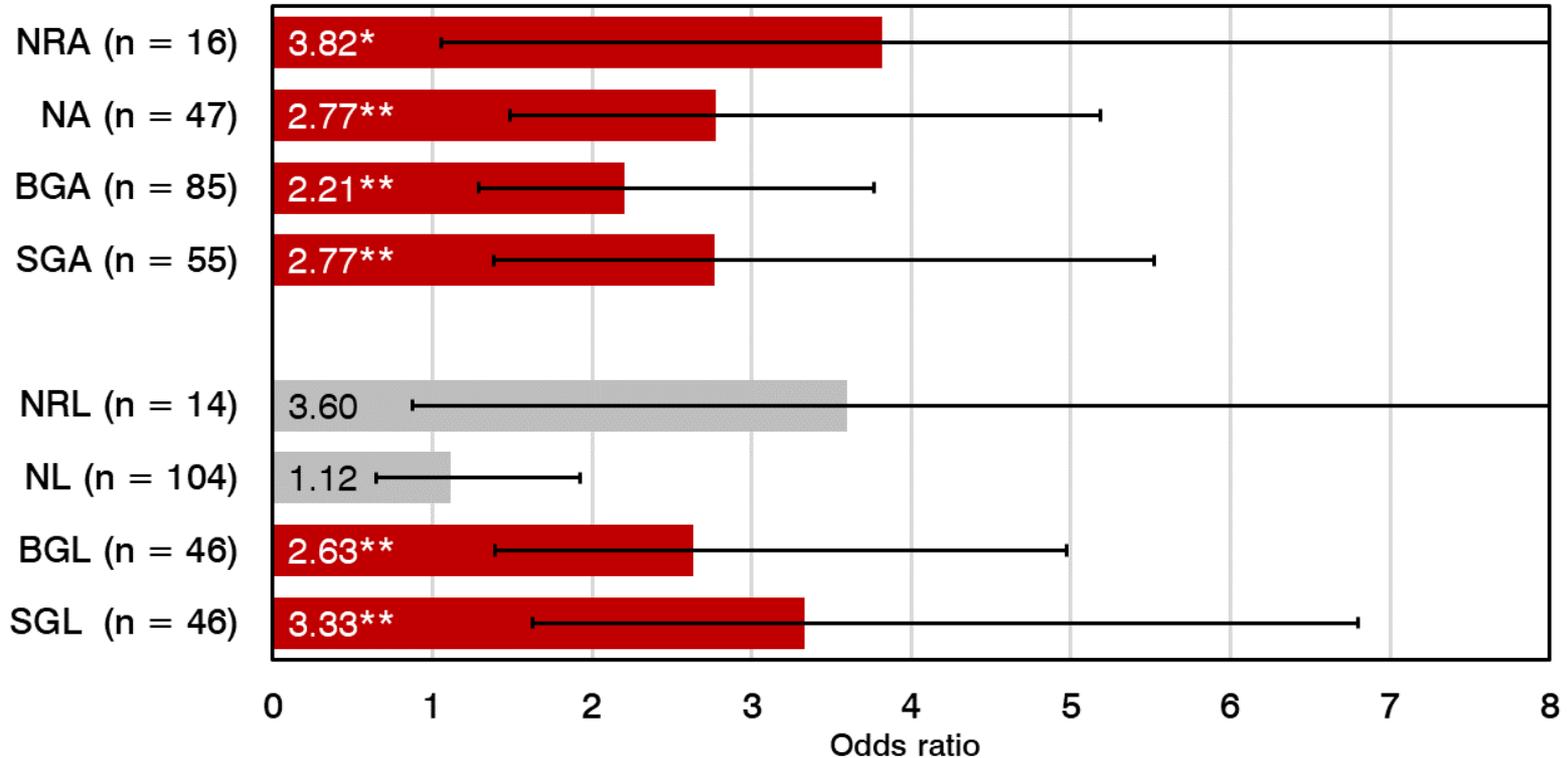
- **Binary logistic regression models, adjusted** for country, gender and family affluence (sexual intercourse, early first sex, condom use at last intercourse) or **unadjusted** (contraceptive pill at last intercourse, neither condom nor pill at last intercourse)
- Odds ratio (attracted to / in love with opposite-gender partners = 1)
- Error bars mark 95% confidence interval
- **NRA** = No response to the attraction item; **NA** = Not attracted; **BGA** = Attracted to both gender partners; **SGA** = Attracted to same-gender partners;
- **NRL** = No response to the love item; **NL** = Not in love; **BGL** = In love with both-gender partners; **SGL** = In love with same-gender partners
- * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Association of attraction/love and having had sexual intercourse,
adjusted models (n = 8458)



