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What is the moral person like? An examination of the shared and unique perspectives on moral character

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Abstract

Objective: The psychological profile of the moral person might depend on whose perspective is being used. Here, we decompose moral impressions into three components: (a) Shared Moral Character (shared variance across self- and informant reports), (b) Moral Identity (how a person uniquely views their morality), and (c) Moral Reputation (how others uniquely view that person's morality).

Method: In two samples (total $N = 458$), we used an extended version of the Trait-Reputation-Identity model to examine the extent to which each perspective accounts for the overall variance in moral impressions and the degree to which social and personal outcomes were associated with each perspective, controlling for method variance (i.e., positivity and acquiescence bias).

Results: Results suggest that moral character impressions are strongly influenced by positivity and largely idiosyncratic. All components were related to higher levels of agreeableness. For the most part, however, the three components had unique correlates: people higher in Shared Moral Character tended to have higher standings on conscientiousness and honesty-humility, were more respected, and donated more during an in-lab game; people higher in Moral Identity endorsed various moral foundations to a greater extent; and people higher in Moral Reputation valued the loyalty foundation less.

Conclusion: These results demonstrate the value of considering multiple perspectives when measuring moral character.

KEYWORDS

moral character, personality, person perception, Trait-Reputation-Identity model

1 | INTRODUCTION

What is it like to be a person with strong moral character? For example, do moral people have distinctive ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving in nonmoral domains? Do they influence others? Are they happy? Answering such questions would shed light on the experience of being moral, as well as potential personal and social consequences of moral character. However, uncovering the psychological profile of the moral person requires a valid measure of morality. To date, researchers have relied on self-reports, informant reports, or behavior in

isolation to measure moral character (for a review, see Sun & Schwitzgebel, in prep). In some ways, self- and other-reports have substantial advantages over behavioral measures because they are convenient and because they reflect the aggregation of many instances of moral behavior in daily life (Hofmann et al., 2014), so taken together, they can form a more reliable and comprehensive view of a person's moral character. Yet, because moral traits are both highly evaluative (posing a problem for self-reports; Leising et al., 2021; Vazire, 2010) and at least somewhat internal (posing a problem for other-reports; Vazire, 2010), using only self-reports or only other-reports likely misses important information.

An alternative approach is to consider only the variance in moral perceptions that is shared between the self and multiple informants, as this reflects a shared social reality. This method arguably provides the best approximation of a person's actual moral character because it circumvents idiosyncratic biases; however, because self–other agreement for moral traits is low compared to other traits (Helzer et al., 2014; Sun & Goodwin, 2020), it might be difficult to rely on self–other composites. Rather than focusing on which perspective is most valid, here we consider the possibility that the self, others, and their shared perspective each provide unique insights into what the moral person is like. Specifically, we explore the nomological network of moral impressions across shared and unique perspectives of moral character. In doing so, we build on a growing body of work demonstrating the importance of teasing apart shared, private, and public personality impressions (Connelly et al., 2022; McAbee & Connelly, 2016), and provide a differentiated perspective on what it looks like to be a moral person.

1.1 | Conceptualizing and measuring moral character

Broadly speaking, *moral character* involves a subset of personality traits that reflect a disposition to think and act in virtuous, ethically admirable ways (Fleeson et al., 2014; Whiteley, 1960). The specific traits that are "virtuous" or "ethically admirable"—or are judged as such—can differ across formal ethical frameworks, cultures, and people (Graham et al., 2016). This precludes the possibility of measuring the "One True Morality" (Dahl, in press; Sun & Schwitzgebel, in prep), and we do not claim to do so here. Instead, in line with a common approach in the emerging psychological study of moral character (Barranti et al., 2016; Furr et al., 2022; Helzer et al., 2014; Sun et al., under review), we operationalize moral character in terms of a composite of widely accepted virtues. This person-centered, virtue ethics approach aligns with how people naturally make moral judgments (Uhlmann et al., 2015) and prioritizes ecological validity and psychological moral relevance (Meindl & Graham, 2014).

While there are many ways of indexing moral character, our moral character composite comprises the traits of fairness, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, and kindness. This combination of traits is distinct from both the agreeableness domain in the Big Five framework (McCrae & Costa, 1999) and the Honesty-Humility domain in the HEXACO framework (Ashton & Lee, 2009). Big Five agreeableness captures kindness, but not the integrity-related aspects of fairness, honesty, and trustworthiness. On the other hand, within the Honesty-Humility domain, only the fairness facet (which assesses tendencies towards avoiding fraud and can, therefore, be conceptualized as a blend of honesty, fairness, and trustworthiness) is particularly morally relevant (based on crowdsourced ratings of moral relevance; Sun et al., under review). The other Honesty-Humility facets of sincerity, greed avoidance, and modesty are arguably less morally relevant. Finally, neither Big Five agreeableness nor Honesty-Humility explicitly capture loyalty.

1.2 | Shared and unique perspectives on moral character

Our assumption that the self, others, and their shared perspective each provide unique insights into what the moral person is like is based on the Johari window (Luft & Ingham, 1955). This model suggests that although some information is shared between the self and others, there is nevertheless some information that is unique to the self (i.e., that others do not know) and some that is unique to others (i.e., that the self does not know). This insight is particularly relevant for evaluations of moral character because many moral traits are at least partially concealable (e.g., honesty might only be knowable to the self) and some have low base rates (e.g., bravery). These features reduce the observability of certain moral traits.

1.2.1 | Perspectives on moral character using the Trait-Reputation-Identity model

This tripartite conceptual framework for understanding moral character can be empirically tested using the Trait-Reputation-Identity (TRI) model (McAbee & Connelly, 2016). As shown in Figure 1, this approach uses a bifactor structure to model: (a) a general factor onto which all self- and informant-report items load, which conceptually reflects shared perceptions of a person's moral character (Shared Moral Character); and perspective-specific

