Excitability/Excitation

1. I quickly become sexually excited when my partner performs oral sex on me. (R)
2. Just thinking about sex turns me on. (R)
3. I find anal sex to be exciting. (R)
4. When it comes to sex, I am easily aroused by my partner touching me. (R)
5. I find masturbation to be sexually stimulating. (R)
6. I seem to lose my sexual excitement too fast.
7. Kissing is sexually arousing for me. (R)
8. Even when I am the mood, it is difficult for me to get excited about sex.
9. Sexual foreplay is exciting for me. (R)
10. When it comes to sex, it seems to take me a long time to get sexually aroused.
11. Pleasing my partner is sexually exciting for me. (R)
12. I have difficulty maintaining my sexual excitement.
13. I find sexual intercourse to be exciting. (R)
14. When it comes to sex, I think my level of sexual excitement is low.
15. Giving my partner oral sex is sexually exciting for me. (R)
16. In general, sex is satisfying for me. (R)

Note. (R) = Reverse-scored items. Scoring system responses: all of the time = 0 points; most of the time = +1 point; some of the time = +2 points; rarely = +3 points; never = +4 points.

Sexual Inhibition/Sexual Excitation Scales

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The Sexual Inhibition/Sexual Excitation Scales (SIS/SES) assess a person’s propensity for sexual inhibition and excitation. The underlying theoretical model postulates that sexual response and associated behaviors depend on dual control mechanisms, involving excitatory and inhibitory neurophysiological systems (Bancroft & Janssen, 2000). Sexual inhibition and excitation, as measured by these scales, have been found to be predictive of sexual desire and arousal, sexual functioning, sexual risk taking, sexual compulsivity, sexual aggression, sexual infidelity, and the effects of negative mood on sexuality (see Bancroft, Graham, Janssen, & Sanders, 2009, and Janssen & Bancroft, 2007, for reviews).

Description

The SIS/SES, although initially developed for men (Janssen, Vorst, Finn, & Bancroft, 2002a, 2002b), can be used in both male and female samples. A facet design approach was used to guide scale development (e.g., Shye & Elizur, 1994). The majority of items were written in an “if-then” form. A variety of facets are covered, including the type of stimulus (e.g., social, imaginary, visual, tactile) and type of response (sexual arousal or genital response). Inhibition is conceptualized to play a specific role in the modification of sexual responses in the avoidance or reduction of threat. Threats can be intrapersonal or interpersonal in nature and can involve norms and values, physical and psychological harm, etc.

Factor analysis on the data from a sample of 408 sexually functional, heterosexual men (mean age = 23 years) identified 10 factors (Janssen et al., 2002a). A further factor analysis of the subscale scores identified a single excitation factor (SES), but differentiated sexual inhibition into two factors: Inhibition Due to Threat of Performance Failure (SIS1) and Inhibition Due to the Threat of Performance Consequences (SIS2). SES consists of 20 items and four subscales, SIS1 consists of 14 items and three subscales,

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and SIS2 consists of 11 items and three subscales. The factor loadings were between .6 and .9 and the three factors together accounted for 60% of the variance. Multigroup confirmatory factor analyses on the data from a second sample of 459 men (mean age = 21 years) and a third sample of 313 men (mean age = 46 years) further supported the use of the higher-level factor structure.

The three scales showed close to normal distributions in all three samples. SES and SIS1 were related to age (e.g., \( r = -0.24 \) and \( r = 0.34 \), respectively, in the third sample). In addition, correlations between SES and the two inhibition factors were low (e.g., SES-SIS1: \( r = -0.07 \); SES-SIS2: \( r = -0.11 \) in the first sample), suggesting that sexual excitation and inhibition are relatively independent. A significant but modest correlation (\( r = 0.28 \), first sample) revealed limited overlap between the two inhibition scales.

A later study (Carpenter, Janssen, Graham, Vorst, & Wicherts, 2008) compared 978 men (mean age = 20 years) with 1,067 heterosexual women (mean age = 19 years), and confirmatory factor analysis suggested an acceptable fit of the three-factor structure in women.

### Response Mode and Timing

Respondents are asked to indicate what their “most likely reaction” would be to a series of statements and to provide a rating on a 4-point scale (1 = Strongly Agree to 4 = Strongly Disagree) to a total of 45 questions. Completion of the questionnaire takes approximately 10 minutes.

### Scoring

To compute scores, all but two (Items 17 and 45; see Exhibit) of the items first need to be reversed (1 = 4, 2 = 3, 3 = 2, 4 = 1). Missing values can be replaced with the mean of the other items making up the lower-level factor to which the missing item belongs (see Exhibit). It is recommended that no scores are computed if more than 10 out of the 45 items are missing, and that missing values are assigned to SES if more than 5 SES items are missing, to SIS1 if more than 4 SIS1 items are missing, and to SIS2 if more than 3 SIS2 items are missing. SES consists of the sum of Items 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 16, 25, 26, 29, 30, 32, 35, 37, 38, 39, 43, and 44. SIS1 consists of the sum of Items 5, 9, 10, 17 (not recoded), 19, 20, 21, 23, 33, 36, 40, 41, 42, and 45 (not recoded). SIS2 consists of the sum of Items 2, 8, 12, 15, 18, 22, 24, 27, 28, 31, and 34.

