Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures

Terri D. Fisher, Clive M. Davis, William L. Yarber, Sandra L. Davis

Sexual Arousability Inventory and Sexual Arousability Inventory—Expanded

Publication details


Emily Franck Hoon, Dianne Chambless

Published online on: 12 Aug 2010

How to cite :- Emily Franck Hoon, Dianne Chambless. 12 Aug 2010, Sexual Arousability Inventory and Sexual Arousability Inventory—Expanded from: Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures Routledge Accessed on: 13 Jul 2023


PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.
The Sexual Arousability Inventory (SAI) and the Sexuality Arousability Inventory—Expanded (SAI-E) measure sexual arousability and anxiety. The SAI has clinical utility, as it is capable of discriminating between a normal population and individuals seeking therapy for sexual dysfunction (Hoon, Hoon, & Wincze, 1976). The SAI-E can help determine if a client has an arousal dysfunction problem and/or sexual anxiety, which may be inhibiting normal functioning. Furthermore, it can help pinpoint which erotic experiences may be problematic. The SAI is sensitive to therapeutic changes (e.g., Murphy, Coleman, Hoon, & Scott, 1980) and can, therefore, help to determine the efficacy of various therapy programs (or components thereof) for a given individual or group(s) of individuals.

The SAI-E is also a valuable research tool for determining the relationship of sexual arousability and anxiety to the characteristics, attitudes, and experiences of subjects (e.g., Burgess & Krop, 1978; Coleman, Hoon, & Hoon, 1983; Hoon & Hoon, 1982) and for investigating underlying dimensions of arousability (Chambless & Lifshitz, 1984; Hoon & Hoon, 1978).

Description

The SAI is a 28-item self-report inventory measuring perceived arousability to a variety of sexual experiences. The SAI-E is the same inventory rated both on arousability and anxiety dimensions. The two dimensions are uncorrelated, providing independent information.

The SAI is suitable for either heterosexual or lesbian women. The SAI-E is suitable for administration to men or women regardless of sexual orientation or marital status. The items are descriptions of sexual experiences and situations which are rated along a 7-point Likert-type scale on the basis of (a) how sexually aroused and (b) how anxious the respondent feels (or would feel) when engaged in the described activity. Response options on the arousability dimension range from –1, adversely affects arousal; unthinkable, repulsive, distracting to 5, always causes sexual arousal; extremely arousing. Extremes of the anxiety scale are –1, relaxing, calming to 5, always causes anxiety; extremely anxiety producing.

When frequent evaluations are desired, alternate forms of the SAI may be used interchangeably to assess sexual arousability throughout therapy for sexual dysfunction.

Response Mode and Timing

Using a paper/pencil format, respondents circle the number indicating their degree of arousal during each of the described activities. They then independently circle the numbers indicating their perceived anxiety during each of the same activities. A card sort format may also be used for individual assessment. The inventory takes an average of 10 minutes to complete by either method. It takes less than 5 minutes to complete the 14-item version.

Scoring

Arousability score is the sum of the arousability ratings (subtracting any –1s). Anxiety score is a sum of anxiety ratings (subtracting –1s). For ease of interpretation, available normative data are presented in Table 1.

Reliability

Arousability, female samples. Reliability information from the original research (Hoon et al., 1976) follows with additional information, as noted. Cronbach alpha coefficients for the original validation (N = 151) and cross-validation (N = 134) samples were .91 and .92,
respectively. Spearman-Brown corrected split-half coefficients were .92 for each sample, indicating high internal consistency. A test-retest coefficient on a subsample (n = 48) with an 8-week interval was .69. Split-half reliability was later confirmed by Chambless and Lifshitz (1984), who obtained a Spearman-Brown corrected coefficient of .92 utilizing a sample (N = 252) from another geographic location.

