



The Moderating Effects of Fear of Intimacy in the Relationships Between Sexual Compulsivity and Sexual Satisfaction

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INTRO

There are various reasons a person might not be sexually satisfied in their relationship. Higgins and colleagues (2011) reported that feelings such as guilt will often affect whether a person is sexually satisfied or not. Sexual satisfaction can be linked to mental health and relationship stability (Higgins, 2011). Individuals who have mental health issues may experience less sexual satisfaction than individuals who don't have mental health issues. Communication is an important role in relationship satisfaction (Montesi, 2012). Individuals who don't experience relationship satisfaction will most likely not experience sexual satisfaction either.

METHODS

Data was collected through a cross sectional survey administered through an online data collection tool. Data collected included demographic information, the Sexual Compulsiveness Scale (SCS), the Fear of Intimacy Scale (FIS), the Sexual Satisfaction Survey (SSS) and the Sexual Behavioral System Subgoals Questionnaire (SBSS).

339 undergraduate students from a medium sized university designated as a Hispanic Serving Institute completed the survey. After removing individuals who did not answer all questions, 234 responses remained in the data set. Full demographic information for the analyzed data is presented in Table 1 and Figure 1

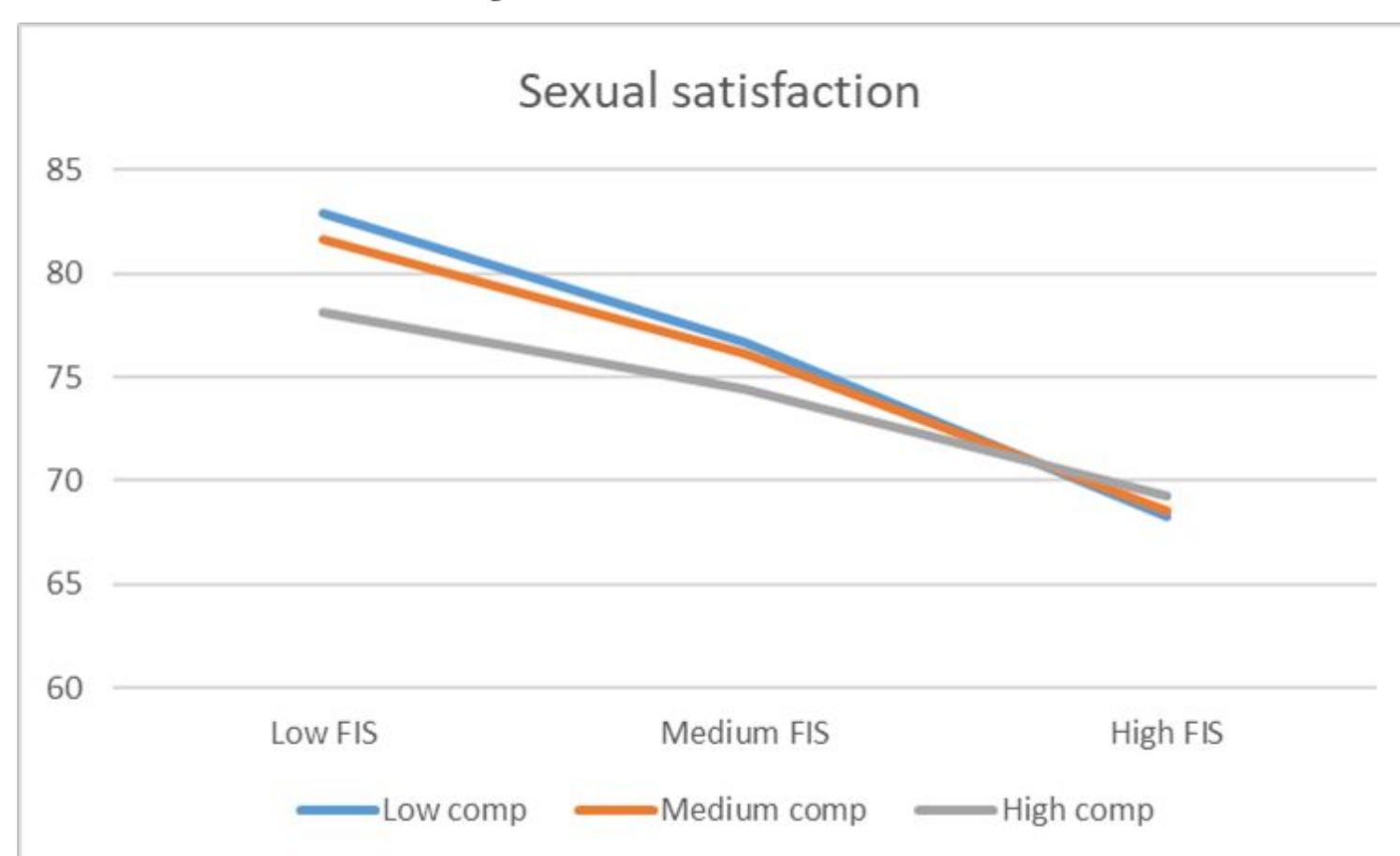
Data were analyzed using the SPSS PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2018) Model 1. SPSS Pleasure scores were included as a covariate

