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Dyadic Sexual Regulation Scale

JOSEPH A. CATANIA,1 University of California, San Francisco

The Dyadic Sexual Regulation Scale (DSR) measures the extent to which an individual perceives sexual activity to be regulated from an internal versus an external locus of control. In developing a locus of control scale specific to the dyadic sexual situation, we sought to develop a scale that assesses perceptions of the ability to emit behaviors that (a) influence the acquisition and termination of sexual rewards, (b) effect events between these latter two points, and (c) prevent or avoid aversive sexual encounters. Moreover, the scale would reflect control flexibility, which is generally defined as an individual’s ability either to relinquish or to accept control, dependent on the variant nature of social/sexual interactions.

Description

The DSR is an 11-item, subject- or interviewer-administered, Likert-type scale with seven points (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The scale items were derived from open-ended interviews about sexual attitudes with heterosexual and homosexual couples. Five items are reversed (Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 10) for counter-balancing purposes. A shortened five-item interviewer-administered form of the DSR is also available.

Response Mode and Timing

All forms of the scale are available in English and Spanish. The expanded form is self-administered; the briefer revised form is interviewer administered. Both forms take 1–2 minutes to complete.

Scoring

After reversing the reverse-worded items, total scores are computed so that higher scores indicate a greater degree of internal control. Sum across scores to obtain total score. Scale scores range from 11 (external) to 77 (internal).

Reliability and Validity

The DSR has been administered to varied populations, including college students, national urban probability samples constructed to adequately represent White, Black, and Hispanic ethnic groups, and high HIV-risk-factor groups (Catania, Coates, Kegeles, et al., 1992; Catania, Coates, Stall, et al., 1992). The DSR scale has also been administered to respondents from introductory psychology classes at a university recruited to participate in a sexual survey study that assessed locus of control in sexual contexts (Catania, McDermott, & Wood, 1984). The college-age analyses (Catania et al., 1984) examined only heterosexuals who had a current, regular sexual partner. Sample 1 consisted of 151 White students (59 males and 92 females) with a mean age of 27. Sample 2 consisted of 27 males and 43 females with similar demographic features as Sample 1. Reliability was good (Cronbach’s alpha = .74 in Sample 1, and .83 in Sample 2). A principal component analysis with varimax rotation was conducted on the DSR items for Sample 1. There were no item loadings greater than .30 beyond the first factor, and the first factor accounted for 95% of the variance. Test-retest reliability was .77, with a 2-week interval. The DSR revealed convergent validity with the Nowicki-Strickland Adult Internal-External Control Scale (NSLC; Nowicki & Duke, 1974), r = .19, p < .05, df = 149 (Catania et al., 1984). The DSR was found to be related with each dyadic measure of sexual activity. The scale was not found to be related to monadic activities (i.e., masturbation), further supporting the concurrent validity of the DSR with locus of control. Internality with regard to sexual activity is associated with higher frequencies of intercourse, oral sex from partner, orgasms with partner, sexual relations, affectionate behaviors, and sexual satisfaction, and with lesser anxiety in sexual situations. DSR was not found to be related to gender. In contrast the NSLC was more weakly associated with each criterion.

The five-item, shortened version of the DSR was administered to respondents recruited to participate in the 1990–1991 National AIDS Behavior Survey2 (NABS) longitudinal cohort study, which was composed of three interlaced samples designed to oversample African Americans and Hispanics for adequate representation (Catania, Coates, Kegeles, et al., 1992). The interlaced samples included a national sample, an urban sample of 23 cities with high prevalences of AIDS cases, and a special Hispanic urban sample. The revised version of the DSR was administered to 4,620 respondents between the ages of 18–49. Reliability was good (Cronbach’s alpha = .62 total sample). Means, standard deviations, range, median, and reliabilities are given for White, Black, and Hispanic groups, males and

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2For further details on sample construction and weighting of the NABS study, see Catania Coates, Stall, et al. (1992).
females, and levels of education for both national and urban-high risk city samples (Table 1). The shortened five-item version was also administered to 954 respondents who participated in the third wave of the AIDS in Multi-ethnic Neighborhoods (AMEN) study (Catania, Coates, Stall, et al., 1992). The AMEN study is a longitudinal study (three waves) in which the distribution of HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, related risk behaviors, and their correlates across social strata were examined. Respondents ranged from 20–44 years of age and included White (n = 418) African-American (n = 124) and Hispanic (n = 229) ethnic groups. Reliability was moderate (Cronbach’s alpha = .59). The mean, standard deviation, median, range, and reliabilities of ethnic groups, gender, and levels of education are provided in Table 1.

References


### Table 1

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Note: Because weights for probability of selection are used, all frequencies may not sum to equal total frequencies.

* National AIDS Behavior Study.
* AIDS in Multi-Ethnic Neighborhoods.

For further details on sample construction and weighting of the AMEN cohort study, see Catania Coates, Stall, et al. (1992).
Exhibit

**Dyadic Sexual Regulation Scale**

*Instructions:* The following statements describe different things people do and feel about sex. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with these statements.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

1. I often take the initiative in beginning sexual activity.
2. If my sexual relations are not satisfying there is little I can do to improve the situation.
3. I have sexual relations with my partner as often as I would like.
4. My planning for sexual encounters leads to good sexual experiences with my partner.
5. I feel that it is difficult to get my partner to do what makes me feel good during sex.
6. I feel that my sexual encounters with my partner usually end before I want them to.
7. When I am not interested in sexual activity I feel free to reject sexual advances by my partner.
8. I want my partner to be responsible for directing our sexual encounters.
9. I find it pleasurable at times to be the active member during sexual relations while my partner takes a passive role.
10. During some sexual encounters I find it pleasurable to be passive while my partner is the active person.

Note. Items 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 make up the brief revised form. Items 3 and 8 are reworded in the short form, as follows: 3. You have sexual relationships as often as you like. Do you agree or disagree? 8. Your sexual partner makes most of the decisions about when the two of you will have sex. Do you agree or disagree?

### Juvenile Love Scale: A Child’s Version of the Passionate Love Scale

**ELAINE HATFIELD AND DANIELLE YOUNG, University of Hawaii**

Hatfield and Walster (1978) defined passionate love as “a state of intense longing for union with another.” Reciprocation is “associated with fulfillment and ecstasy,” whereas unrequited love is “associated with emptiness, anxiety, or despair (p. 9).” Though the Passionate Love Scale (PLS) for adults has been used for several decades (Hatfield, Rapson, & Martel, 2007), it was not until 1983 that we developed a companion scale to measure passionate love in young children and adolescents. Because passionate love has been described as “puppy love,” “lovesickness,” and “infatuation” (labels all ideologically associated with young love), it seems to be specifically relevant to measure this concept in younger age groups. The Juvenile Love Scale (JLS) is an exact equivalent of the PLS. (A detailed description of the PLS is provided elsewhere in this volume.) The JLS taps cognitive, emotional, and behavioral indicants of “desire for union.”

**Description**

The JLS is designed to measure passionate love in children from 3 to 18 years of age. The JLS, like the PLS, comes in a short form (15 items) and a long form (30 items). Researchers have used two techniques in administering the JLS, depending on the age of the participants.

*If children are 3 to 7.* The first step in administering the JLS is to make sure the children understand the concepts of *boyfriend* and *girlfriend* (almost all do), the 15 or 30 test items (almost all do), and how to use the response scale.

The response scale is explained first. Essentially, one wants to teach children that, when the experimenter makes a statement, they can indicate how much they agree via a 9-point scale. This is done in the following way: Children are shown a large “ruler” with dimensions of $4 \times 20$ inches.

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