Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures

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

Female Sexual Resourcefulness Scale

Publication details
Terry P. Humphreys, Deborah J. Kennett
Published online on: 12 Aug 2010
Female Sexual Resourcefulness Scale
TERRY P. HUMPHREYS AND DEBORAH J. KENNETT, Trent University

The Female Sexual Resourcefulness Scale (FSRS; Humphreys & Kennett, 2008; Kennett, Humphreys & Patchell, 2009) assesses the self-control strategies women use to deal with unwanted sexual encounters. Unwanted sexual encounters often involve some form of verbal and/or nonverbal persuasion on the part of the male, creating more perceived pressure on a woman to consent. Hence, being sexually resourceful empowers women with a variety of specific strategies for saying no or leaving the situation when in these circumstances.

Description

The FSRS was developed after Rosenbaum’s (1990, 2000) model of self-control. The key component in this model is learned resourcefulness: the basic self-regulatory skills needed to handle everyday life challenges. Individuals possessing a large, general repertoire of learned resourcefulness skills make use of positive self-statements, delay gratification, apply problem-solving methods, and employ other self-control strategies when dealing with negative emotions (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999), breaking bad habits (Kennett, Morris, & Bangs, 2006), adhering to medical regimens (Zauszniewski & Chung, 2001), carrying out boring but necessary tasks (Kennett & Nisbet, 1998), or overcoming other adversities they encounter (Chislett & Kennett, 2007). However, how readily one is able to draw on this general repertoire of well-learned skills depends on other factors. In particular, the extent to which a woman is able to be sexually resourceful when confronted with unwanted sexual advances depends on process regulating cognitions (PRCs) such as sexual self-efficacy (i.e., the belief that she is capable of stopping unwanted sexual advances/activities). These beliefs are shaped over time by the outcomes and personal explanations of past unwanted sexual experiences, and they are further affected by physiological (e.g., one’s sexual arousal level) and situational (e.g., relationship status, sexual coercion, environmental setting) variables that interact among each other by either facilitating or preventing the use of specific sexual resourcefulness strategies to put a halt to the unwanted sexual advance/activity.

Response Mode and Timing

Two alternative modes are possible. As a paper-and-pencil survey, respondents circle a number from 1 to 6 corresponding to the degree to which they feel the statement is characteristic of themselves. As an online survey (using an internal or external service), respondents click on the bullet response from 1 to 6 corresponding to the degree to which they feel the statement is characteristic of themselves. The FSRS takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Scoring

Items are scored 1 for Very Uncharacteristic of Me to 6 for Very Characteristic of Me. Items 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 16, 17, and 18 are reverse scored. Total scores can range from 19 to 114. The mean score on this inventory for our two samples was $M = 80.5, SD = 18.4$ (Kennett et al., 2009) and $M = 85.9, SD = 16.1$ (Humphreys & Kennett, 2008), respectively.

Reliability

Based on two female undergraduate datasets, the reliability for the whole FSRS was $.91 (N = 150; Kennett et al., 2009) and $.91 (N = 152; Humphreys & Kennett, 2008), respectively.

Over a 6-week period, test-retest reliability in a female student sample ($N = 63$) was .78 (Humphreys & Kennett, 2008).

Validity

Construct validity was examined by comparing the FSRS to previously established scales: the Self-Control Schedule (SCS; Rosenbaum, 1980) and the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES; Koss & Oros, 1982), as well as a number of newly designed scales: Sexual Self-Efficacy (Kennett et al., 2009), Reasons for Consenting to Unwanted Sex (Kennett et al., 2009; Humphreys & Kennett, 2008), and Sexual Giving-In Experiences (Kennett et al., 2009).

Demographically, FSRS is unrelated to age, relationship stage, or length of relationship. This is important given that Rosenbaum’s conceptualization of learned resourcefulness suggests that skill level should not change dramatically once one reaches early adulthood or because of changes in relationship partners without significant intervention (Rosenbaum, 1990, 2000).

Rosenbaum’s (1980) SCS measures an individual’s general repertoire of learned resourcefulness skills, by assessing one’s use of positive self-statements to control emotional and physiological responses and ability to...
problem solve and delay gratification. The FSRS was designed to measure a specific type of learned resourcefulness focused on dealing with unwanted sexual situations. As predicted, the SCS and the FSRS are correlated, \( r(152) = .26, p = .001 \). Again, as predicted, FSRS is negatively correlated with forced sex play (Items 1–3), \( r(152) = -.48, p < .001 \), and attempted or completed forced intercourse (Items 4–10), \( r(152) = -.41, p < .001 \), in the SES (Koss & Oros, 1982). In addition, FSRS was negatively correlated with a single item assessing the extent to which female students have experienced unwanted sexual advances from men, \( r(152) = -.21, p = .008 \). Therefore, being sexually resourceful is related to less involvement in unwanted and forced sexual situations.