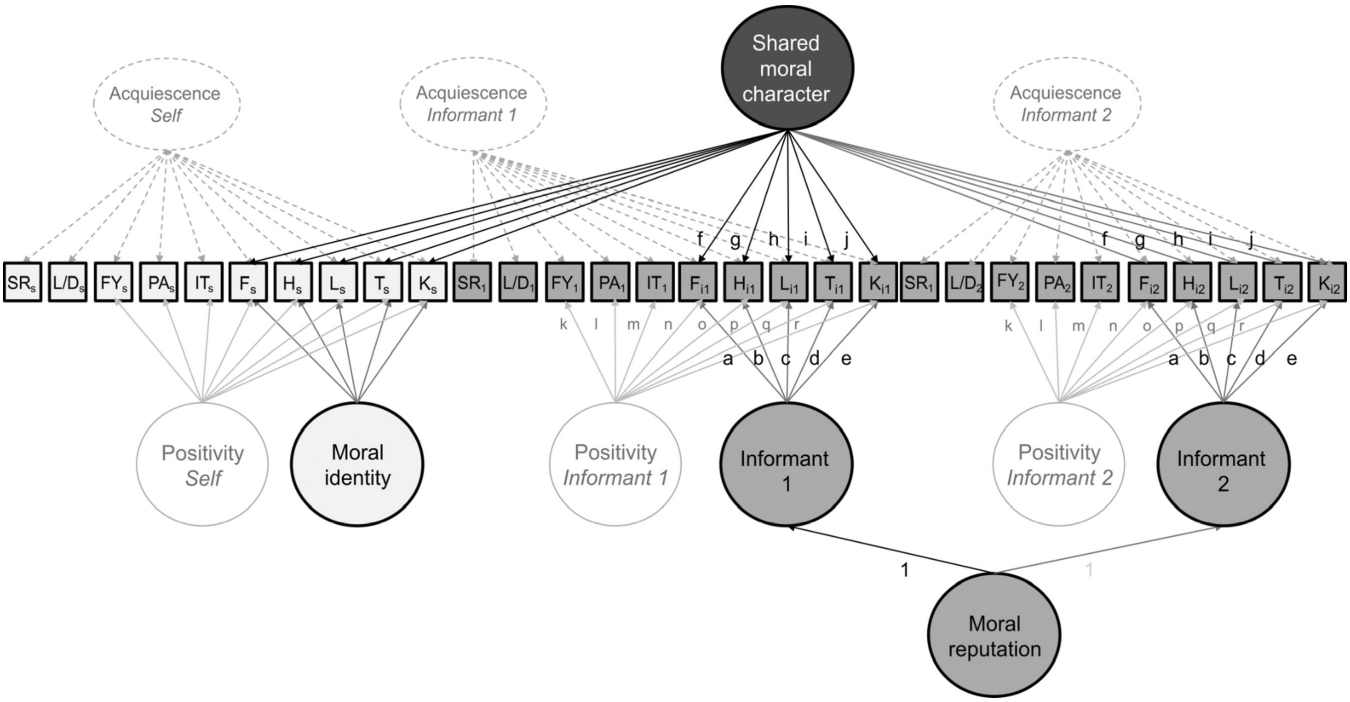

FIGURE 1 Conceptual model of moral impressions. This model is based on the TRI model (McAbee & Connelly, 2016). Indicators with the subscript *s* represent self-reports and indicators with the subscripts *i1* (or *1*) and *i2* (or *2*) represent ratings made by the first and second informants, respectively. The letters in the indicators correspond to the items; for the moral factors, the items are: fairness (F), honesty (H), loyalty (L), trustworthiness (T), kindness (K). The positivity factors have three additional items: funny (FY), physically attractive (PA), intelligent (IT). The acquiescence factors have two additional items: serious (SR) and either lethargic (Sample 1) or depressed (Sample 2) (L/D). To model the interchangeability of the informants, factor loadings of each of the respective informant indicators (e.g., i2) were constrained to equality across informants (e.g., λi2). These constraints were applied for all informant factors (morality, positivity, and acquiescence) and are indicated by the labels *a* through *r*. Similarly, the residuals and intercepts (not visualized) for the informant-reported items were also constrained to equality across the two informants. All loadings for the self- and informant-reported acquiescence factors were fixed to 1.

factors for (b) self-reports (Moral Identity) and (c) informant reports (Moral Reputation), which capture everything that is not shared between the self and others.

Moral Identity reflects aspects of moral character that no one else observes, such as internal states and (im)moral acts conducted in private (Vazire, 2010). For example, if Meg donates privately to charity, others might not think that she is particularly generous even though her self-reports would suggest that she is. Conversely, if Meg is a good liar, others might assume that she is honest whereas she knows that she is not. If so, Moral Identity would provide valid insight into a person's character that others' perceptions would not capture.

Moral Reputation reflects aspects of morality that only others see; perhaps information that others are more willing and able to provide that the self is unwilling or unable to disclose (Vazire & Carlson, 2011; Vazire & Mehl, 2008). Indeed, given that people often consider humility to be a moral virtue (Wright, 2019), people who are moral in many contexts of their lives might develop a moral reputation that diverges from their self-perceptions. If so, Moral Reputation would provide valid information beyond Moral Identity. Like the Shared Moral Character factor, the Moral Reputation factor is also based on shared variance; in this case, the commonality between informants' reports.

Importantly, however, trait ratings of any kind are an unknown blend of trait-specific judgments (i.e., the substance that we are interested in) and sources of noise, such as positivity (i.e., someone's attitude towards the target; Leising et al., 2021; McAbee & Connelly, 2016) and response styles. This means that the perspective-specific factors reflect a blend of true moral variance (that is unique to the self or to others), idiosyncratic biases, response styles, and method variance (McAbee & Connelly, 2016). Critically, more evaluative traits are more likely to be distorted by attitudes (Leising et al., 2021; Vazire, 2010). Because morality is a highly desirable trait domain (Cottrell et al., 2007; Goodwin et al., 2014), it is likely that a large part of self- and other-reported moral character judgments reflects the rater's attitudes (e.g., Pringle et al., 2023). Such positivity

biases can stem from motivational and social desirability factors (Robins & John, 1997; Vazire, 2010). Because people are motivated to see themselves as moral (Prentice et al., 2019; Tappin & McKay, 2017), they might be unwilling to admit to being immoral. These biases might be associated with morality in some cases (e.g., if immoral people overestimate their own morality, whereas moral people underestimate their own morality; or, if humble people are unwilling to report that they are humble; Davis et al., 2010; Kruger & Dunning, 1999). Informant reports are not affected in the same way by ego-protection motives (e.g., informants are not as personally invested in maintaining a moral image of Meg as she is in maintaining her moral self-views; Vazire, 2010), but are not immune to other positivity biases (e.g., halo effects).

Positivity biases and response styles pose a particular challenge for measuring moral character because attitudes are typically idiosyncratic (i.e., uncorrelated across perspectives; Anusic et al., 2009; Pringle et al., 2023), which suggests that they are sources of bias rather than valid information. When it comes to identifying the nomological network of the moral person, positivity might attenuate multimethod correlations (e.g., Meg's self-reports of moral traits weakly correlate with objectively rated behavior or with informant reports) and inflate monomethod correlations (e.g., Meg's self-reports of morality and self-esteem will be strongly correlated due to attitude variance).

Because the Shared Moral Character factor reflects only the common variance between perspectives, it should be devoid of these idiosyncratic sources of noise. This bolsters the idea that the Shared Moral Character factor is likely to contain a larger share of valid moral variance (relative to noise), compared to the perspective-specific factors (which may contain a smaller signal-to-noise ratio). So, why not just rely on Shared Moral Character, if it provides the most "purely" estimate of a person's morality? First, the Shared Moral Character factor requires some degree of overlap. If there is not enough shared variance between perspectives—which is possible, given past work demonstrating low agreement for moral character (Helzer et al., 2014; Pringle et al., 2023)—the TRI model will not fit the data. In other words, there is some chance that morality is entirely in the eye of the beholder. Even in a less extreme case, it is possible that the Shared Moral Character factor accounts for a trivial amount of the total variance in moral impressions, whereas the Moral Identity and Moral Reputation factors account for a much larger share of the total moral variance. If so, relying on Shared Moral Character would provide a tragically incomplete picture of what the moral person is like.

Fortunately, as shown in Figure 1, idiosyncratic positivity biases and response styles can be teased apart from the perspective-specific factors. Doing so can help to increase the amount of substantive moral variance in the Moral Identity and Moral Reputation factors. The TRI model can then reveal how much variance in moral impressions is explained by the unique self- or other-perspectives, the shared factor, and positivity and response biases. By controlling for positivity and response biases that would otherwise distort the effect sizes for the correlates of the Moral Identity and Moral Reputation factors, this approach also allows us to more cleanly compare the nomological networks of the three perspectives on moral character.

1.2.2 | Psychological correlates of each perspective

We argue that the Shared Moral Character, Moral Identity, and Moral Reputation factor each provide unique information about a person's moral character. Accordingly, each perspective should be associated with a distinct psychological profile. To get a sense of what these profiles might be, we explored the traits, values, behavior, and well-being of moral people, as well as the social consequences associated with being a moral person. Existing theories and studies provide some sense of plausible correlates of moral character (summarized in Table 1 for concision). However, because past research has not typically distinguished between the three perspectives, the current literature does not enable strong predictions about which psychological profiles will be associated with each perspective. For these reasons, this examination was exploratory; that is, we did not have specific hypotheses about how each of the three perspectives would be related to these psychological correlates. However, in general, it seems reasonable to assume that the Moral Identity factor would be more likely to be related to private or internal correlates (e.g., moral values), compared to more observable outcomes. Likewise, we assume that the Moral Reputation factor would be related to more observable correlates (e.g., social capital), rather than more internal correlates.

