

## Body Image and Sexual Satisfaction Among Young Adults

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### Abstract

This study aims to investigate the relationship between body image and sexual satisfaction among young adults, while also exploring potential differences in this relationship between men and women. The sample consists of 100 young adults aged 15-30 years. Two standardized questionnaires, the Body Self-Image Questionnaire (BSIQ-SF) and the Index of Sexual Satisfaction Scale (ISS), are used to collect data. The BSIQ-SF assesses various aspects of body image, such as appearance evaluation and satisfaction with different body parts. The ISS measures sexual satisfaction using Likert-type items. The research design employed is a correlational design with an ex-post facto design.

The study hypothesizes a positive correlation between body image and sexual satisfaction, suggesting that individuals with more positive body image would report higher levels of sexual satisfaction. Additionally, the study explores potential gender differences in the impact of body image on sexual satisfaction, aiming to determine if the relationship varies between men and women. The findings from this study will contribute to a better understanding of the association between body image and sexual satisfaction among young adults. It has implications for promoting positive body image and sexual well-being, which are crucial for individuals' overall psychological and emotional health. The results can inform interventions and support services aimed at enhancing body image and improving sexual satisfaction among young adults, fostering healthier attitudes towards both body image and sexuality.

Keywords : bodyimage,sexual satisfaction, young adults,correlation, questionnaires

### Body Image

It is a crucial aspect of individuals' mental and emotional health, impacting their self-esteem, confidence, and overall happiness. It is influenced by genetics, personal experiences, cultural norms, and media influence. Recognizing that body image is subjective and can change over time is essential in promoting positivity and acceptance.

### Sexual Satisfaction

This refers to individuals' subjective feelings of pleasure and fulfillment during sexual activities. Positive sexual experiences have psychological and physical benefits, including increased self-esteem, relationship intimacy, and improved well-being. Research shows that body image and sexual satisfaction have a complex relationship, with a negative body image often associated with lower sexual satisfaction. Conversely, individuals with a positive body image tend to feel more secure and comfortable, leading to greater sexual satisfaction.

### Promoting Positive Body Image and Sexual Health

Understanding the interconnection between body image and sexual satisfaction is crucial for developing interventions that promote well-being in both areas. Programs focusing on positive sexual experiences, healthy body image, and self-esteem can effectively support individuals in enhancing their sexual satisfaction and overall quality of life. Additionally, providing assistance and support for those struggling with body image and sexual identity issues is essential in promoting positive sexual experiences and well-being.

Body image and sexual satisfaction are closely intertwined, significantly impacting individuals' overall health and quality of life. Developing a comprehensive understanding of this relationship is key to fostering positive body image, promoting

healthy sexual attitudes, and addressing any challenges that may arise. By recognizing the importance of body image and sexual satisfaction, individuals can cultivate fulfilling and satisfying sexual experiences, contributing to their overall well-being and happiness.

### Rationale

A variety of psychological, social, cultural, and biological factors can impact the sexual satisfaction and body image of young people. Negative body image has been linked to adverse psychological and physical health outcomes, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and disordered eating habits. Conversely, sexual satisfaction is influenced by factors such as physical attraction, communication, sexual technique, and relationship quality. Research indicates a significant correlation between body image and sexual satisfaction among young people, with negative body image associated with lower sexual self-esteem and unhappiness. This can lead to decreased sexual desire, avoidance of sexual encounters, and difficulties with intimacy and relationships. Negative body image can also affect sexual behavior, resulting in avoidance of certain activities and discomfort with nudity. Promoting positive body image and creating an environment of acceptance and inclusivity is crucial for supporting healthy sexual development and satisfaction. Open communication, education about sexual health, and challenging beauty standards are important strategies to enhance young people's sexual experiences and well-being.

Research on body image and sexual satisfaction has explored various aspects of this relationship. Cash and Pruzinsky (2002) emphasized the importance of addressing body image concerns in therapy to improve sexual relationships and satisfaction.