RESULTS

The overall model assessed was significant and accounted for approximately 41% of the variance in SSS scores, $F(4,229) = 40.42, p < .001, R^2 = .4138$. SCS ($b = -1.5382, t(229) = -2.45, p = .015$), FIS ($b = -.4620, t(229) = -4.37, p < .001$), SBSS ($b = 1.04, t(229) = 8.54, p < .001$), and the interaction effect ($b = .0154, t(229) = 2.27, p = .024$) were all significant predictors of SSS scores. At one SD below the mean on FIS in the sample, FIS significantly impacted the relationship between ICG scores and UCLA scores when controlling for SBSS ($t(229) = -2.877, p = .023, b = -.600$). At mean levels of FIS, the relationship was no longer significant ($t(229) = -1.54, p = .125, b = -.292$). At one standard deviation below the mean, the effect of FIS continued to weaken, ($t(229) = 0.57, p = .569, b = .129$).

Figure 2

The moderating effects of Fear of Intimacy on the relationship between sexual compulsivity and sexual satisfaction



DISCUSSION

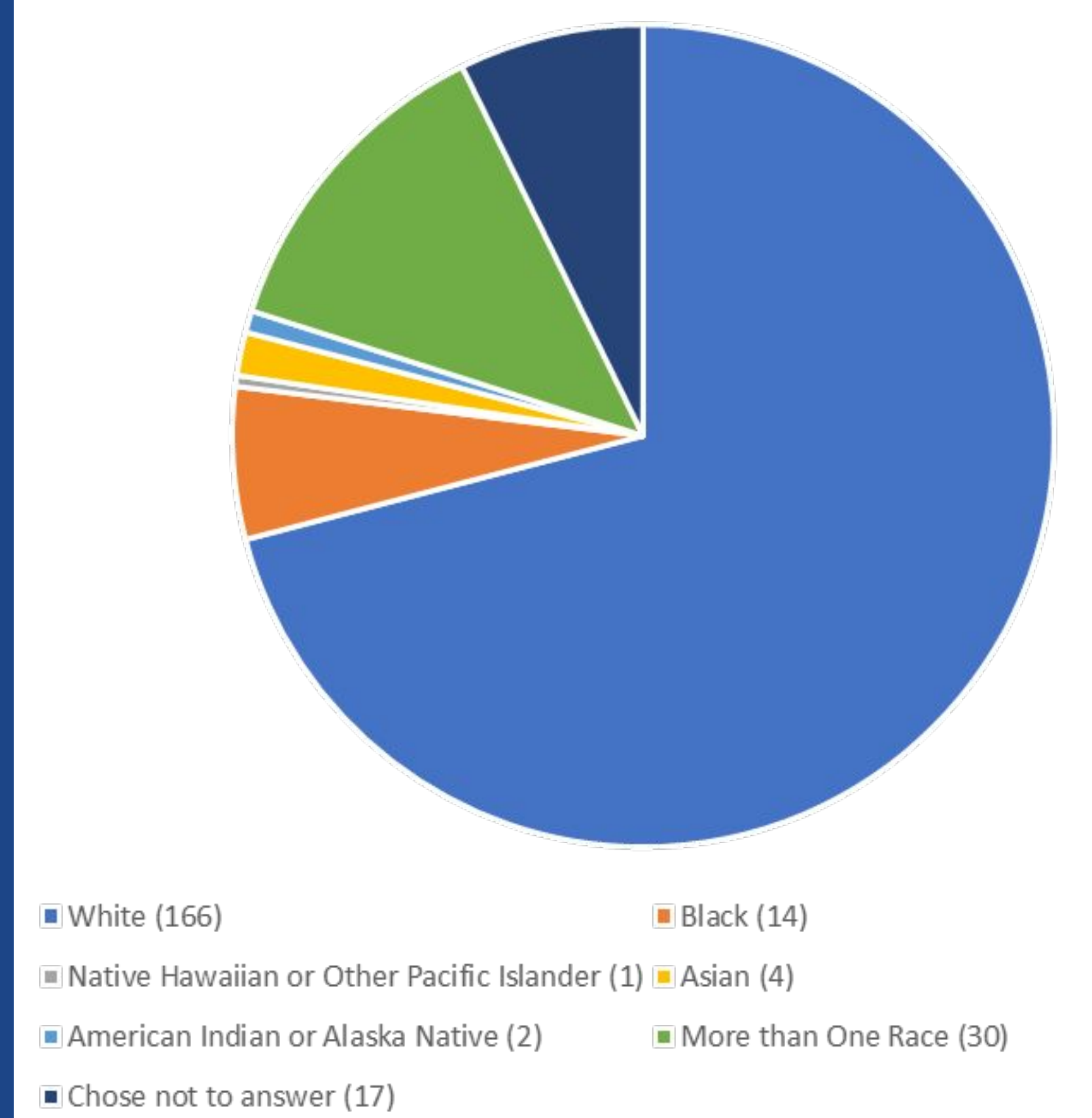
