58. Masturbation is harmful and ought to be avoided.

59. Institutions, such as nursing homes, should provide privacy such as to allow residents to engage in sexual behavior without fear of intrusion of observation.

60. If family members object to a widowed relative engaging in sexual relations with another resident of a nursing home, it is the obligation of the management and staff to make certain that such sexual activity is prevented.

61. Sexual relations outside the context of marriage are always wrong.

*These options are repeated for Items 2–35.
Indicates that the scoring should be reversed such that 2 = 1, and 1 = 2 (i.e., a low score indicates high knowledge).

Reverse scoring on these items. A low score indicates a permissive attitude.

Sex Anxiety Inventory

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The Sex Anxiety Inventory (SAI) measures anxiety regarding sexual matters, defined as a generalized expectancy for nonspecific external punishment for the violation of, or the anticipation of violating, perceived normative standards of acceptable sexual behavior. A major goal was to be able to distinguish sexual anxiety from sexual guilt, which Mosher (1965) defined as “a generalized expectancy for self-mediated punishment for violating, anticipating the violation of, or failure to attain internalized standards of proper behavior” (p. 162).

Description

The 25 items on the scale are in a forced-choice format, with one alternative representing an anxiety response and the other a nonanxiety response. The form of the scale used by its developers includes 15 filler items. Items were included on the final version of the scale if they met the following criteria: (a) The correlation between the item and the total score of the SAI was significant at the .05 level (two-tailed), (b) the item-total correlation exceeded the correlation between that item and the score on the Sex Guilt subscale of the Mosher Forced-Choice Guilt Inventory, (c) the item-total correlation exceeded the correlation between that item and the score on the Crowne and Marlowe (1964) Social Desirability Scale, and (d) there was no significant difference between the item-total correlations for males and females. Of the 25 items that appear on the scale, only 4 were significantly correlated with social desirability, 2 in the positive direction and 2 in the negative direction. The scale was developed with a college student population.

Response Mode and Timing

The respondents circle the letter of the alternative that comes closest to describing their feelings. The scale rarely requires more than 15 minutes for completion.

Scoring

For Items 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 22, 24, and 25, alternative “a” is the anxiety response. For the remaining items, alternative “b” is the anxiety response. Each anxiety response is scored as 1 point, resulting in a possible range of scores from 0 to 25.

Reliability

Janda and O’Grady (1980) reported that the internal consistency of the scale (using the Kuder-Richardson formula) was .86. Test-retest reliability, with a time interval of 10 to 14 days, was .85 for males and .84 for females.

Validity

Concurrent validity of the scale has been demonstrated by using it to predict self-reported sexual experiences of both men and women (Janda & O’Grady, 1980). Vanwesenbeeck (2001) reported that women high in sex anxiety were less likely to watch Dutch sexually explicit television for leisure than low-anxious women.

Other Information

A copy of the scale, complete with filler items, can be obtained at no cost from the author.

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Anxiety

References

Exhibit

Sex Anxiety Inventory

1. Extramarital sex . . .
   a. is OK if everyone agrees.
   b. can break up families.
2. Sex . . .
   a. can cause as much anxiety as pleasure.
   b. on the whole is good and enjoyable.
3. Masturbation . . .
   a. causes me to worry.
   b. can be a useful substitute.
4. After having sexual thoughts . . .
   a. I feel aroused.
   b. I feel jittery.
5. When I engage in petting . . .
   a. I feel scared at first.
   b. I thoroughly enjoy it.
6. Initiating sexual relationships . . .
   a. is a very stressful experience.
   b. causes me no problem at all.
7. Oral sex . . .
   a. would arouse me.
   b. would terrify me.
8. I feel nervous . . .
   a. about initiating sexual relations.
   b. about nothing when it comes to members of the opposite sex.
9. When I meet someone I'm attracted to . . .
   a. I get to know him or her.
   b. I feel nervous.
10. When I was younger . . .
    a. I was looking forward to having sex.
    b. I felt nervous about the prospect of having sex.
11. When others flirt with me . . .
    a. I don’t know what to do.
    b. I flirt back.
   a. would scare me to death.
   b. might be interesting.

13. If in the future I committed adultery . . .
   a. I would probably get caught.
   b. I wouldn’t feel bad about it.

   a. feel too nervous to tell a dirty joke in mixed company.
   b. tell a dirty joke if it were funny.

15. Dirty jokes . . .
   a. make me feel uncomfortable.
   b. often make me laugh.

16. When I awake from sexual dreams . . .
   a. I feel pleasant and relaxed.
   b. I feel tense.

17. When I have sexual desires . . .
   a. I worry about what I should do.
   b. I do something to satisfy them.

18. If in the future I committed adultery . . .
   a. it would be nobody’s business but my own.
   b. I would worry about my spouse finding out.

   a. wouldn’t bother me.
   b. would make me nervous.

20. Casual sex . . .
   a. is better than no sex at all.
   b. can hurt many people.

   a. is sometimes necessary.
   b. can damage one’s career.

22. Sexual advances . . .
   a. leave me feeling tense.
   b. are welcomed.

23. When I have sexual relations . . .
   a. I feel satisfied.
   b. I worry about being discovered.

24. When talking about sex in mixed company . . .
   a. I feel nervous.
   b. I sometimes get excited.

25. If I were to flirt with someone . . .
   a. I would worry about his or her reaction.
   b. I would enjoy it.