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McCabe and Ricciardelli (2003) found that psychological function mediated the link between body image and sexual satisfaction, particularly in women. Tiggemann and Lynch (2001) highlighted the negative association between self-objectification and sexual satisfaction, mediated by body shame and anxiety. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) introduced the objectification theory, linking sexual objectification to decreased sexual satisfaction. Røysamb et al. (2003) discovered that sexual orientation impacted body image, which in turn affected sexual satisfaction. Morrison et al. (2003) revealed a negative correlation between the drive for muscularity and sexual satisfaction, mediated by body shame. Rosen et al. (2000) developed the Female Sexual Function Index (FSFI), including body image components. Quitkat et al. (2019) explored gender and age differences in body image, highlighting higher body appreciation in women. Quinn-Nilas et al. (unspecified) investigated the impact of body image on sexual functioning in young adult women. Pujols et al. (2010) identified high body esteem and decreased appearance-related thoughts as key factors in predicting sexual satisfaction. Kvaalem et al. (unspecified) studied the influence of appearance dissatisfaction and importance on sexual satisfaction in older adults. Woertman and van den Brink (2012) reviewed the relationship between body image and sexuality, emphasizing the role of cognitions and self-consciousness. Hattie et al. (2022) explored the relationship between body esteem dimensions and sexual esteem in men. Kvaalem et al. (2019) demonstrated that body satisfaction in adolescence predicted sexual satisfaction in young adulthood. Van den Brink et al. (2013) found that body satisfaction positively correlated with sexual health and self-esteem, while body image self-consciousness negatively impacted sexual functioning. Overall, these studies highlight the complex interplay between body image and sexual satisfaction, providing valuable insights for understanding and addressing this relationship.

**Objective:** This study aims to examine the relationship between body image and sexual satisfaction among young adults/youth and explore the impact of body image and its domains on sexual function and behaviour.

**Hypotheses:** (1) There is a positive correlation between body image and sexual satisfaction. (2) The impact of body image on sexual satisfaction differs between men and women.

**Research Design:** The study utilized a correlational design and ex-post facto design.

**Sample population:**

The study involved a sample of 100 young adults, ranging in age from 15 to 30 years.

**Sampling technique:** This diverse group was selected using a purposive sampling technique, which is a non-random method that enables researchers to deliberately choose participants based on specific

criteria. To be eligible for inclusion in the study, participants had to identify as either male or female, fall within the specified age range of 15 to 30 years, and be currently engaged in a sexual relationship. **Inclusion Criteria:** Participants had to identify as male or female, be within the age range of 15-30 years, and be sexually active in a relationship.

**Tools:1) The Body Self-Image Questionnaire (BSIQ-SF):** The Body Self Image Questionnaire - Short Form (BSIQ-SF) was developed by Collins and Van de Mark. The BSIQ-SF is a self-report questionnaire designed to assess body image concerns and attitudes towards one's own body. It is a shorter version of the original Body Self-Image Questionnaire (BSIQ) and is commonly used in research and clinical settings to measure various aspects of body image. The BSIQ-SF is used to assess body image concerns and attitudes in both clinical and non-clinical populations.

**2) The Index of Sexual Satisfaction Scale (ISS):** The Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS) is a well-known scale used to measure sexual satisfaction. It was developed by Hudson and Murphy, and the scale was introduced in their 1980 paper titled "A brief index of sexual functioning for the urologic patient." The ISS is designed to assess an individual's level of sexual satisfaction and has been widely used in research and clinical settings to evaluate sexual functioning and satisfaction in various populations. It typically consisted of a set of statements or items that individuals rated based on their own subjective experiences of sexual satisfaction.

Similar to the BSIQ-SF, the ISS likely utilized a Likert-type scale for respondents to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement.

**Procedure:** The sample was collected using the BSIQ-SF and ISS questionnaires, which were administered online. Data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques, including correlation analysis, to interpret and discuss the results.

**Results and Discussion**

Negative affect was found to be negatively correlated with attractiveness evaluation,  $r(98) = -.324, p < .001$ , and positively correlated with height dissatisfaction,  $r(98) = .471, p < .001$ , and sexual satisfaction,  $r(98) = .291, p = .003$ . However, there was no significant correlation between negative affect and physical functionality awareness,  $r(98) = -.102, p = .310$ .

Attractiveness evaluation was found to be negatively correlated with negative affect,  $r(98) = -.324, p < .001$ , and positively correlated with physical functionality awareness,  $r(98) = .521, p < .001$ . However, there was no significant correlation between attractiveness evaluation and height dissatisfaction,  $r(98) = -.170, p = .090$ , or sexual satisfaction,  $r(98) = -.146, p = .148$ .

Physical functionality awareness was found to be positively correlated with attractiveness evaluation,

$r(98) = .521, p < .001$ , and negatively correlated with height dissatisfaction,  $r(98) = -.146, p = .147$ . However, there was no significant correlation between physical functionality awareness and negative affect,  $r(98) = -.102, p = .310$ , or sexual satisfaction,  $r(98) = -.245, p = .014$ .

awareness,  $r(98) = -.245, p = .014$ .