1.3 | Present research

The current work aims to better understand what a person who has higher levels of moral character is like by simultaneously exploring three perspectives on moral character: a shared perspective (Shared Moral Character), a unique self-perspective (Moral Identity), and a unique reputation perspective (Moral Reputation). Our first goal is to explore the degree to which moral impressions arise from a shared social reality or are in the eye of the beholder, above and beyond positivity and method variance. To do so, we use

TABLE 1 Potential psychological correlates of moral character.

Correlate	Justification for potential association (or lack thereof)
Nonmoral personality traits	• Agreeableness and conscientiousness have been described as "the classic dimensions of character" (McCrae & John, 1992) • Honesty-humility has sometimes been interpreted as "integrity" (Szirmák & De Raad, 1994), "trustworthiness" (Di Blas & Forzi, 1998), or "morality" (John et al., 1988) • There is conceptual overlap between our measurement of moral character and the domains of Big Five agreeableness (kindness) and Honesty-Humility (fairness, honesty, trustworthiness) • People tend to rate extraversion and neuroticism as being less morally relevant (Sun & Goodwin, 2020) • People do not believe that improving facets of their extraversion and neuroticism would improve their morality much (Sun & Berman, under review)
Moral behavior and values	• Self-reports of Honesty-Humility and guilt-proneness were both positively related to prosocial behavior across a variety of games, and both self- and informant reports of Honesty-Humility predicted allocations during a dictator game (Thielmann et al., 2020) • Informant reports had unique predictive validity (beyond self-reports) for fairness in the dictator game (Thielmann et al., 2017) • It is an open question as to whether certain values are especially likely to motivate people to be more moral (e.g., Amormino et al., 2022), whether moral people value all moral foundations, or whether moral people could pursue different moral values (Fleeson et al., 2023)
Social consequences	• Those who are perceived as being moral tend to be liked and respected (Goodwin et al., 2014; Hartley et al., 2016; Sun et al., under review)
First impressions	• People preferentially seek morally relevant information when forming first impressions of others (Brambilla et al., 2011; Goodwin et al., 2014) • First impressions of morality are likely based mostly on observable behavior, and might, therefore, be more related to Moral Reputation than Moral Identity
Well-being	• Informant-reported morality (as judged by close others, colleagues, and acquaintances) was associated with higher subjective well-being and meaning in life (Sun et al., under review) • Meta-analytic results revealed a modest positive association between (largely self-reported) prosociality and well-being (Hui et al., 2020)

self- and informant-perceptions of moral character to decompose moral ratings into the three TRI components, as well as positivity and acquiescence factors. Our second goal is to better understand the psychological profile of the moral person from these three perspectives. To do so, we explore the nomological network of the Shared Moral Character, Moral Identity, and Moral Reputation factors. Taken together, this work offers nuanced insights into different perspectives on a person's moral traits. Our analyses were not preregistered, but our codebooks, anonymized data, analysis scripts, and supplemental analyses are openly available at: https://osf.io/7cj8n/?view_only=5966abb871af4fde810926344e7797b2.

2 | METHOD

2.1 | Participants and procedure

We used data from two previously collected studies. Both studies received ethical approval from the Institutional Review Boards at the University of Toronto, Mississauga (Sample 1 Protocol #31168) and McGill University (Sample 2 Protocol #317-1217). Other published articles have used items from Sample 1, including self- and informant reports of the moral items (honest, trustworthy, loyal, fair, kind; Pringle et al., 2023; Rau et al., 2021). Neither article used the TRI model to analyze the data and the research questions were distinct from those investigated in this manuscript.

In both samples, target participants completed self-report measures online, before attending an in-lab session in small groups. In Sample 1, targets nominated four informants; in Sample 2, targets brought one informant to the lab session and nominated two additional informants. The TRI model assumes that each target has exactly two informants. If targets had more than two informants, we kept the first two informants and excluded additional informants. Targets with no informant reports were excluded from analyses; however, to use all available data from targets who had at least one informant, we retained targets with only one informant-report and used maximum likelihood estimation for our analyses. Table 2 summarizes the characteristics of the targets and informants who were included in the final analyses.

Sample 1 originally included 493 undergraduate students from the University of Toronto Mississauga. Of these, 227 were excluded for having 0 informants. The

TABLE 2 Overview of the characteristics of the targets and informants.

	Sample 1	Sample 2
Targets		
Sample size	266	192
M_{age} (SD_{age})	19.25 (2.25) years	21.88 (4.24) years
Ethnicity	87 South Asian, 32 East Asian, 27 Western European, 25 Middle Eastern, 23 Eastern European, 15 African, 13 South East Asian, 9 Caribbean, 4 South American, 1 Native American, 7 self-identified	80 White, 7 Black or African American, 44 Asian, 9 Middle Eastern, 32 Other
Gender	19% male, 73% female, 8% did not respond	16% male, 73% female, 0.05% self-identified, 11% did not respond
Informants		
Sample size	407	346
M_{age} (SD_{age})	26.28 (13.38) years	23.24 (7.85) years
Ethnicity		
Gender	22% male, 62% female, 15% did not respond	29% male, 67% female, 0.9% other, 2.5% did not respond
Relationship to target	59% friends, 16% parent, 9% sibling, 5% child, 5% other family member, 3% romantic partner, 3% another category	64% friend, 11% romantic partner, 8% sibling, 7% child, 5% parent, 2% spouse, 2% co-worker, 0.3% other family member, 0.3% neighbor, 0.3% another category

Note: Trait domains were measured using the Big Five model in Sample 1 and the HEXACO model in Sample 2. The "Neuroticism/Emotionality" rows, therefore, refer to Big Five Neuroticism in Sample 1 and HEXACO Emotionality in Sample 2. "-" indicates that the variable was not measured in a particular sample.

remaining 266 targets had at least 1 informant, with 141 targets having 2 or more informants. This resulted in a final sample of 266 targets and 407 informants in Sample 1. Targets were compensated up to $40 CAD or a mix of course credit and money. As compensation, informants were entered into a lottery for a $20 CAD Amazon.ca gift card.

Sample 2 included 192 community participants and undergraduate students from McGill University. Because all participants brought one informant with them to the lab session, all 192 targets had at least 1 informant and 154 targets had 2 or more informants. Participants were compensated with up to $90 CAD or a mix of course credit and money.

2.2 | Measures

Below, we report the measures that we used in this study. All other measures are reported in the study codebooks on the OSF. The means, standard deviations, and alpha reliability estimates for all measures are presented in Table 3.

2.2.1 | Moral impressions

We collected self- and informant reports of five moral traits in both studies: fair, honest, loyal, trustworthy, and kind. Although there were additional moral traits in each sample (humble, generous, cooperative in Sample 1 and equitable, dutiful, compassionate, caring in Sample 2), we chose to use only the items that were consistent across the two datasets in order to make them as comparable as possible. This collection of moral trait items is similar to previous work (e.g., Barranti et al., 2016; Helzer et al., 2014). Participants in Sample 1 indicated their agreement with the item (e.g., "I am someone who is trustworthy") on a 9-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 9 = *extremely*); in Sample 2, the items were rated a 9-point bipolar scale (e.g., 1 = *untrustworthy*, 9 = *trustworthy*).