Findings suggest that individuals have a more satisfying sex life when their fear of intimacy is low. After controlling for how much individuals use sex for pleasure, sexual compulsivity predicted lower sexual satisfaction for those who had low fear of intimacy. These findings suggest that working to adjust fear of intimacy may be beneficial for all individuals struggling with sexual satisfaction but that special care needs to be paid to how compulsively individuals pursue sex. Given the cross-sectional nature of the data, it is important to interpret the findings with caution. Further experimental investigation is needed to assess how robust the findings from the current study are.

After controlling for the use of sex for the purposes of pleasure, fear of intimacy moderates the relationship between sexual compulsivity and sexual satisfaction.

Table 1 Demographic information of study sample

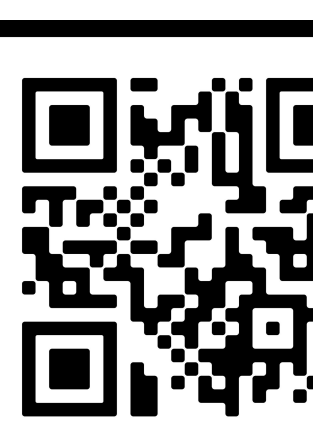
Variable	
Age	22.71 (6.04)
Gender	36 Male, 197 Female, 1 Non-binary
Ethnicity	131 Latinx, 96 Non-Latinx, 3 chose not to answer

Figure 1 Racial identity of study sample



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