Cumulative percentile norms have remained remarkably consistent. The addition of a sample of women over the age of 25 to the original sample, and subsequent reanalysis of the data, did not appreciably alter the cumulative percentile distribution (M age = 28.4, revised N = 370). Similarly, the distributions obtained from independent samples (Chambless & Lifshitz, 1984) were remarkably similar with two minor differences. A slightly lower average arousability score was obtained from the younger sample (M age = 18.91, N = 252) and a slightly higher average score was obtained from the older sample (M age = 26.26, N = 90; see Table 1).

Flax (1980) has provided reliability information on the 14-item shortened versions of the arousability scale for women. In a sample of 158 White married women, half with ileostomies, she obtained Cronbach alpha coefficients of .88 and .86 for Forms A and B, respectively. Test-retest coefficients after a 3-week interval were .97 and .98 (N = 39) respectively.

Anxiety, female samples. Split-half reliability was calculated on responses of 252 female undergraduates yielding an excellent corrected reliability coefficient of .94 (Chambless & Lifshitz, 1984). Test-retest data are unavailable.

Arousalability and anxiety, male samples. Reliability information on the SAI-E and SAI for men is not available.

Validity

Arousalability, female samples. Construct validity has been demonstrated by consistently high correlations with four criterion variables: awareness of physiological changes during sexual arousal, satisfaction with sexual responsiveness, frequency of intercourse, and total episodes of intercourse before marriage (Hoon et al., 1976). Separate factor analyses of the original SAI data and a subsequent independent heterosexual female sample both resulted in five highly interpretable solutions with similar factor loadings on the respective factors (Chambless & Lifshitz, 1984). Factor analysis of SAI data obtained on a sample of lesbian women (N = 407) resulted in six underlying dimensions, three of which were analogous to factors found on the heterosexual samples. The other three factors were consistent with lesbian sexual practices, one differing in genitally oriented items, another representing oral sex, and the last representing nudity (Coleman et al., 1983).

Burgess and Krop (1978) found a significant correlation between SAI scores and satisfaction with intercourse frequency in heterosexual women (N = 74). They also found a significant positive relationship between sexual arousability and heterosexual attitude and significant negative relationships with sexual anxiety and trait anxiety. Trait anxiety was not significantly related to sexual anxiety, which implies that these two forms of anxiety are independent entities.

Discriminant validity has been demonstrated between normal and sexually dysfunctional women, with the mean score of the latter falling at the 5th percentile of the former (Hoon et al., 1976). Significant and theoretically interpretable response differences to specific items have been found according to sex (Hoon & Hoon, 1977), experience with cohabitation (Hoon & Hoon, 1982), orientation (Coleman et al., 1983), and distinct styles of sexual expression (Hoon & Hoon, 1978).

Anxiety, female samples. The initial stages of validation of the anxiety scale yielded encouraging results. Validity data were collected on two samples of women by Chambless and Lifshitz (1984), who predicted the anxiety scale should be negatively correlated with frequency of orgasm and with greater sexual experience. In the undergraduate sample (N = 252), the more sexually experienced were found to be significantly less anxious (tau = –.14), and in a sample of community women (N = 90), higher frequency of coital orgasm was significantly associated with lower anxiety (tau = –.25).

A principal components analysis with oblique rotation was conducted on the undergraduate responses. Three interpretable factors, accounting for 61% of the variance, were extracted. Factor 1 (45%) and Factor 3 (5%) were similar in being general factors defined more by their exclusion of pornography and masturbation than by items they included. Factor 1, however, seemed more related to intercourse and foreplay, whereas Factor 3 was weighted more heavily with items concerning noncoital genital stimulation. Factor 2 (12%) concerned pornography and masturbation. These factors are similar in content to three of those on the arousability scale, indicating these may be consistent dimensions of sexual stimuli. The two factors pertaining to partner sex were modestly negatively correlated with the masturbation factor.

Arousalability and anxiety, male samples. Validity information on the SAI-E and SAI is unavailable for men.

Other Information

Samples of the measure, factor analytic information, item means and standard deviation are available from the first author.