2.2.2 | Personality trait domains

Both samples included self- and informant reports of participants' broad personality trait domains. Informants completed the same items as the targets, but each item (e.g., "I would never accept a bribe, even if it were very large") was adapted to be from the informant's perspective (e.g., "[Target's name] would never accept a bribe, even if it were very large"). Each trait domain factor was modeled using a weighted aggregate of self- and informant-reported items from their respective scales as indicators, such that each perspective was weighed equally (50% self, 50% informants; see Supplemental Table D1 for the results for self- and informant-report perspectives separately).

Sample 1 did not contain an established personality measure. Following previous work (Rau et al., 2021), we

TABLE 3 Descriptive statistics for both samples.

	Study 1			Study 2		
Variable	***M***	***SD***	***α***	***M***	***SD***	***α***
Moral character						
Self-reports	7.52	0.83	0.73	7.58	0.85	0.74
Informant reports	7.92	0.76	0.77	7.77	0.74	0.80
Self-reported trait domains						
Extraversion	5.47	1.88	0.73	3.28	0.71	0.81
Agreeableness	7.17	1.27	0.67	3.22	0.73	0.82
Conscientiousness	5.87	1.77	0.52	3.55	0.67	0.80
Neuroticism/Emotionality	4.69	1.70	0.48	3.64	0.63	0.73
Openness	6.57	1.14	0.37	3.79	0.66	0.77
Honesty-Humility	–	–	–	3.37	0.72	0.76
Informant-reported trait domains						
Extraversion	6.33	1.53	0.73	3.40	0.60	0.87
Agreeableness	7.51	1.13	0.64	3.27	0.62	0.82
Conscientiousness	6.65	1.46	0.62	3.58	0.64	0.89
Neuroticism/Emotionality	3.89	1.34	0.48	3.46	0.58	0.85
Openness	7.32	1.13	0.39	3.67	0.62	0.87
Honesty-Humility	–	–	–	3.37	0.60	0.83
Self-reported moral values						
Care/harm	4.88	0.74	0.66	4.88	0.67	0.58
Fairness	4.89	0.65	0.65	4.88	0.69	0.68
Loyalty	3.96	0.87	0.71	3.46	0.80	0.63
Authority	3.91	0.84	0.64	3.37	0.82	0.62
Purity	3.71	1.04	0.78	2.87	0.90	0.68
Moral behavior						
Round 1 donation	–	–	–	11.61	5.41	–
Average donation	–	–	–	12.27	5.23	–
Moral first impression	–	–	–	6.51	1.36	–
Social consequences						
Popularity						
Self-report	4.78	2.06	–	5.10	1.94	–
Informant-report	6.27	1.90	–	6.53	1.42	–
First impression	–	–	–	6.53	1.58	–
Influence						
Self-report	6.24	1.67	–	5.84	1.69	–
Informant-report	6.81	1.57	–	6.32	1.35	–
First impression	–	–	–	6.49	1.67	–
Respect						
Self-report	7.25	1.37	–	6.71	1.42	–
Informant-report	7.65	1.20	–	7.40	1.01	–
First impression	–	–	–	6.92	1.42	–
Well-being						
Life satisfaction	–	–	–	4.62	1.24	0.88
Self-esteem	5.34	2.03	–	4.73	1.08	0.91

Note: Trait domains were measured using the Big Five model in Sample 1 and the HEXACO model in Sample 2. The "Neuroticism/Emotionality" rows, therefore, refer to Big Five Neuroticism in Sample 1 and HEXACO Emotionality in Sample 2. "–" indicates that the variable was not measured in a particular sample.

used a collection of adjective ratings that is comparable to the TIPI. Specifically, each of the Big Five were measured with 2 items (Extraversion: outgoing, introverted [r]; Agreeableness: warm, compassionate; Openness: intellectual, creative; Conscientiousness: disorganized [r], self-disciplined; Neuroticism: calm [r], anxious), on a 9-point scale (1 = *Not at all*, 9 = *Extremely*). In Sample 2, targets' personality traits were measured with the HEXACO-60 (10 items per domain; Ashton & Lee, 2009). Participants indicated their agreement with various items (e.g., "[I/Target's name] would be quite bored to visit an art gallery") on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). Given that the Big Five and HEXACO frameworks conceptualize agreeableness and emotionality/neuroticism in unique ways (Ashton et al., 2014; Ludeke et al., 2019), we report the results for agreeableness, emotionality (HEXACO; Sample 2), and neuroticism (Big Five; Sample 1) separately for each sample.

2.2.3 | Moral values

In both studies, moral values were assessed with the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ; Graham et al., 2011). The MFQ asks respondents about which factors they consider most relevant when judging whether something is right or wrong (e.g., "Whether or not someone conformed to the traditions of society"; 1 = *not at all relevant*, 5 = *extremely relevant*) and about their broader moral beliefs (e.g., "Justice is the most important requirement for a society"; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). We examine the correlations between moral character and each of the five moral foundations.

2.2.4 | Moral behavior

In both samples, participants came to the lab and played a Public Goods game in groups of 4–6. For the Public Goods game, participants were allocated $20 in Monopoly money and were told to divide their allocation between the community chest—which would be multiplied by 1.5 (3 participants), 2 (4 participants), 2.5 (5 participants), or 3 (6 participants) and then distributed equally to all players at the end of the round—and their private chest—which they alone would keep. Participants were told that they could redeem the Monopoly money at the end of the session for entries into a raffle to win a $50 Amazon gift card. Participants first completed a practice round and then completed 3 actual game rounds. We used their allocation to the community chest as a measure of in-lab moral behavior. Specifically, we conducted the analyses using their donations on the first actual (vs. practice) round, because conceptually, this should reflect people's tendency to behave prosocially in the absence of group-specific feedback. For completeness, we also conducted the analyses using their average donation across all three rounds. Donations were group-mean centered to account for the fact that some groups donated more on average than others.

2.2.5 | First impressions

In Sample 2, participants provided round-robin ratings of their group members. First impressions of morality were measured with a composite of five items that were comparable to the self- and informant-reported moral items (i.e., fair, honest, loyal, trustworthy, compassionate). The items were measured on 9-point bipolar rating scales (e.g., 1 = *unfair*, 9 = *fair*). Because the data were in round-robin format, we used Social Relations Analyses (Kenny, 2004) to compute the target effects for this composite, which reflects the way that a participant was generally seen by their group members.

2.2.6 | Social consequences

In Samples 1 and 2, participants and their informants reported the extent to which the participant was popular, respected, and influential. All ratings were made on a 9-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 9 = *extremely*). Given that popularity, influence, and respect are conceptually different, we conducted the analyses separately for each indicator; each one was modeled as a manifest variable. Participants in both samples provided their impressions of their group members throughout the session (i.e., at the beginning, midpoint, and end of the session). We use impressions at the end of the session because by that point, participants should have some information beyond physical stereotypes on which to base their impressions. Like the moral first impressions described above, we used Social Relations Analyses to extract target effects for popularity, influence, and respect, which were then used as manifest indicators. Because social capital is inherently interpersonal and must be granted by others, we focus only on informant reports and zero-acquaintance ratings of social capital (i.e., we exclude self-reports of these items).

2.2.7 | Well-being

We assessed two dimensions of well-being—satisfaction with life (Sample 2 only) and self-esteem (both

samples)—and modeled them as separate outcomes. In Sample 2, participants reported their life satisfaction using the 5-item Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985). The SWLS asks participants about their general life satisfaction (e.g., "I am satisfied with my life") with items rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

In Sample 1, self-esteem was measured with one item ("I have high self-esteem"; Robins et al., 2001) using a 9-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 9 = *extremely*). In Sample 2, self-esteem was measured with the 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1965), which asks participants about their global self-attitudes (e.g., "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself"). The RSES was rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

2.3 | Analyses

All analyses were conducted in R (4.0.3; R Core Team, 2022) using the *lavaan* package (Rosseel, 2012) with maximum likelihood estimation.