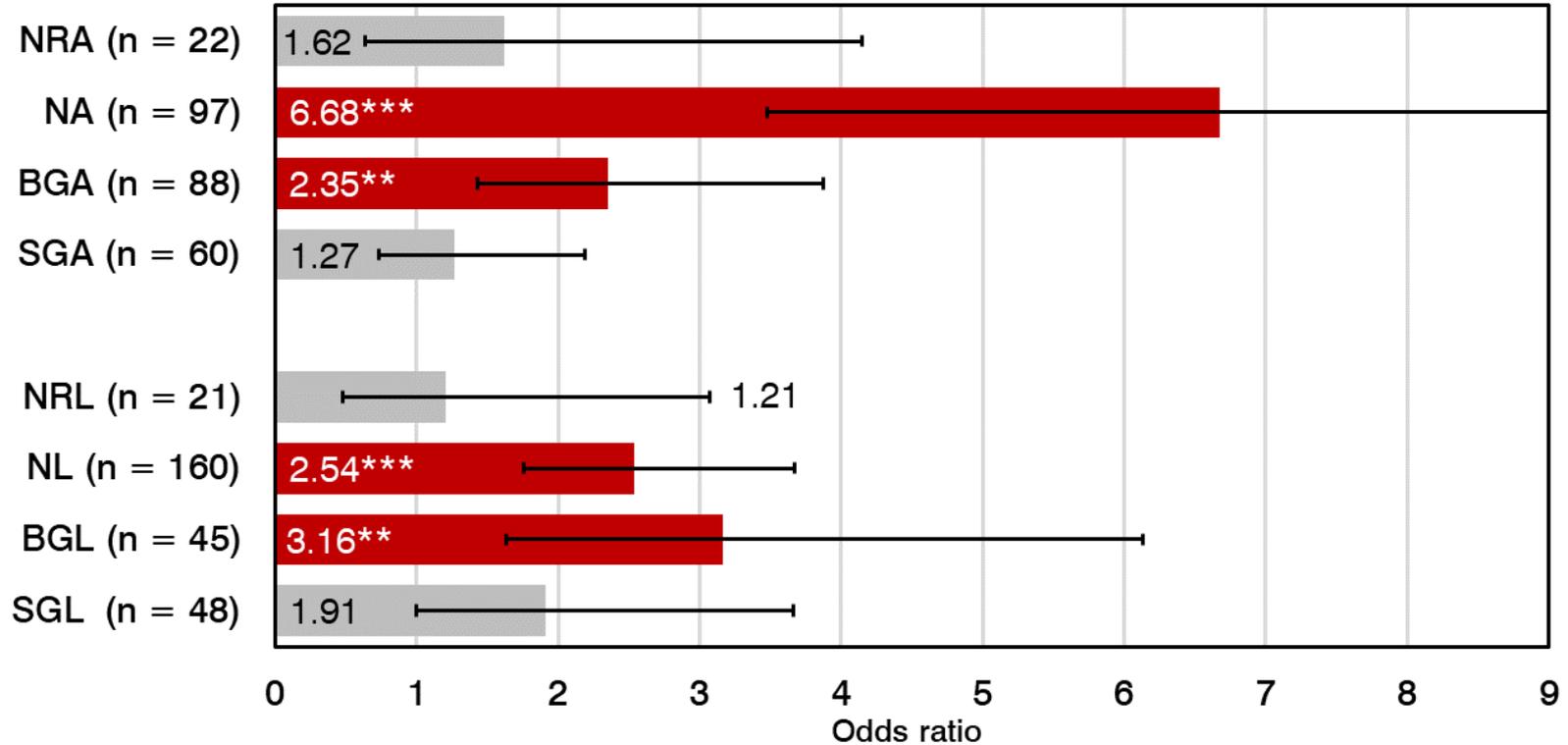
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Association of attraction/love and early first sex, adjusted models (n = 1437)



