



THE EFFECTS OF SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION ON ANXIETY

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INTRODUCTION

- What is Sexual Objectification Theory?
- Long term exposure to sexual objectification can result in mental health issues such as depression or sexual dissatisfaction

CURRENT LITERATURE

- Sexual Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).
- Women experience more reported anxiety than men (Watson et al., 2015).
- Sexual objectification may explain gender differences in reported anxiety levels (Davidson et al., 2016).
- Objectification and high levels of anxiety (Saéz et al., 2019).

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CURRENT STUDY

- Sexual objectification is a prevalent issue in Western culture
- Women are more likely to experience objectification than men and are more likely to experience higher levels of anxiety than men (Tyler et al., 2016)
- Anxiety is the most common mental health disorder in the United States
 - Women are twice as likely to experience anxiety compared to men (Davidson et al., 2016)
- Other risks

THE CURRENT STUDY

- Hypothesis 1: It is hypothesized that the current study will find a significant positive correlation between sexual objectification experiences and anxiety.
 - Supported by Davidson et al., 2016
- Hypothesis 2: It is hypothesized unwanted explicit sexual advances will positively correlate more highly with anxiety than body evaluation.
 - Supported by Saéz et al., 2019

METHODOLOGY

- Participants: All Participants Were Required to be Female and Over the Age of 18 Years Old. All Participation was Voluntary.
 - Number of Participants: 148
 - Average Age: 33.53 Years Old

METHODOLOGY

Measures:

- Interpersonal Sexual Objectification Scale (Kozee et al., 2007)
 - Body Evaluation Subscale
 - How often have you been whistled at while walking down a street?
 - How often have you heard a rude, sexual remark about your body?
 - Explicit Sexual Objectification Experiences
 - How often have you been touched or fondled against your will?
 - How often have you experienced sexual harassment (on the job, in school, etc.)?
- Beck Anxiety Inventory (Beck et al., 1988)
 - Numbness or tingling
 - Fear of the worst happening

METHODOLOGY

- Procedure:
 - Qualtrics survey posted on Facebook and Instagram
 - Recruitment script included names of the researchers and the expected time to complete the study.
 - When participants verified that they were female and over the age of 18, they were directed to complete the Interpersonal Sexual Objectification Scale and the Beck Anxiety Inventory.

RESULTS – DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Variable	N	M	SD	Range
Body Evaluation	116	22.51	5.43	10-40
Explicit Objectification Experiences	116	7.03	1.87	4-16
Anxiety	114	43.12	9.85	21-84

RESULTS – TEST OF EACH HYPOTHESIS

We used a correlational design to compare Body Evaluation/Explicit Objectification Experiences to Anxiety.

- Hypothesis 1:
 - Body Evaluation had a correlation coefficient of .459
 - Explicit Experiences had a correlation coefficient of .486
 - The p value for both Body Evaluation and Explicit Experiences compared to Anxiety was .000
 - Positive Correlation that was not likely due to chance.
 - More experiences = more anxious

RESULTS – TEST OF EACH HYPOTHESIS

- Hypothesis 2:
 - There was a partial difference between anxiety correlations of the Body Evaluation and Explicit Sexual Objectification variables.
 - Explicit Sexual Objectification (.486) was slightly higher than Body Evaluation (.459)

DISCUSSION

- Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) found a significant positive correlation between sexual objectification and anxiety levels.
 - The current study did find a significant difference
- Sáez et al. (2019) found that unwanted explicit sexual objectification positively correlated more highly with anxiety than body evaluation.
 - The current study found it be partially supported

DISCUSSION

Importance and Applications:

- Additional support for the current research that objectification is related to anxiety
- May be used by mental health counselors
- Additionally, like the study done by Davidson et al. (2016), this research can be used to contribute to violence against women programming

FUTURE RESEARCH

- With the prevalence of virtual meetings, a study could view these effects in an online setting.
- More research could be done to explore the differences in kinds of objectification and mental health risks

THANK YOU



QUESTIONS



COMMENTS