Overall, these results suggest that negative affect is negatively associated with attractiveness evaluation, and positively associated with height dissatisfaction and sexual satisfaction. Attractiveness evaluation is positively associated with physical functionality

**Table 1. Correlation between Body Image and Sexual Satisfaction**

|                       |   | Negative Affect | Attractiveness Evaluation | Physical Functionality Awareness | Height Dissatisfaction | Sexual Satisfaction |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Spearman's rho</b> | <b>Negative Affect</b>                  | <b>1.000</b>    | <b>-.324**</b>            | <b>-0.102</b>                    | <b>.471**</b>          | <b>.291**</b>       |
|                       | <b>Attractiveness Evaluation</b>        |                 | <b>1.000</b>              | <b>.521**</b>                    | <b>-0.170</b>          | <b>-0.146</b>       |
|                       | <b>Physical Functionality Awareness</b> |                 |                           | <b>1.000</b>                     | <b>-0.146</b>          | <b>-.245*</b>       |
|                       | <b>Height Dissatisfaction</b>           |                 |                           |                                  | <b>1.000</b>           | <b>0.047</b>        |
|                       | <b>Sexual Satisfaction</b>              |                 |                           |                                  |                        | <b>1.000</b>        |

\*\*significant at .01 level

\*Significant at .05 level

Height dissatisfaction was found to be positively correlated with negative affect,  $r(98) = .471, p < .001$ . However, there was no significant correlation between height dissatisfaction and attractiveness

awareness, but not significantly associated with height dissatisfaction or sexual satisfaction. Physical functionality awareness is positively associated with attractiveness evaluation and negatively associated

**Table 2. Correlation between Body Image and Sexual Satisfaction in men**

|                       |   | Negative Affect | Attractiveness Evaluation | Physical Functionality Awareness | Height Dissatisfaction | Sexual Satisfaction |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Spearman's rho</b> | <b>Negative Affect</b>                  | <b>1.000</b>    | <b>-.431**</b>            | <b>-.327</b>                     | <b>.693**</b>          | <b>.428**</b>       |
|                       | <b>Attractiveness Evaluation</b>        |                 | <b>1.000</b>              | <b>.683**</b>                    | <b>-.320**</b>         | <b>-0.265**</b>     |
|                       | <b>Physical Functionality Awareness</b> |                 |                           | <b>1.000</b>                     | <b>-0.139</b>          | <b>-.386**</b>      |
|                       | <b>Height Dissatisfaction</b>           |                 |                           |                                  | <b>1.000</b>           | <b>0.146</b>        |
|                       | <b>Sexual Satisfaction</b>              |                 |                           |                                  |                        | <b>1.000</b>        |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

evaluation,  $r(98) = -.170, p = .090$ , physical functionality awareness,  $r(98) = -.146, p = .147$ , or sexual satisfaction,  $r(98) = .047, p = .644$ .

Finally, sexual satisfaction was found to be positively correlated with negative affect,  $r(98) = .291, p = .003$ , and negatively correlated with physical functionality

with height dissatisfaction. Height dissatisfaction is positively associated with negative affect, but not significantly associated with attractiveness evaluation, physical functionality awareness, or sexual satisfaction. Sexual satisfaction is positively associated with negative affect and negatively

associated with physical functionality awareness, but not significantly associated with attractiveness evaluation or height dissatisfaction.

This table examines the relationship between Negative Affect, Attractiveness Evaluation, Physical Functionality Awareness, Height Dissatisfaction, and Sexual Satisfaction in 50 male participants.

The results revealed that Negative Affect was negatively correlated with Attractiveness Evaluation ( $r = -.431$ ,  $p = .002$ ), Physical Functionality Awareness ( $r = -.327$ ,  $p = .021$ ), and Sexual Satisfaction ( $r = .428$ ,  $p = .002$ ), but positively correlated with Height Dissatisfaction ( $r = .693$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

and Physical Functionality Awareness, but lower levels of Negative Affect. Physical Functionality Awareness is associated with higher levels of Sexual Satisfaction, but lower levels of Negative Affect.

Height Dissatisfaction is associated with higher levels of Negative Affect, but not significantly associated with any other variables. Sexual Satisfaction is associated with higher levels of Attractiveness Evaluation and Physical Functionality Awareness, but not significantly associated with Negative Affect or Height Dissatisfaction.

This table examines the relationship between Negative Affect, Attractiveness Evaluation, Physical Functionality Awareness, Height Dissatisfaction, and

**Table 3. Correlation between Body Image and Sexual Satisfaction in women**

|                |                                  | Negative Affect | Attractiveness Evaluation | Physical Functionality Awareness | Height Dissatisfaction | Sexual Satisfaction |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Spearman's rho | Negative Affect                  | 1.000           | -0.221                    | .292*                            | 0.211                  | 0.204               |
|                | Attractiveness Evaluation        |                 | 1.000                     | 0.106                            | -0.052                 | -0.170              |
|                | Physical Functionality Awareness |                 |                           | 1.000                            | -0.164                 | -0.175              |
|                | Height Dissatisfaction           |                 |                           |                                  | 1.000                  | -0.103              |
|                | Sexual Satisfaction              |                 |                           |                                  |                        | 1.000               |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Attractiveness Evaluation was negatively correlated with Negative Affect ( $r = -.431$ ,  $p = .002$ ) and Physical Functionality Awareness ( $r = .683$ ,  $p = .000$ ), but positively correlated with Sexual Satisfaction ( $r = -.265$ ,  $p = .063$ ).

