Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures

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Sexual Deception Scale

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Exhibit

**Sexual Self-Disclosure Scale**

You are to read each item in the next section of the questionnaire and then indicate the extent that you have talked about that item to each person (i.e., the extent to which you have made your attitudes and/or behaviours known to that person). Use the rating scale below to describe the extent that you have talked about each item.

The rating scale is:

1. Have told the person nothing about this aspect of me.
2. Have talked only in general terms about this item.
3. Have talked in some detail about this item but have not fully discussed my own attitudes or behaviors.
4. Have talked in complete detail about this item to the other person. He or she knows me fully in this respect.

Choose one number in the row which corresponds to the amount of your disclosure. For example, if you have talked in general terms to your mother about your attitudes and/or behaviors regarding masturbation, you would place a 2 in column 6 of the computer card.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items: Disclosure to mother</th>
<th>No Disclosure</th>
<th>Only General Terms</th>
<th>Some Detail</th>
<th>Complete Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My personal views on sexual morality.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Premarital sexual intercourse.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Oral sex.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Masturbation.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My sexual thoughts or fantasies.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sexual techniques I find or would find pleasurable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Use of contraception.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sexual problems or difficulties I might have.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sexual Deception Scale**

**WILLIAM D. MARELICH**¹ AND **RHONA I. SLAUGHTER,** *California State University, Fullerton*

The Sexual Deception Scale is designed to measure the use of sexual deception in intimate relationships by specifically focusing on the lies and deceptive practices individuals use in order to engage in sexual activity with a current or prospective partner. The scale is designed for use with general or college populations for research on intimate and close relationships.

**Description**

In accordance with social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), the scale addresses the use of sexually deceptive practices in order to gain and/or maintain specific resources. In some cases, the rewards are sexual in nature (e.g., when one partner deliberately lies in order to have sexual intercourse with another partner). Likewise, the use of deception may occur when an individual uses sexual intimacy as a cost in order to maintain an existing resource (e.g., providing sexual services in order to maintain the relationship).

The instrument consists of a 15-item questionnaire in a forced-choice, dichotomous format. Participants indicate *Yes* or *No* to having ever engaged in a particular act or

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behavior. The measure consists of three subscales that reflect the different types of lies or deceptions used by individuals: blatant lies, self-serving lies, and lies told to avoid confrontation. Items that address blatant lying tactics involve the individual’s use of deception to gain access to sexual activity. The use of deception for self-serving purposes employs the practice of engaging in sexual behavior in order to gain specific resources such as material items or companionship. Finally, items that address the use of deception to avoid confrontation signify the individual’s willingness to engage in sexual behaviors to avoid conflict.

Response Mode and Timing

Respondents answer Yes or No to each item based on whether they have ever participated in the act/behavior. The instrument can be administered by traditional paper-and-pencil method or by utilizing online data collection techniques. The measure takes 5 minutes to complete.

Scoring

The Sexual Deception Scale comprises three subscales (Blatant Lying, Self-Serving, Avoiding Confrontation). No total score is available, although a second-order factor analysis (see Marelich, Lundquist, Painter, & Mechanic, 2008) suggests that a total score measure may be viable. The Blatant Lying subscale consists of Items 1, 2, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 15. The Self-Serving subscale consists of Items 4, 7, and 8. The Avoiding Confrontation subscale consists of Items 3, 5, 6, 10, and 14. According to Marelich et al. (2008), each item is assigned the value of 1 for a Yes response and 2 for a No response. To obtain a score for each individual subscale:

1. Reverse code all scale items (0 = No, 1 = Yes).
2. Sum the items of the particular subscale.
3. Divide by the number of items in that particular subscale.

Scores yielded for each subscale indicate the amount of deception used; higher scores signify the greater use of sexually deceptive practices.

Reliability

Principal components analysis was utilized, and an oblique rotation was utilized to allow the resulting components to correlate. Items showed good pattern matrix loadings on at least one of the subscales. After a confirmatory factor analysis was performed (see Validity below), internal consistency reliabilities were performed, and ranged from .71 to .75 for the three subscales.

Validity

A confirmatory factor analysis was performed to validate the principal components analysis. Based on these results, the final set of 15 items and their respective subscales was derived. This final model showed good fit, and a second-order factor analysis showed that the three resulting subscales reflect a broader sexual deception construct.

Construct and criterion validity of the instrument was assessed by correlating the three subscales with additional items designed to address attitude and behavioral issues toward sexual intimacy and sexual needs. Across all three subscales, those noting more sexual deceptions reported a greater number of lifetime sexual partners, engaging in one-night stands, and misrepresenting the total number of lifetime sexual partners to the current/prospective partners. These correlations were the strongest for those using blatant lies. Individuals showing greater self-serving deceptions were significantly associated with greater perceived sexual need, and greater need to manipulate their partners. Items assessing intimacy-related attitudes, such as the desire to be in a relationship and/or maintain the current relationship, were found to positively correlate with the use of deceptions to avoid confrontation.

In addition to the significant associations found between subscales and various acts and behaviors, each component was found to fall in accordance with the cost/benefit structure of social exchange theory. For example, items that constitute the Blatant Lying subscale address the use of deception to gain sexual favors (i.e., sex as a benefit), whereas items associated with the Self-Serving or Avoiding Confrontation subscales construe the use of sexual favors as a means to gain or maintain resources (i.e., sex as a cost to maintain the relationship).

References


Exhibit

Sexual Deception Scale

Directions: Below are a number of items addressing things you may or may not have done sometime in your life. Please answer each item Yes or No. “Sex” below can refer to intercourse or other forms of sexual intimacy (e.g., oral sex, manual stimulation).

Have you ever . . .

1. Told someone “I love you” but really didn’t just to have sex with them?
   Yes _____ No_____

2. Told someone “I care for you” just to have sex with them?
   Yes _____ No_____

3. Had sex with someone so they would leave you alone?
   Yes _____ No_____

4. Had sex with someone so you would have someone to sleep next to?
   Yes _____ No_____

5. Had sex with someone even though you didn’t want to?
   Yes _____ No_____

6. Had sex with someone in order to maintain your relationship with them?
   Yes _____ No_____

7. Had sex with someone in order to maintain resources you get from them (e.g., money, clothes, companionship)?
   Yes _____ No_____

8. Had sex with someone in order to get resources from them (e.g., money, clothes, companionship)?
   Yes _____ No_____

9. Had sex with someone just so you could tell your friends about it?
   Yes _____ No_____

10. Had sex with someone so they wouldn’t break up with you?
    Yes _____ No_____

11. Gotten a partner really drunk or stoned in order to have sex with them?
    Yes _____ No_____

12. Told someone they’d be your boyfriend/girlfriend just so they would have sex with you?
    Yes _____ No_____

13. Had sex with someone, then never returned their calls after that?
    Yes _____ No_____

14. Had sex with someone because you wanted to please them?
    Yes _____ No_____

15. Faked “who you are” in order to have sex with somebody?
    Yes _____ No_____