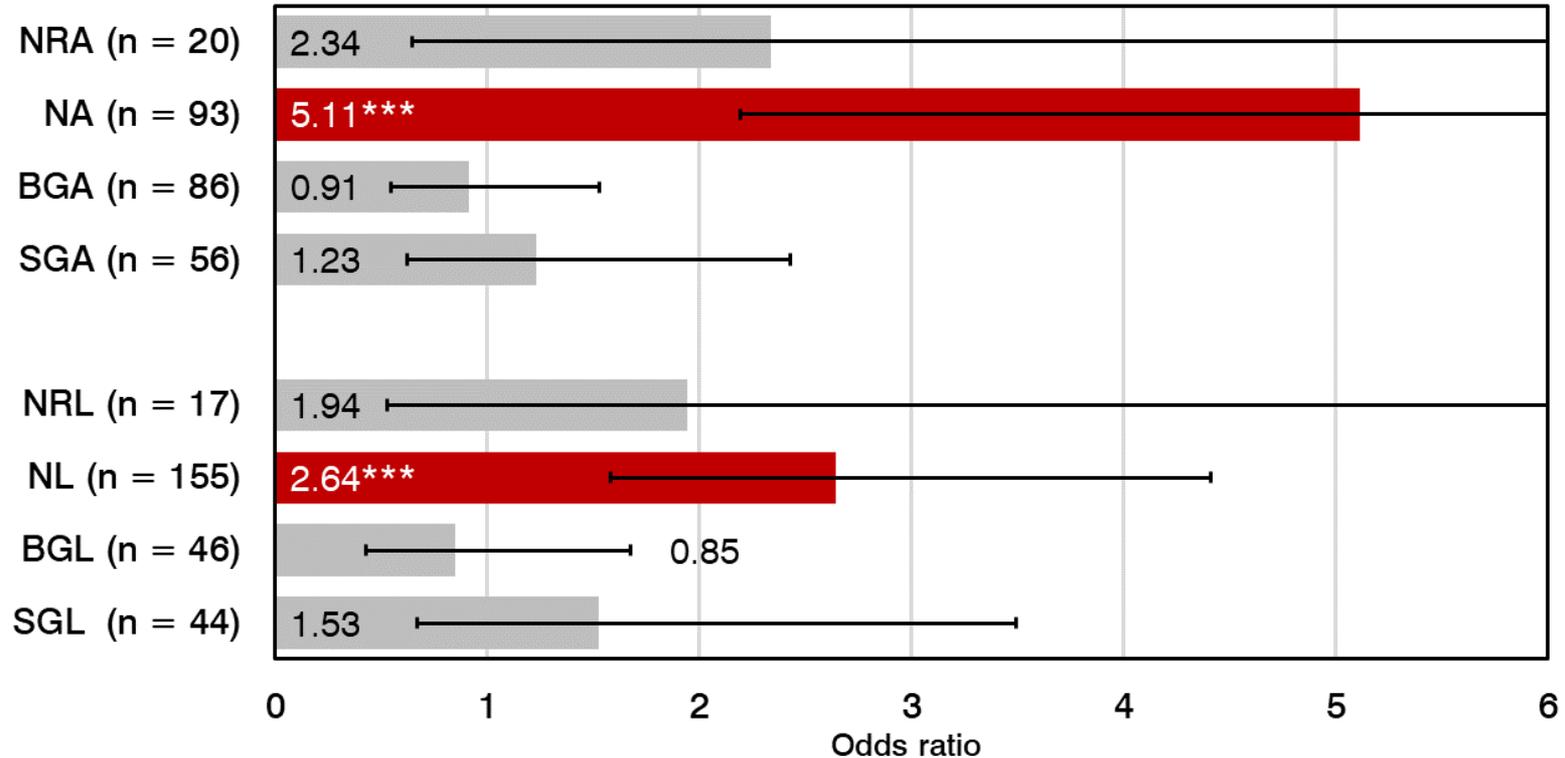
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Association of attraction/love and not using (or not sure about using) a condom at last sexual intercourse, adjusted models (n = 1525)