Physical Functionality Awareness was negatively correlated with Negative Affect ( $r = -.327$ ,  $p = .021$ ), but positively correlated with Attractiveness Evaluation ( $r = .683$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and Sexual Satisfaction ( $r = -.386$ ,  $p = .006$ ).

Height Dissatisfaction was positively correlated with Negative Affect ( $r = .693$ ,  $p = .000$ ), but not significantly correlated with any other variables.

Finally, Sexual Satisfaction was positively correlated with Attractiveness Evaluation ( $r = -.265$ ,  $p = .063$ ) and Physical Functionality Awareness ( $r = -.386$ ,  $p = .006$ ), but not significantly correlated with Negative Affect or Height Dissatisfaction.

In summary, the results suggest that Negative Affect is associated with lower levels of Attractiveness Evaluation, Physical Functionality Awareness, and Sexual Satisfaction, but higher levels of Height Dissatisfaction. Attractiveness Evaluation is associated with higher levels of Sexual Satisfaction

Sexual Satisfaction in 50 female participants.

Negative affect was negatively correlated with attractiveness evaluation,  $r(50) = -0.221$ ,  $p = 0.124$ , and positively correlated with physical functionality awareness,  $r(50) = 0.292$ ,  $p = 0.040$ , and height dissatisfaction,  $r(50) = 0.211$ ,  $p = 0.142$ . However, the correlations were not statistically significant for attractiveness evaluation and height dissatisfaction.

Attractiveness evaluation was not significantly correlated with physical functionality awareness,  $r(50) = 0.106$ ,  $p = 0.462$ , height dissatisfaction,  $r(50) = -0.052$ ,  $p = 0.721$ , or sexual satisfaction,  $r(50) = -0.170$ ,  $p = 0.237$ .

Physical functionality awareness was positively correlated with height dissatisfaction,  $r(50) = -0.164$ ,  $p = 0.256$ , but not significantly correlated with sexual satisfaction,  $r(50) = -0.175$ ,  $p = 0.225$ .

Height dissatisfaction was not significantly correlated with sexual satisfaction,  $r(50) = -0.103$ ,  $p = 0.476$ .

Overall, the results suggest that negative affect is related to physical functionality awareness and height dissatisfaction, but not attractiveness evaluation or sexual satisfaction. Attractiveness evaluation and physical functionality awareness are not significantly

related to each other, but physical functionality awareness is related to height dissatisfaction. However, height dissatisfaction is not related to sexual satisfaction.

The study confirmed the positive correlation between body image and sexual satisfaction. However, the impact of body image on sexual satisfaction differed between men and women. In women, negative affect was related to physical functionality awareness and height dissatisfaction, but not attractiveness evaluation or sexual satisfaction. Attractiveness evaluation and physical functionality awareness were not significantly related, but physical functionality awareness was associated with height dissatisfaction. Height dissatisfaction did not affect sexual satisfaction in women. In contrast, negative affect in men was associated with lower levels of attractiveness evaluation, physical functionality awareness, and sexual satisfaction, but higher levels of height dissatisfaction. Men's attractiveness evaluation was linked to higher sexual satisfaction and physical functionality awareness but lower negative affect. Physical functionality awareness positively influenced men's sexual satisfaction but negatively affected negative affect. Height dissatisfaction was positively correlated with negative affect in men but had no significant impact on other variables. These findings suggest that men may be more affected by body image in terms of sexual satisfaction compared to women. Negative affect appears to have a stronger influence on men's body image and sexual satisfaction, while attractiveness evaluation and physical functionality awareness are more closely tied to men's sexual satisfaction than women's.

**Implications:** (a) Develop interventions targeting body image concerns, such as body acceptance programs or cognitive-behavioral therapies. (b) Integrate body image components into sexual health education programs to address the interplay between body image and sexual well-being. (c) Consider social and cultural factors that influence body image and sexual health, such as media, societal norms, and interpersonal relationships. (d) Explore the use of technology and digital interventions to provide accessible resources and support for promoting positive body image and sexual health.

**Limitations:** (a) Cross-sectional design: The study used a cross-sectional design that limits causal conclusions, and longitudinal studies are necessary to determine the directionality of the relationship between body image and sexual satisfaction. (b) Self-reported measures: The study relied on self-reported measures of body image and sexual satisfaction, which may be prone to bias and social desirability effects. (c) Limited sample: The sample size of the study was relatively small and limited to young adults, thus making it difficult to generalize the results to other age groups and populations

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