2.3.1 | TRI model

The main analyses use the TRI model (McAbee & Connelly, 2016) to decompose self- and informant-reported moral character into Shared Moral Character, Moral Identity, and Moral Reputation factors. As shown in Figure 1, the TRI is a bifactor model in which (1) all moral items across perspectives load onto the Shared Moral Character factor, (2) self-reported moral items load onto a Moral Identity factor, (3) the informant-reported moral items load onto two informant factors (i.e., informant 1 items load onto the informant 1 factor) and these two informant factors in turn load onto a higher-order Moral Reputation factor. Informants were modeled as interchangeable (McAbee & Connelly, 2016) and as such, their factor loadings, intercepts, and residual variances were constrained to be equal for comparable items (e.g., the loading for informant 1's rating of fairness was fixed to be the same as informant 2's rating of fairness). The loadings of the two informant factors were likewise constrained to load equally onto the higher-order informant factor.

Importantly, because the Shared Moral Character factor contains only the common variance across both perspectives, all the idiosyncrasies in self- and informant reports are funneled into the Moral Identity and Moral Reputation factors. Practically, this means that these factors contain an unknown blend of substantive and nonsubstantive variance. To address this, we also modeled a Positivity factor and an Acquiescence factor for each perspective (Figure 1). Because all the moral items were positively keyed, we included two additional negatively keyed items (serious and lethargic in Sample 1; serious and depressed in Sample 2) to create the Acquiescence factors. All loadings for the Acquiescence factors were fixed to 1. The Positivity factors are composed of the moral items within each perspective as well as three additional evaluative adjectives: funny, physically attractive, and intelligent. The underlying logic for this factor is that the only reason all these items should be related is because they are tied together by a person's positive or negative attitudes towards the target (see Anusic et al., 2009; Pringle et al., 2023 for similar approaches). Put differently, these items come from conceptually distinct domains that, theoretically, should not substantially overlap. Thus, if there is common variance among the items, then it is likely driven by the rater's attitudes. Conceptually, this model takes a strict stance that moral character is devoid of positivity, though there is an argument to be made that positivity actually *is* a substantive component of moral impressions. Thus, for completeness, we also ran the analyses without accounting for attitudes and acquiescent responding (see Supplemental Tables G1–G7).

We first fit the bifactor model without the Positivity and Acquiescence factors in each sample to ensure that the structural TRI model fit the data reasonably well (Sample 1: CFI = 0.914, RMSEA = 0.054, SRMR = 0.076, AIC = 9671; Sample 2: CFI = 0.935, RMSEA = 0.051, SRMR = 0.075, AIC = 7674). The fit worsened with the addition of Positivity and Acquiescence factors (Sample 1: CFI = 0.789, RMSEA = 0.052, SRMR = 0.087, AIC = 21,890; Sample 2 CFI = 0.737, RMSEA = 0.063, SRMR = 0.105, AIC = 17,016), but this is very likely because of the added complexity of the models, which these fit indices are designed to penalize. In all of these models, the parameters were freely estimated: the only constraint was that the informant factors were fixed to equivalence (i.e., informants were interchangeable). Finally, we saved the parameters from the most complex model with positivity and acquiescence factors and subsequently used these parameters to constrain all the loadings, variances, and residuals in the sample-specific analyses where we examined the correlates of each of the moral factors. These parameters are presented in Supplemental Tables A1 and A2. This two-step process of separately fitting the measurement model and then constraining the parameters in a subsequent model to those estimates has been used in past work (McAbee et al., 2014) as a strategy for reducing model complexity and circumventing convergence issues, which are common among bifactor models (Zhang et al., 2021).

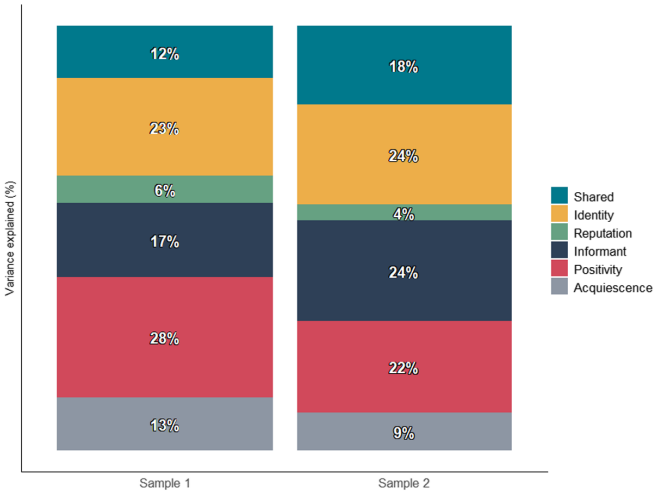

FIGURE 2 Variance decomposition of moral impressions including positivity and acquiescence factors in samples 1 and 2. "Shared" = Shared Moral Character factor; "Identity" = Moral Identity factor; "Reputation" = Moral Reputation factor; "Informant" = lower-order informant factors, which are represented by "Informant 1" and "Informant 2" factors in Figure 1.

2.3.2 | Variance decomposition

We decomposed the variance in both the TRI model without the Positivity and Acquiescence factors (Supplemental Figure G2) and in the TRI model with Positivity and Acquiescence factors in each sample (Figure 2). We calculated the variance explained by each factor by (1) squaring the standardized factor loadings for all factors, (2) summing the squared loadings within each factor, (3) summing the squared loadings across all factors, and (4) dividing the sum of squared loadings for a given factor by the total sum of squared loadings (i.e., the ratio of the sum of squared loadings for an individual factor to the sum of squared loadings for all factors). For the Moral Reputation factor, the proportion of variance explained was computed by squaring the loadings for the first-order informant factors onto the higher-order Moral Reputation factor, and then taking the product of these squared loadings. Informant variance reflects the variance that is accounted for by the first-order informant factors that is not explained by the Moral Reputation factor.

2.3.3 | Psychological correlates of TRI components

To examine the psychological profile of each component, we examined latent factor correlations with the psychological and interpersonal correlates outlined above. Specifically, each factor (Shared Moral Character, Moral Identity, and Moral Reputation) was constrained to correlate only with the variable of interest and not with each other (as indicated by the "orthogonal = TRUE" argument in *lavaan*). Using the same argument, the Positivity and Acquiescence factors were constrained to be independent of all factors.

To focus our interpretation on the overall results across both samples, in the main text, we report meta-analytic correlations where applicable (i.e., when a measure was used in more than one sample). We used the *meta* package (Balduzzi et al., 2019) in R to obtain these estimates. Inferences based on meta-analytic correlations should be more robust than inferences from one sample alone; however, we examine a sizable number of correlations, and not all variables were measured across both samples. To provide readers with an additional indicator of robustness, in the main text, we focus on describing correlates that survived a False Discovery Rate (FDR; Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995) correction. We use the FDR correction because it is less conservative than the standard Bonferroni correction (Chen et al., 2017). Still, to provide more information for readers who wish to apply less stringent inference criteria, we also indicate which effects were significant at uncorrected $p < 0.05$, 0.01, and 0.001 thresholds. Full results for each sample are presented in the Supplemental Tables E1 and E2.

3 | RESULTS

3.1 | Are there shared and unique components of moral character impressions?

