Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures

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Causal Attribution for Coital Orgasm Scale

Publication details
https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315881089.ch166

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Published online on: 12 Aug 2010

https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315881089.ch166

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The Causal Attribution for Coital Orgasm Scale is designed to evaluate causal attributions for orgasm and nonorgasm during sexual intercourse.

**Description**
This scale was developed to evaluate attributions of coital outcomes, along the two major attributional dimensions identified by Weiner (1979; Weiner & Kukla, 1970): internal versus external, and stable versus unstable. The scale uses a paired-comparison forced-choice format as suggested by McMahan (1973), Weiner, Nierenberg, and Goldstein (1976), and Girodo, Dotzenroth, and Stein (1981). The labels in the questionnaire were judged to translate most adequately Weiner’s notions of ability (internal-stable), effort (internal-unstable), task difficulty (external-stable), and luck (external-unstable). For both orgasmic and nonorgasmic coital outcomes, subjects are presented with every possible pairing of causal attributions. With four attributional categories (internal-stable, internal-unstable, external-stable, external-unstable), this yields two sets of six forced-choice options. Whether respondents refer to simultaneous clitoral stimulation does not seem to affect causal attributions (Loos, Bridges, & Critelli, 1987). The scale is designed for use with women who have had at least 15 coital contacts and have experienced coital orgasm at least one time.

**Response Mode and Timing**
Respondents place a check mark in front of the one choice in each pair of choices which they believe is more accurate for them. The questionnaire requires no more than 10 minutes to complete.

**Scoring**
One point is credited for each check mark; no points are given for unchecked items. For both Question I (orgasm) and Question II (nonorgasm), items are summed to form an attributional score (ranging from 0 to 3) for each of the four causal categories, as follows: internal-stable (1a + 4b + 5b); internal-unstable (1b + 2a + 6a); external-stable (2b + 3a + 5a); external unstable (3b + 4a + 6b). The two underlying causal dimensions are formed by summing across quadrants, as follows: locus of control (internal-stable + internal-unstable); stability (internal-stable + external-stable).

**Reliability**
The paired-comparison forced-choice format has been used reliably in a number of other studies investigating Weiner’s four categories of causal attribution (Girodo et al., 1981; McMahan, 1973; Weiner & Kukla, 1970; Weiner et al., 1976), and is a standard method of assessing attributions in achievement-motivation situations (Crandall, Katkovsky, & Crandall, 1965). Girodo et al. reported a test-retest reliability ranging from .65 to .78 ($p < .001$) for success and failure attributions, and a high internal consistency of causal preferences across the four causal categories, with Kendal’s tau ranging from .22 ($p < .05$) to .70 ($p < .001$).

**Validity**
Construct validity for Weiner’s four attributional categories has been established in numerous studies in which respondents were asked to explain spontaneously the causes of certain imagined and real outcomes (Frieze, 1976; Weiner, 1979; Weiner, Russell, & Lerman, 1978; Wong & Weiner, 1981). The Causal Attribution for Coital Orgasm Scale has been used successfully to differentiate between attributional styles of women with high and low orgasm frequency (Bridges, 1981; Loos et al., 1987).

**References**

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**Exhibit**

*Causal Attributions for Coital Outcome Scale*

I. Complete the following sentence by placing a check mark in front of the ONE CHOICE IN EACH PAIR of choices which you believe is MORE ACCURATE FOR YOU. Please respond to all six choices.

When I have an orgasm *during coitus*, it is typically because: (Select one answer from each pair.)

1. a) _____ I am typically sexually responsive.
   OR
   b) _____ I particularly wanted to have an orgasm.
2. a) _____ I particularly wanted to have an orgasm.
   OR
   b) _____ My partner is a good lover.
3. a) _____ My partner is a good lover.
   OR
   b) _____ It was a matter of luck.
4. a) _____ It was a matter of luck.
   OR
   b) _____ I am typically sexually responsive.
5. a) _____ My partner is a good lover
   OR
   b) _____ I am typically sexually responsive.
6. a) _____ I particularly wanted to have an orgasm.
   OR
   b) _____ It was a matter of luck.

II. Complete the following sentence by placing a check mark in front of the ONE CHOICE IN EACH PAIR of choices which you believe is MORE ACCURATE FOR YOU. Please respond to all six choices.

When I do not have an orgasm *during coitus*, it is typically because: (Select one answer from each pair.)

1. a) _____ I am typically sexually unresponsive.
   OR
   b) _____ I did not particularly want to have an orgasm.
2. a) _____ I did not particularly want to have an orgasm.
   OR
   b) _____ My partner is not a good lover.
3. a) _____ My partner is not a good lover.
   OR
   b) _____ It was a matter of luck.
4. a) _____ It was a matter of luck.
   OR
   b) _____ I am typically sexually unresponsive.
5. a) _____ My partner is not a good lover.
   OR
   b) _____ I am typically sexually unresponsive.
6. a) _____ I did not particularly want to have an orgasm.
   OR
   b) _____ It was a matter of luck.