References


Exhibit

**Sexual Arousability Inventory**

*Instructions:* The experiences in this inventory may or may not be sexually arousing to you. There are no right or wrong answers. Read each item carefully, and then circle the number which indicates how sexually aroused you feel when you have the described experience, or how sexually aroused you think you would feel if you actually experienced it. Be sure to answer every item. If you aren’t certain about an item, circle the number that seems about right. Rate feelings of arousal according to the scale below.

| –1 | adversely affects arousal; unthinkable, repulsive, distracting |
| 0 | doesn’t affect sexual arousal |
| 1 | possibly causes sexual arousal |
| 2 | sometimes causes sexual arousal; slightly arousing |
| 3 | usually causes sexual arousal; moderately arousing |
| 4 | almost always sexually arousing; very arousing |
| 5 | always causes sexual arousal; extremely arousing |

*a* 1. When a loved one stimulates your genitals with mouth and tongue
*a* 2. When a loved one fondles your breasts with his/her hands
  3. When you see a loved one nude
  4. When a loved one caresses you with his/her eyes
*a* 5. When a loved one stimulates your genitals with his/her finger
*a* 6. When you are touched or kissed on the inner thighs by a loved one
  7. When you caress a loved one’s genitals with your fingers
  8. When you read a pornographic or “dirty” story
*a* 9. When a loved one undresses you
*a* 10. When you dance with a loved one
*a* 11. When you have intercourse with a loved one
*a* 12. When a loved one touches or kisses your nipples
  13. When you caress a loved one (other than genitals)
*a* 14. When you see pornographic pictures or slides
*a* 15. When you lie in bed with a loved one
*a* 16. When a loved one kisses you passionately
  17. When you hear sounds of pleasure during sex
*a* 18. When a loved one kisses you with an exploring tongue
*a* 19. When you read suggestive or pornographic poetry
*a* 20. When you see a strip show
  21. When you stimulate your partner’s genitals with your mouth and tongue
  22. When a loved one caresses you (other than genitals)
  23. When you see a pornographic movie (stag film)
*a* 24. When you undress a loved one
  25. When a loved one fondles your breasts with mouth and tongue
*a* 26. When you make love in a new or unusual place
  27. When you masturbate
  28. When your partner has an orgasm

*Note:* Asterisks indicate those items comprising shortened form A. Form B consists of items without asterisks.

*The seven response options are repeated following each item.
Sexual Anxiety Inventory

Now rate each of the items according to how anxious you feel when you have the described experience. The meaning of anxiety is extreme uneasiness, distress. Rate feelings of anxiety according to the scale below:

–1 relaxing, calming
0 no anxiety
1 possibly causes some anxiety
2 sometimes causes anxiety; slightly anxiety producing
3 usually causes anxiety; moderately anxiety producing
4 almost always causes anxiety; very anxiety producing
5 always causes anxiety; extremely anxiety producing

1. When a loved one stimulates your genitals with mouth and tongue
2. When a loved one fondles your breasts with his/her hands
3. When you see a loved one nude
4. When a loved one caresses you with his/her eyes
5. When a loved one stimulates your genitals with his/her finger
6. When you are touched or kissed on the inner thighs by a loved one
7. When you caress a loved one’s genitals with your fingers
8. When you read a pornographic or “dirty” story
9. When a loved one undresses you
10. When you dance with a loved one
11. When you have intercourse with a loved one
12. When a loved one touches or kisses your nipples
13. When you caress a loved one (other than genitals)
14. When you see pornographic pictures or slides
15. When you lie in bed with a loved one
16. When a loved one kisses you passionately
17. When you hear sounds of pleasure during sex
18. When a loved one kisses you with an exploring tongue
19. When you read suggestive or pornographic poetry
20. When you see a strip show
21. When you stimulate your partner’s genitals with your mouth and tongue
22. When a loved one caresses you (other than genitals)
23. When you see a pornographic movie (stag film)
24. When you undress a loved one
25. When a loved one fondles your breasts with mouth and tongue
26. When you make love in a new or unusual place
27. When you masturbate
28. When your partner has an orgasm

*The seven response options are repeated following each item.