As shown in Figure 2,[1] the Shared Moral Character factor explained the least amount of the variance (less than 20%)

whereas the Identity factor explained the most variance (23%–24%). Surprisingly, the higher-order Reputation factor, which reflects the amount of variance not accounted for by the Informant factors, explained relatively little variance (4%–6%) beyond the Informant factors (17%–24%). Notably, positivity explained as much variance as the Identity factor (22%–28%) suggesting that attitudes are a strong component of self- and informant-perspectives of morality.

3.2 | What is the psychological profile of the moral person?

Given that we were able to decompose moral impressions into the shared and nonshared components, we next examined the associations between each component and several psychological correlates. The full results are summarized visually in Figure 3 and the exact estimates are presented in Table 4.

3.2.1 | Shared moral character

People higher in the Shared Moral Character factor (i.e., those who both self-reported higher morality and whose informants rated them higher in morality) tended to be higher in honesty-humility, Big Five (but not HEXACO) agreeableness, and conscientiousness, and they tended to score higher in the care moral foundation. Furthermore, the Shared Moral Character factor was associated with donating more, on average, during an in-lab Public Goods game. In terms of social outcomes, informants tended to view these individuals as influential and tended to respect them. There were, however, no associations between the Shared Moral

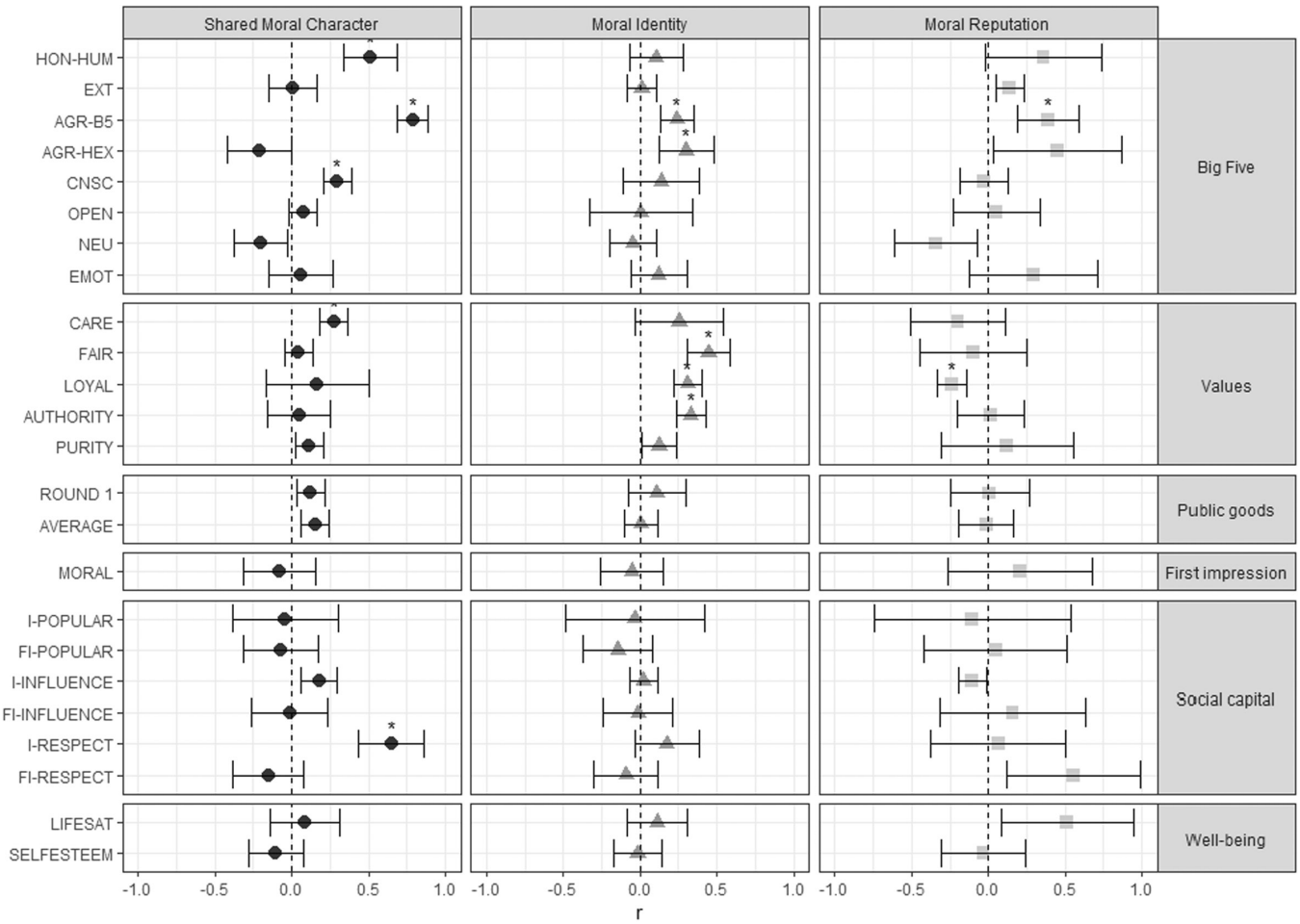

FIGURE 3 Correlates of the shared moral character, moral identity, and moral reputation factors. EMOT = Emotionality, NEU = Neuroticism, CNSC = Conscientiousness, OPEN = Openness, AGR-HEX = HEXACO Agreeableness, AGR-B5 = Big Five Agreeableness, EXT = Extraversion, HON-HUM = Honesty-Humility. Row names preceded with "I" = informant reports; row names preceded with "FI" = first impression. LIFESAT = life satisfaction. The 95% confidence intervals have not been adjusted for multiple comparisons. Asterisks represent effects that are significant at a FDR-corrected $p < 0.05$ threshold.

TABLE 4 Correlations between moral character components and outcomes.

	r [unadjusted 95% CI]		
Correlate	**Shared moral character**	**Moral identity**	**Moral reputation**
Personality			
Honesty-Humility	**0.50* [0.32, 0.68]**	0.12 [−0.05, 0.30]	0.32* [0.01, 0.64]
Extraversion	0.01 [−0.16, 0.17]	0.01 [−0.08, 0.10]	0.13* [0.04, 0.22]
Agreeableness			
Big Five	**0.79* [0.69, 0.89]**	**0.24* [0.13, 0.35]**	**0.39* [0.19, 0.59]**
HEXACO	−0.23* [−0.44, −0.02]	**0.30* [0.12, 0.48]**	0.36* [0.02, 0.70]
Conscientiousness	**0.30* [0.20, 0.39]**	0.14 [−0.10, 0.38]	−0.03 [−0.18, 0.13]
Openness	0.08 [−0.02, 0.17]	0.01 [−0.33, 0.34]	0.06 [−0.20, 0.33]
Neuroticism	−0.20* [−0.38, −0.03]	−0.05 [−0.20, 0.10]	−0.34* [−0.61, −0.07]
Emotionality	0.05 [−0.16, 0.26]	0.13 [−0.06, 0.31]	0.24 [−0.10, 0.59]
Moral values			
Care	**0.27* [0.18, 0.37]**	0.26 [−0.02, 0.54]	−0.16 [−0.40, 0.07]
Fairness	0.04 [−0.05, 0.13]	**0.45* [0.32, 0.58]**	−0.07 [−0.37, 0.23]
Loyalty	0.16 [−0.17, 0.49]	**0.32* [0.22, 0.41]**	**−0.21* [−0.31, −0.12]**
Authority	0.04 [−0.16, 0.24]	**0.34* [0.24, 0.43]**	0.01 [−0.20, 0.21]
Purity	0.11* [0.02, 0.20]	0.13* [0.02, 0.24]	0.09 [−0.28, 0.47]
Moral behavior			
Round 1 donation	0.12* [0.03, 0.22]	0.11 [−0.07, 0.30]	0.02 [−0.21, 0.25]
Average donation	**0.15* [0.06, 0.24]**	0.01 [−0.10, 0.11]	0.00 [−0.16, 0.15]
Moral first impression	−0.08 [−0.32, 0.16]	−0.06 [−0.26, 0.15]	0.16 [−0.23, 0.55]
Social consequences			
Popularity			
Informant-report	−0.04 [−0.40, 0.31]	−0.03 [−0.49, 0.42]	−0.13 [−0.72, 0.47]
First impression	−0.07 [−0.32, 0.18]	−0.15 [−0.38, 0.08]	0.04 [−0.34, 0.42]
Influence			
Informant-report	**0.18* [0.07, 0.29]**	0.02 [−0.07, 0.12]	−0.10 [−0.20, 0.00]
First impression	−0.02 [−0.27, 0.23]	−0.02 [−0.24, 0.21]	0.13 [−0.26, 0.52]
Respect			
Informant-report	**0.65*** [0.43, 0.86]**	0.18 [−0.03, 0.39]	0.07 [−0.37, 0.50]
First impression	−0.16 [−0.39, 0.07]	−0.10 [−0.31, 0.11]	0.46* [0.10, 0.81]
Well-being			
Life satisfaction	−0.10 [−0.28, 0.07]	−0.02 [−0.17, 0.14]	−0.03 [−0.30, 0.24]
Self-esteem	0.07 [−0.15, 0.30]	0.11 [−0.08, 0.31]	0.43* [0.08, 0.78]

