

Moral judgments are a crucial part of social life. Based on moral judgments we decide who deserves our trust, whom we should avoid, what behaviors are rewarded and which of them we should punish. We believe in the objectiveness of our moral compass what sometimes leads to controversy and moral disagreement. One of the main reasons why societies often disagree about morality is a common belief about rational nature of moral judgments, which science does not confirm. Within two last decades, scholars interested in moral psychology discovered that people rather produce moral judgments based on fast and automatic intuitions than rational and controlled reasoning. For example, moral cognition research showed that moral judgments arise in approximately 250 milliseconds and even then when we are not able to explain them. Developmental psychologists proved that babies at the age of 3 months, who do not have any lingual skills, can distinguish good protagonist (the helping one) from the bad one (the hindering one). It does not mean that peoples' moral judgments are based only on intuitions. We can use deliberative processes however it occurs only in friendly conditions – when the individual is both motivated to engage in and capable of conscious responding.

Intuitive and automatic nature of moral judgments makes them prone to biases. For example, people influenced by disgust cast harsher moral judgments, even though they are not aware what guided their decisions. Recently, scholars showed that self-interest involvement: I profit from another person dishonest behavior; also, biases moral judgment. When unethical actions aid perceiver's interests, people judge fraudster action in a more lenient way. What is more interesting, interpersonal attractiveness (liking) explained why self-interests bias moral judgments. It turned out, that when a cheater is also acting in the name of our interests we like him or her more than when an individual is acting selfish, and this feeling biases our moral perception. Another line of studies showed that similarity-dissimilarity of beliefs, mere exposure, and facial mimicry influenced judgments of moral character measured in several ways. These influences were strongly and entirely mediated by changes in liking of the judged persons, suggesting that attitudinal influences lay at the core of moral character perceptions. Interestingly, among the research on moral judgments, only discrete emotions received substantial attention as a source of moral intuitions, while attitudes and moods were utterly ignored. The present project addressed this critical gap in knowledge by focusing on attitude-driven affect and moods as a factor shaping moral character attributions. Additionally, we will indicate the moderators which can hinder or bolster the influence of attitudes and moods on moral judgments and test the mediators of this relationship. We also want to clarify whether moods like emotions can distort moral judgments. These answers are relevant, because moral judgments are crucial for everyday situations and, as recent studies showed, they are also surprisingly frequent. For almost 13 000 daily events reported by participants, 29% of them were somehow related to morality.

In the present project, we will conduct ten experiments. In the first seven experiments, we will test potential moderators of attitudes influence on attributions of moral character. The proposed moderators are moral identity; breaking the moral foundation of care/harm; manipulation order; pointing the source of attitude; cognitive load and time pressure. We assume that mediators are: unethical amnesia; selective attention; and distorted perception of harm done. In the last three experiments, we will focus on how moods influence attributions of moral character. In these experiments, we will also test potential moderators of this relationship. We suspect that these moderators can be: information about mood source, wrong mood attribution, and information about judged behavior which is relevant to the moral domain. Apart from questionnaire measures, we will test mood changes by using the BIOPAC® station, which records such physiological changes as pulse pressure, blood volume pulse, temperature, GSR and respiratory function. We believe that the presented project will fill the critical gap in the psychology of moral judgments by showing its affective and subjective nature, therefore bringing back a reason to moral disagreements. In turn, we may make such disagreements less subjective, and thereby less disruptive for the society.