

Why Do Sexual Orientation Differences In Male Masturbation Exist?

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Introduction

- Masturbation is characterized by **sex differences**:
 - Men masturbate more frequently^{1, 2}
 - Men begin to masturbate earlier³
- There are also **sexual orientation differences** within men:
 - Homosexual men masturbate more frequently^{1, 2}
 - Homosexual men report greater pleasure from masturbation⁴
 - Homosexual men are more likely to masturbate in front of a mirror⁴
- Homosexual men are **androphilic** (i.e., attracted to men), meaning that they possess the same type of sexed body that they desire
- Heterosexual men are **gynephilic** (i.e., attracted to women) and do not possess the same type of sexed body that they desire
- **RESEARCH QUESTION**: Do homosexual men eroticize their bodies more than heterosexual men, resulting in sexual orientation differences in masturbation?

Method

- **Participants**: 38 homosexual men (M age = 22.8 years, SD = 3.7), 65 heterosexual men (M age = 20.6 years, SD = 2.8)
 - Sexual orientation determined by Kinsey scale scores (fantasy since age 18)
 - Recruited from the University of Lethbridge and from across Canada via advertisements sent to gay and lesbian organizations and posted on websites
- **Measures**: the Body Eroticization Subscale of the Autoandrophilia Questionnaire
 - **Body Eroticization Subscale (BES)** - assesses degree to which men experience erotic feelings toward their own bodies
 - Rated on 7-point likert scale (1 = not at all true for me; 7 = very true for me)
- **Data Analysis**: Mann-Whitney U tests on 10 individual items from the BES and average BES scores
 - Independent variable = BES scores
 - Dependent variable = sexual orientation

Results

Figure 1: Mean Body Eroticization Subscale Scores

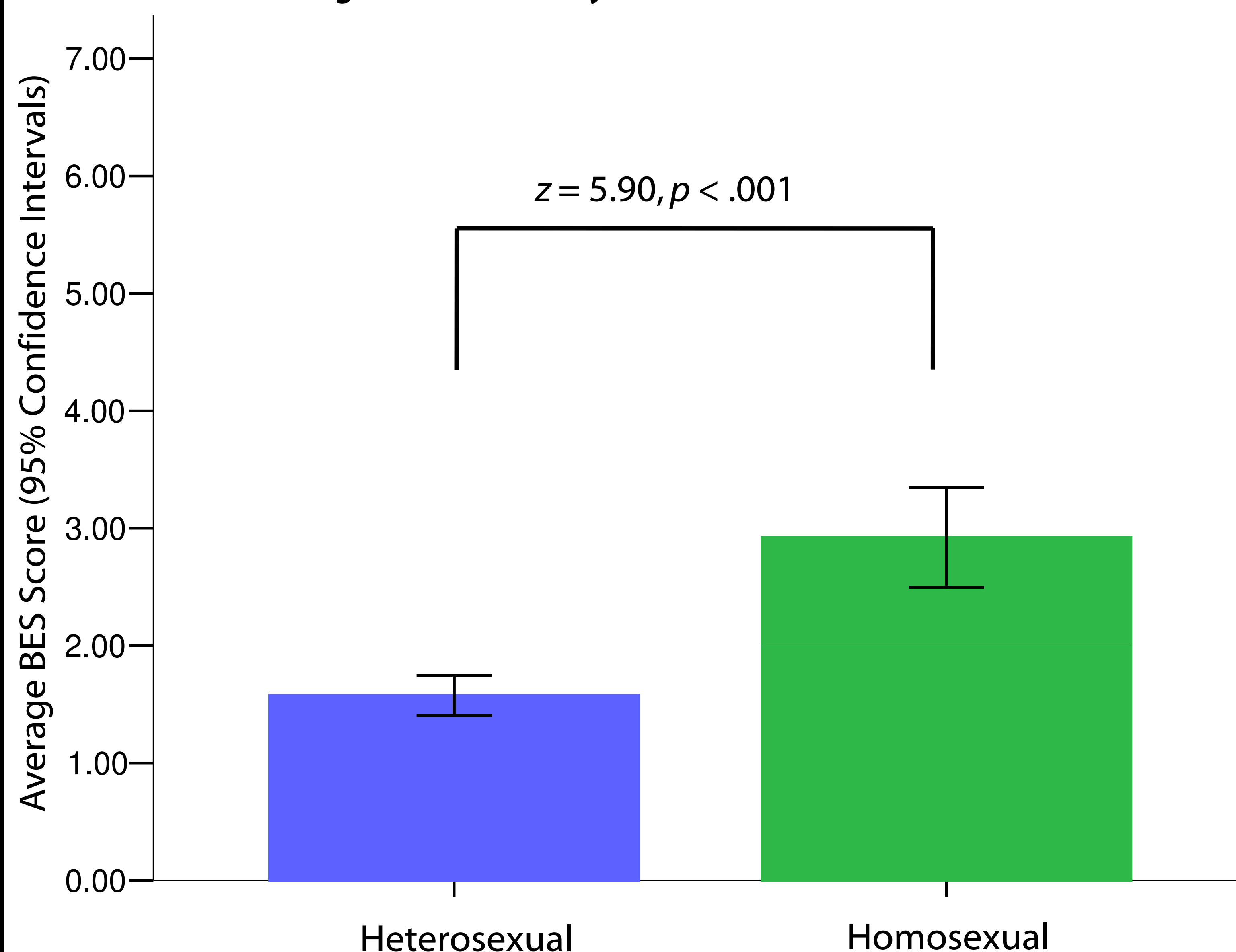


Table 1: Means and standard deviations of the Body Eroticization Subscale Items

Body Eroticization Subscale Item	Homosexual Mean (SD)	Heterosexual Mean (SD)	Mann-Whitney U
Sometimes I become sexually aroused because of my masculine appearance	4.00 (1.79)	2.22 (1.36)	***
Looking at or thinking about my own naked body is sexually arousing	3.16 (1.94)	1.80 (1.19)	***
Just thinking about having a man's body can be enough to get me sexually aroused	4.78 (1.99)	1.17 (.49)	***
The idea of masturbating in front of a mirror is sexually arousing	3.13 (1.91)	1.89 (1.44)	***
I would be aroused watching a video of myself touching my naked body and masturbating	2.56 (1.76)	1.46 (1.12)	***
Naked pictures of myself would arouse me	2.24 (1.57)	1.32 (.71)	***
My body turns me on because I find my body sexy	2.27 (1.68)	2.09 (1.61)	*
I become sexually aroused when I look at, or touch, my chest	3.32 (1.82)	1.45 (1.04)	***
When I masturbate, I have the most intense orgasms when I think about how sexy my body is	1.84 (1.40)	1.22 (.55)	**
When I masturbate, I like to think about my facial hair beard, mustache, goatee) or having facial hair	1.47 (1.11)	1.11 (.41)	*

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion

- Homosexual men exhibited higher average Body Eroticization scores; they also scored significantly higher on each of the individual items from the Body Eroticization Subscale items
- The results suggest that homosexual men tend to eroticize their bodies more than heterosexual men
- Future research should investigate whether elevated self-directed eroticism correlates with masturbation frequency, experiences, and behaviours, as a means of understanding sexual orientation differences in these phenomena

References

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