Note: Estimates were pooled across the two studies where applicable (see Supplemental Tables D1 and D2 for the results for each sample). ***$p < 0.001$, **$p < 0.01$, *$p < 0.05$ (uncorrected). Bolded values reflect correlations that are significant at a FDR-corrected $p < 0.05$ threshold. 95% confidence intervals have not been adjusted for multiple comparisons. Neuroticism was only measured in Sample 1. Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, life satisfaction, and first impression ratings (for popularity, influence, respect, and morality) were only measured in Sample 2. We encountered convergence issues with the model for informant-reported respect in Sample 2, so the values reported in this table and in Figure 3 are based only on Sample 1.

Character factor and first impressions or well-being. Overall, this suggests that people higher in the Shared Moral Character factor are generally pleasant to be around in close relationships but that they do not necessarily make a strong impression when meeting new people for the first time and do not necessarily experience higher or lower well-being.

3.2.2 | Moral identity

People higher in the Moral Identity factor (i.e., those who self-reported higher morality but who were not necessarily viewed similarly by their informants) tended to be higher in Big Five and HEXACO agreeableness, and tended to value the fairness, loyalty, and authority

moral foundations. There were no other associations that survived a FDR correction. This suggests that people higher in this private sense of morality might not act in especially moral ways and are not seen by others (close others or new acquaintances) in especially positive or negative ways. Conceptually though, it makes sense that this factor would be related to the most internal correlate—namely, moral values—as both the Moral Identity factor and the moral foundations capture people's moral cognitions.

3.2.3 | Moral reputation

People who were higher in the Moral Reputation factor (i.e., those who were seen by their informants as moral but who did not necessarily see themselves this way) tended to be higher in Big Five (but not HEXACO) agreeableness and tended to value the loyalty moral foundation less. No other associations survived a FDR correction.

4 | DISCUSSION

What is the moral person like? Across two samples, we use the Trait-Reputation-Identity model (McAbee & Connelly, 2016) to show that, beyond positivity and response styles, moral impressions that are shared among the self and others (Shared Moral Character) can and do differ from the private moral self-perceptions people hold (Moral Identity) and from the moral reputation that people have not internalized (Moral Reputation). Overall, the Shared Moral Character factor reflected someone who was higher on morally relevant traits (honesty-humility, Big Five agreeableness, conscientiousness), who was generally respected, and who acted less selfishly in an in-lab setting; the Moral Identity factor reflected someone who was agreeable and who endorsed an array of moral foundations; and the Moral Reputation factor reflected someone who was agreeable and who valued the loyalty moral foundation less. That said, across all three factors, the moral person was high in Big Five (but not necessarily HEXACO) agreeableness, which is in line with the presumed strong overlap between morality and agreeableness (McCrae & John, 1992).

4.1 | Moral character impressions tend to be idiosyncratic

The Johari window (Luft & Ingham, 1955) suggests that it is informative to examine both the perceptions that are shared between the self and others as well as the perceptions that are unique to the self and those that are unique to others, as each offers new insight about the trait in question. By definition, the Shared Moral Character factor captures moral information that both the self and others have access to; that is, it captures a shared social reality. As a result, the Shared Moral Character might be tapping into someone who *acts* in moral ways: their character is visible to and acknowledged by both the self and others. Conversely, the nonshared factors might be more internal: the Moral Identity factor, for example, is most likely capturing people's moral values and moral cognitions, which are especially difficult for others to see or know but are readily available to the self. Finally, the Moral Reputation factor occupies an interesting space, as it reflects a shared social reality between informants that the self either is not privy to or does not agree with.

Our focus here was on the correlates of the moral components, but it is noteworthy that moral character impressions appear to be largely idiosyncratic. Most of the variance was accounted for by the nonshared perspectives (Moral Identity and Informant Uniqueness) and by raters' idiosyncrasies (Positivity and Acquiescence). Indeed, the Shared Moral Character factor explained less than a fifth of the total variance in all cases. When examining the item-level correlations (Supplemental Table F1), this is relatively unsurprising: there is very little self–other agreement at the item level (mean rs = 0.02/0.08 for Sample 1 and Sample 2, respectively). Practically, this suggests that it is difficult to describe the moral person because people clearly have different ideas of who is more or less moral. Conceptually, this raises the question of why these definitions differ and who should own the definition of moral character (Hofstee, 1994).

The overlap between self- and other-perceptions is often considered to be a more robust criterion compared to either perspective in isolation, as self- and informant reports are prone to a host of biases and distortions (e.g., socially desirable responding, acquiescent responding; Leising et al., 2021; Vazire, 2010). To mitigate the influence of these distortions, we explicitly modeled Positivity and Acquiescence factors, which theoretically should render the Moral Identity and Moral Reputation factors more trustworthy as they now reflect only substantive variance. Importantly, controlling for these sources of noise did affect the pattern of correlates, mostly for the nonshared factors (Supplemental Tables G2 and G3). In particular, we found fewer correlations with the Moral Identity and Moral Reputation factors when controlling for positivity and acquiescence. This suggests that positivity and method variance might have initially been driving associations with the correlates. Alternatively, it is plausible that because morality is highly desirable, moral variance could cause perceivers to form positive impressions of a targets'

various unrelated traits (e.g., intelligence, physical attractiveness, humor). If so, then our approach of controlling for positivity and method variance may have been overly conservative, partialling out valid moral variance. For this reason, we report all results for the base TRI model (i.e., without the Positivity and Acquiescence factors) in Supplement F.

4.2 | Honesty-humility, agreeableness, and moral character

Although we found consistent positive associations between all three factors and agreeableness as it is measured in the Big Five framework, the associations with agreeableness within the HEXACO framework were less clear. Specifically, whereas the Shared Moral Character was negatively related to HEXACO agreeableness (though this did not survive a FDR correction), the Moral Identity factor showed a significant positive association and the Moral Reputation factor showed a nonsignificant positive association with HEXACO agreeableness. Furthermore, only the Shared Moral Character factor was significantly positively related to honesty-humility.

