

Body Related Self-Consciousness During Intimacy and Sexual Satisfaction Among Women: The Role of Body Image-Related Cognitive Fusion as a Moderator

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INTRODUCTION

- 67% of women noted some degree of comfort when having sex with lights on. (Ackard et al., 2000).
- Body self-consciousness during sexual activity is negatively correlated with sexual satisfaction (Claudat & Warren, 2014).
- There must be moderating variables in this relationship. One might body image-related cognitive fusion

METHOD

Participants

- 432 participants
- Mean age = 23.7 ($SD = 7.23$), range = 17 – 58
- BMI mean = 26.17 ($SD = 6.59$), range = 15.33 – 26.17
- 1.4% male, 94.4% female, 3.5% non-binary, .7% other
- White = 65.1%; Other 9.9%, African-American/Black 8.2%, Native American/Alaskan Native = 4.1%; Asian-American/Asian = 3.4%; Middle Eastern/North African = .5%
- 42.1% identified as Hispanic/Latinx

Measures

- **Demographic Questionnaire**
 - Items assessed were age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, year in school, height, and weight.
- **Cognitive Fusion Questionnaire for Body Image**
 - This 10-item questionnaire assesses body image cognitive fusion. Higher scores indicate greater levels of cognitive fusion.
- **Body image self-consciousness scale**
 - This 15-item scale assesses body image concerns during physical intimacy. Higher scores indicate greater body image self-consciousness.
- **Satisfaction with Sex Life Scale-Revised**
 - This 4-item measure assesses satisfaction with sex life. Higher scores indicate greater levels of satisfaction with sex.

Procedures

- Undergraduate students participated in a series of online questionnaires for course credit .

Body image-related cognitive fusion did not moderate the relationship between body related self-consciousness during intimacy and sexual satisfaction

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RESULTS

- See Table 1 for correlations among main constructs
- Body image-related cognitive fusion was positively correlated with body image self-consciousness and BMI and negatively correlated satisfaction with sex life.

Table 1

Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations among Constructs

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. cognitive fusion				
2. body image	** .61			
3. sexual satisfaction	** -.18	** -.39		
4. BMI	** .19	** .20	* -.10	
Mean	28.61	37.92	15.92	26.17
SD	20.00	17.32	7.82	6.59

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

cognitive fusion = Body Image-Related Cognitive Fusion Questionnaire; body image = Body Image Self-Consciousness Scale; sexual satisfaction = Satisfaction with Sex Life Scale-Revised

Moderation Analyses

- The conditional effect of body image-related cognitive fusion did not significantly predict satisfaction with sex life.
- The conditional effect of body image self-consciousness predicted satisfaction with sex life.
- The interaction between body image-related cognitive fusion and body self-consciousness did not predict satisfaction with sex life
- See Table 2

Table 2

Overall model, conditioning effects, and interaction effects estimating satisfaction with sex life

	b	SE	t	p	95% CI
Overall model					
F(4, 417) = 19.79, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .16$					
Intercept	20.68	1.85	11.17	< .001	[17.04, 24.32]
Self-consciousness	-.19	.05	-3.84	< .001	[-.29, -.09]
Fusion	.03	.04	.87	.39	[-.04, .12]
Self-consciousness x fusion	.001	.001	.43	.67	[-.001, .003]
BMI	-.04	.05	-0.70	.48	[-.15, .07]

DISCUSSION

- Body image-related cognitive fusion did not moderate the relationship between body image self-consciousness and satisfaction with sex life.
- Future studies could include participants from other populations and college students across the country
- Future studies could also examine other possible moderators involved in this relationship.



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