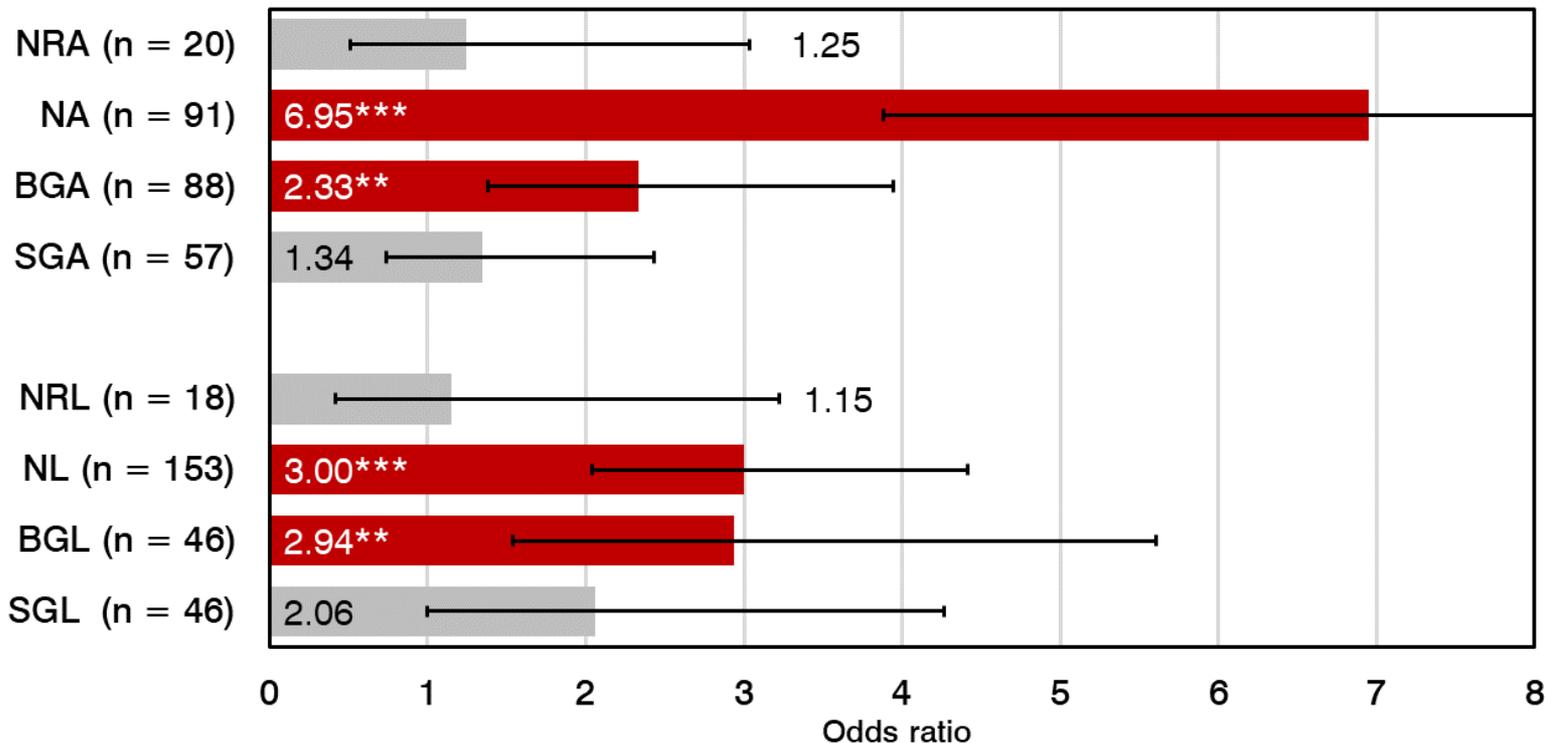
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Association of attraction/love not using (or not sure about using) contraceptive pill at last sexual intercourse, unadjusted models (n = 1487)



NRA = No response to the attraction item; **NA** = Not attracted; **BGA** = Attracted to both gender partners; **SGA** = Attracted to same-gender partners; **NRL** = No response to the love item; **NL** = Not in love; **BGL** = In love with both-gender partners; **SGL** = In love with same-gender partners

Association of attraction/love not using (or not sure about using) either condom or contraceptive pill at last sexual intercourse, unadjusted models (n = 1487)



NRA = No response to the attraction item; **NA** = Not attracted; **BGA** = Attracted to both gender partners; **SGA** = Attracted to same-gender partners; **NRL** = No response to the love item; **NL** = Not in love; **BGL** = In love with both-gender partners; **SGL** = In love with same-gender partners

Discussion

- Not being attracted is **predictive** of sexual intercourse and early sex, while not being in love is **protective**
- Disproportionate risk of **both-gender** attracted/love youth for all risky sexual health outcomes, except lack of pill use at last intercourse
- Potential **explanations**: heterosexist pressure to engage in heterosexual sex; 'camouflaging' sexual minority status; lack of information/awareness as targeted health promotion programmes for gay and bisexual males do not cover pregnancy
- Social minority stress and **stigma management** (Saewyc, 2014)
- **Complex determinants** of sexuality
- Sexual health promotion programmes: **holistic** and **skill-based approach** rather than concentrating solely on condom use

Thank you

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