At first glance, these findings might appear inconsistent; however, there are well-established theoretical differences between agreeableness within the HEXACO and Big Five frameworks, and between HEXACO agreeableness and honesty-humility. Within the HEXACO, agreeableness is characterized by tolerance and forgiveness, and it is generally antithetical to *anger* (Ashton et al., 2014), whereas in the Big Five framework, agreeableness is somewhat broader, encompassing kindness and compassion in addition to tolerance. Likewise, although honesty-humility and agreeableness within the HEXACO are both thought to result in prosociality, they represent different routes to this end point: people high in honesty-humility cooperate even in situations where they could exploit the other person, whereas people high in HEXACO agreeableness cooperate even when the *other* person seems exploitative (Ashton et al., 2014). With respect to the current work, then, the Shared Moral Character factor reflects someone who is compassionate and kind (Big Five agreeableness) and someone with integrity (honesty-humility) but not necessarily someone who is especially lenient in their judgments of others.

4.3 | Is it good to be moral?

Overall, only the Shared Moral Character factor was related to positive social outcomes, and none of the factors were related to self-rated well-being. We have argued that the Shared Moral Character factor likely reflects someone who acts morally, or whose character is particularly visible to outside observers—and, supporting this idea, we found that Shared Moral Character was related to donating more during an in-lab Public Goods game. It makes sense that someone who is considered to be moral within a shared social reality would also garner respect from others, given that morality is a desirable trait domain. And indeed, these results are in line with past work suggesting that a perceiver's perceptions of a target's moral character are associated with how much the perceiver likes and respects the target in general (Hartley et al., 2016). It is interesting that the Shared Moral Character factor was not related to first impressions of any kind. That said, morality is difficult to observe in general, and especially in a first impressions context with very little information. It would be beneficial for future work to explore in more depth the behavioral correlates of the Shared Moral Character factor, and to explore first impressions made in different circumstances (e.g., in a group interaction that involves more discussion to allow more relevant cues to surface).

That we found no associations between the moral factors and well-being is somewhat surprising, because recent work (Sun et al., under review) has found that having a reputation for being moral is related to self-reported life satisfaction. However, as noted above, it is possible that in attempting to control for positivity and acquiescence, we partialed out some valid moral variance. Without doing so, moral identity was associated with greater self-esteem, and moral reputation was associated with greater life satisfaction (see Supplemental Table E2).

4.4 | Limitations and constraints on generality

One notable limitation of the current work lies in our operationalization of moral character. We prioritized ecological validity in defining moral character in terms of widely accepted moral character traits (i.e., honesty, fairness, loyalty, trustworthiness, kindness). However, morality can also be defined more narrowly using a utilitarian or deontological lens, and it seems likely that the psychological profile of a person who is moral in a utilitarian sense, for example, would be quite different from that of a person who is moral in the sense of having high levels of widely accepted moral character traits. We also recognize that the traits we used represent only one of many possible operationalizations of moral character. When choosing these traits, aside from practical constraints (i.e., selecting items that were consistent across datasets) and conceptual constraints (i.e., selecting items based on past work), we were also mindful to

keep the number of items low. This was done in order to prevent the Shared Moral Character factors from inadvertently becoming Positivity factors: more items provide a larger bandwidth, but also increases the chances that the shared variance tying the items together stems not from substance but from global attitudes (Leising et al., 2021). Thus, we sacrificed bandwidth in some ways to preserve the substance of the factors.

Our work does not provide much information about the accuracy or predictive validity of each factor. Although we explored in-lab behavior and found no significant associations, correlating broad traits with specific in-lab behaviors is certainly not ideal. Unfortunately, the datasets we used were limited in the range of behavioral measures of moral behavior available. Future work might use the bifactor approach we have used here to examine the moral factors' associations with several instances of in-lab behavior and/or moral behavior in daily life (e.g., Bollich et al., 2016). It would be particularly useful for future work to try to capture immoral acts as these are most likely to be concealed and, therefore, should be related to the Moral Identity factor. That said, we recognize that it would require some methodological creativity to capture behaviors that people intend to conceal. However, this would provide more insight into the Moral Identity factor and would also act as a validity check for the model, because it would be surprising if concealed immoral behavior were related to the Shared Moral Character or Moral Reputation factors. Finally, incorporating additional self-reports about moral behavior (e.g., involvement in volunteering) and moral emotions would be useful for supplementing our findings.

The current studies were exploratory and were not preregistered, and the measures used for the correlates of interest varied across samples and some had especially low reliabilities (Table 3). For example, some of our personality measures were brief (e.g., the TIPI in Sample 2) or not validated (e.g., the assortment of trait adjectives in Study 1). Although replication across datasets does provide some evidence for robustness in cases where correlations were consistently observed across measures and samples, future studies should aim to replicate these findings using a more standardized set of measures and a preregistered analysis plan.

Furthermore, the correlates themselves were a mixture of self- and informant reports, so some might be concerned that our findings are due to method effects (e.g., self-reported correlates associating with the Moral Identity factor). However, conceptually, because we have removed raters' idiosyncrasies from the moral factors, it should have been more difficult for spurious correlations to arise (i.e., if positivity and response styles contribute to the inflation of monomethod correlations, then controlling for these tendencies in people's moral ratings should reduce their influence). Practically, we did not see evidence that method effects were driving the results: in that case, we would have expected that self-reported outcomes would correlate with the Moral Identity factor and that informant-reported outcomes would correlate with the Moral Reputation factor, but that is not what we found. Thus, we are more confident that our findings reflect real associations beyond method effects.

We also acknowledge the following constraints on the generalizability of our findings. First, we measured morality solely with adjectives rather than concrete moral behaviors or values. Yet, some researchers have suggested that broader adjective items (e.g., "I am an honest person") are more evaluative—and, therefore, more heavily contaminated by global attitudes (Leising et al., 2021)—compared to more concrete behavioral items (e.g., "Do you often try to make someone believe something that you know is false?"; Meindl et al., 2015). It is possible that the relative proportion of variance explained by the trait, reputation, and identity components, as well as the correlates of each component, may differ if nonadjective-based items were used.

A second constraint on generality is that the informants included in all datasets varied in their relationship to the targets. We could not use only one type of informant (e.g., only friends or only parents) without significant reductions in our sample size, so we proceeded with a diverse pool of informants. However, because the moral reputation factor is based on what is shared across informants, it is likely that differences in familiarity and closeness with the target made the moral reputation factor somewhat weaker than it would have been if informants were of the same type within and across targets. It would be an interesting next step to examine whether and how the psychological correlates of Moral Reputation might change with different types of informants. An exploration that expanded the TRI to include reputations across contexts might also reveal how contextual or general moral reputation is.

5 | CONCLUSION

Moral research within psychology has skyrocketed in recent years, and several lines of work have aimed at understanding the personal and social importance of moral character. Our work takes a step back and asks what moral character is associated with from different perspectives and using different operationalizations. We found that (1) moral character is separable into nonshared Moral Identity and Moral Reputation components in addition to a Shared Moral Character component, (2) these factors

emerged beyond positivity and response styles, and (3) each factor had a unique nomological network. Taken together, our results suggest that what the moral person is like depends in part on which component of moral character is being considered. These results contribute to our collective understanding of morality as a complex construct that is best measured from multiple perspectives.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Victoria Pringle, Erika N. Carlson, and Jessie Sun provided the conceptualization and methodology, wrote the original draft and editing. Erika N. Carlson. acquired the funding. Victoria Pringle provided the visualization. Victoria Pringle and Jessie Sun provided the formal analyses. Erika N. Carlson collected and cured the data.

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ETHICS STATEMENT

Both studies were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards for the treatment of human participants and received approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Toronto (Sample 1) and at McGill University (Sample 2).

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ENDNOTE

[1] See Supplemental Figure C1 for the decomposition with disaggregated self- and informant positivity and acquiescence.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

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