

Cognitive-Affective Factors and Women's Orgasm Difficulties: A Comparative Study

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Introduction & Objectives: Cognitive-affective factors including sexual beliefs, automatic thoughts, and affect, as well as individual propensity for sexual inhibition and excitation, have been shown to be involved in female orgasmic response. However, most previous studies have only included non-clinical samples and there is yet a need to compare how women with and without orgasm difficulties differ regarding these variables.

Method(s) & Sample: Two groups, comprised of 250 women with orgasm difficulties and 250 without ($N = 500$), matched for sociodemographic variables (e.g., age), completed a questionnaire protocol assessing sexual inhibition and sexual excitation (Sexual Inhibition/Sexual Excitation Scales – Short Form), sexual beliefs (Sexual Dysfunctional Beliefs Questionnaire), negative automatic thoughts (Automatic Thoughts subscale of the Sexual Modes Questionnaire), and affect (Positive and Negative Affect Schedule) experienced during sexual activity. Multivariate Analyses of Variance were ran for each set of variables.

Results: Compared to women without orgasm difficulties, women who reported orgasm difficulties scored

higher on sexual inhibition related to fear of performance failure and sexual excitation [$V = 0.70$, $F(3, 480) = 12.0$, $p < .001$], as well as on age related beliefs [$F(1, 497) = 5.73$, $p = .017$]. Moreover, women with orgasmic difficulties reported significantly more negative automatic thoughts [$V = 0.15$, $F(6, 490) = 14.7$, $p < .001$] (e.g., failure and disengagement, low self body image, sexual abuse, lack of erotic content, lack of partner's affection, and one's passivity) and lower positive affect during sexual activity [$V = 0.11$, $F(2, 485) = 28.4$, $p < .001$].

Conclusion & Recommendations: These results are in line with cognitive-affective models of sexual dysfunction, while suggesting that specific cognitive-affective factors are involved in female orgasm difficulties. Nonetheless, the novel findings of this study highlight attentional focus and sexual inhibition as potential targets for interventions aimed at orgasm difficulties.

Keywords: female orgasmic problems, cognitive-affective factors, sexual inhibition and excitation

Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Statement: None

Psychosexual Factors that Influence Sexual and Relationship Satisfaction of People with Physical Disabilities

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Introduction & Objectives: Sexually dysfunctional beliefs, as well as an individual tendency for sexual inhibition, seem to play a role in the development of sexual problems. However, little is known about its role in the sexual health of people with physical disabilities. This study aimed to analyse how sexual beliefs and sexual inhibition help explain sexual and relationship satisfaction in people with and without physical disabilities.

Method(s) & Sample: A sample of 479 participants (61% were women), aged between 18 and 55 years old, participated in the study. Of these, 189 individuals had a self-reported physical disability and the majority (70.1%) were motor or neuromuscular health conditions (e.g. spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy). Participants filled in several questionnaires about sexual functioning beliefs, sexual inhibition/excitation propensity, sexual and relationship satisfaction, sociodemographic and disability characteristics.