The Sexual Self-Efficacy scale (Kennett et al., 2009) assesses women’s belief that they have what it takes to deal with or prevent unwanted sexual advances. This 5-item scale was positively correlated with FSRS, \( r(152) = .59, p < .001 \). Clearly, believing that you have the ability to deal with unwanted sexual advances is positively linked with actually using a variety of resourcefulness skills when engaged in these situations.

The Reasons for Consenting to Unwanted Sex Scale (RCUSS) (Kennett et al., 2009; Humphreys & Kennett, 2008) assesses the amount of endorsement women give to a variety of reasons why they have voluntarily consented to engage in sexual activity they did not desire. Reasons for consent are in accordance with previous research suggesting that women consent to unwanted sexual activity to satisfy their partner’s needs, promote intimacy, avoid tension, prevent a partner from losing interest in the relationship, and/or fulfill perceived relationship obligations (O’Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998; Impett & Peplau, 2002; Shotland & Hunter, 1995). As predicted, the RCUSS negatively correlated with the FSRS, \( r(152) = -.67, p < .001 \). The FSRS was also negatively correlated with actual percentage of time women “gave in” to sexual experiences, \( r(152) = -.60, p < .001 \). The results described in this section were reported from Humphreys and Kennett (2008); however, they were replicated in Kennett et al. (2009).

Exhibit

Female Sexual Resourcefulness Scale

**Instructions:** This questionnaire is designed to find out how different people view their thinking and their behavior about unwanted sexual activities/advances.

**Unwanted sexual advances/activities are defined as anything from an unwanted intimate hand on the shoulder to unwanted sexual intercourse.** Other unwanted sexual advances/activity could include things such as verbal advances, touching, hugging, kissing, or dancing.

A statement may range from very uncharacteristic of you to very characteristic of you. Please answer every statement, and circle only one answer for each statement. Use the following scale to indicate whether a statement describes your thinking or behavior.

1 = Very Uncharacteristic of Me
2 = Rather Uncharacteristic of Me

Other Information

Permission to use the FSRS may be obtained from either T. Humphreys or D. Kennett.

References


1. When I am in the middle of sexual play and am aroused, but do not want the activity to progress any further, I am often able to change my aroused feelings so that I am able to prevent the activity from progressing.

2. I often give in to unwanted sexual activity.

3. When I feel upset while engaged in unwanted sexual activity, I try not to think about it.

4. When I am faced with unwanted sexual activity/advances, I have no difficulty leaving the situation.

5. While engaged in unwanted sexual activity, I think I'm making a mistake, but I'm at a loss to do anything about it.

6. I usually consent to unwanted sexual activity when my partner is pressuring me.

7. When I am experiencing unwanted sexual activity/advances, I prefer to not think about it and go along with the activity instead.

8. If I was in the middle of sexual play which I no longer wanted to continue, I could tell him to stop.

9. When I have become aroused from sexual play, but do not want to continue any further, I am able to resist engaging in the sexual activity by thinking about the good reasons for stopping.

10. Although I feel bad about hurting my partner's feelings, I am able to let him know when I am uncomfortable with a sexual situation.

11. I feel good about myself when I resist unwanted sexual advances.

12. When experiencing unwanted sexual activity/advances, I often tell myself that I can do something about it.

13. When I am about to engage in unwanted sexual activity, I tell myself to stop and think before I do anything.

14. I consider my actions very carefully when deciding whether or not to participate in unwanted sexual activity.

15. I always have a back-up plan for when I am faced with unwanted sexual advances/activity that get out of control.

16. It takes a lot of effort on my part to bring unwanted sexual advances/activity to a halt.

17. When presented with unwanted sexual advances/activity, I base my decision on my arousal and how I feel in the moment, even if I know I will regret it later.

18. When engaging in unwanted sexual activity, I try to divert my thoughts from how uncomfortable I feel.

19. I plan in advance how far I want to go with any sexual activity, and am able to stop the activity before it goes too far.

*This scale follows each of the scale statements.

**Questionnaire of Cognitive Schema Activation in Sexual Context**

**PEDRO J. NOBRE,**¹ Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Portugal

**JOSÉ PINTO-GOUVEIA,** Universidade de Coimbra, Portugal

The Questionnaire of Cognitive Schema Activation in Sexual Context (QCSASC; Nobre & Pinto-Gouveia, 2009) assesses the activation of negative self-schemas to negative sexual events. The measure assesses the activation of these self-schemas (using a list proposed by Judith Beck, 1995), following the presentation of four negative sexual events associated with the most common sexual dysfunctions in men and women. The QCSASC is a measure that might be clinically useful in helping to assess the role of cognitive variables on sexual functioning, and eventually contributing to a better understanding of cognitive processes underlying sexual problems.

**Description**

The QCSASC is a 28-item instrument that assesses cognitive schemas presented by the participants when facing negative sexual situations. The first part consists of the presentation of four sexual situations related to the most common sexual dysfunctions: desire disorder, erectile dysfunction, premature ejaculation, and anal penetration. The second part assesses the participants' ability to control unwanted sexual advances/activity.

¹Please address correspondence to Pedro Nobre, Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Apartado 1013, 5001–801 Vila Real, Portugal; e-mail: pnobre5@gmail.com