### Reliability

Cronbach alpha scores for the three male samples were .89, .89, and .88 for SES; .81, .78, and .83 for SIS1; and .73, .69, and .75 for SIS2 (Janssen et al., 2002a). In women (Carpenter et al., 2008), the corresponding alphas were .87, .76, and .70.

A sample of 50 men (Janssen et al., 2002a) and 51 women (Carpenter et al., 2008) completed the SES/SIS questionnaire on two occasions. The average number of weeks between sessions was 7 for men and a little under 5 for women. Test-retest correlations were .76 (SES), .67 (SIS1), and .74 (SIS2) for men, and .70 (SES), .68 (SIS1), and .60 (SIS2, after removal of two outliers) for women.

### Validity

In evaluating the scales’ discriminant and convergent validity (see Carpenter et al., 2008; Janssen et al., 2002a), we found a small degree of overlap with measures of traits of behavioral inhibition, neuroticism, harm avoidance, and reward responsivity, suggesting that the SES scale is related to aspects of reward responsivity and the SIS scales (especially SIS2) tap aspects of behavioral inhibition (see Table 1).

However, the limited degree of overlap supports the idea that the SIS/SES questionnaire predominantly measures propensities that are specific to sexual responsibility. For more information on validity, including associations with sexual functioning and sexual risk taking, see Bancroft et al. (2009) and Janssen and Bancroft (2007).

### Other Information

The SIS/SES and additional information, including an SPSS file for scoring, can be found online at http://www.indiana.edu/~sexlab. There are no fees attached to its use.

### TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations of SES, SIS1, and SIS2 With Other Measures</th>
<th>SES Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>SIS1 Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>SIS2 Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability Scale</td>
<td>( -0.23 )</td>
<td>( 0.02 )</td>
<td>( -0.18 )</td>
<td>( -0.11 )</td>
<td>( -0.01 )</td>
<td>( 0.17 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Inhibition/Activation Scales</td>
<td>( 0.16 )</td>
<td>( 0.23 )</td>
<td>( -0.01 )</td>
<td>( 0.13 )</td>
<td>( 0.16 )</td>
<td>( 0.21 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAS—Reward Responsiveness</td>
<td>( 0.11 )</td>
<td>( 0.37 )</td>
<td>( -0.19 )</td>
<td>( -0.12 )</td>
<td>( -0.08 )</td>
<td>( -0.01 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAS—Drive</td>
<td>( 0.15 )</td>
<td>( 0.25 )</td>
<td>( 0.06 )</td>
<td>( -0.01 )</td>
<td>( -0.09 )</td>
<td>( -0.07 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAS—Fun Seeking</td>
<td>( 0.27 )</td>
<td>( 0.25 )</td>
<td>( -0.19 )</td>
<td>( -0.18 )</td>
<td>( -0.31 )</td>
<td>( -0.17 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ)</td>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>( 0.16 )</td>
<td>( 0.22 )</td>
<td>( 0.18 )</td>
<td>( 0.20 )</td>
<td>( 0.07 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>( 0.03 )</td>
<td>( -0.01 )</td>
<td>( -0.20 )</td>
<td>( -0.14 )</td>
<td>( -0.12 )</td>
<td>( -0.10 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harm Avoidance Subscale (MPQ)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Opinion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey (SOS)</td>
<td>( 0.58 )</td>
<td>( 0.42 )</td>
<td>( -0.08 )</td>
<td>( -0.10 )</td>
<td>( -0.33 )</td>
<td>( -0.28 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociosexual Orientation Inventory (SOI)</td>
<td>( 0.38 )</td>
<td>( 0.20 )</td>
<td>( 0.12 )</td>
<td>( 0.08 )</td>
<td>( -0.47 )</td>
<td>( -0.33 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Women: \( N = 141 \) for all measures except SDSR-5: \( N = 1,040 \). Men: \( N = 531 \) for all measures except SDSR-5: \( N = 971 \). Table taken from Carpenter et al. (2008). \(^{p} \leq 0.01\); Holm’s sequential Bonferroni procedure (Holm, 1979).
A short (14-item) version is also available (see this volume).

References

Exhibit
SIS/SES Scales

Instructions: In this questionnaire you will find statements about how you might react to various sexual situations, activities, or behaviors. Obviously, how you react will often depend on the circumstances, but we are interested in what would be the most likely reaction for you. Please read each statement carefully and decide how you would be most likely to react. Then circle the number that corresponds with your answer. Please try to respond to every statement. Sometimes you may feel that none of the responses seems completely accurate. Sometimes you may read a statement which you feel is “not applicable.” In these cases, please circle a response which you would choose if it were applicable to you. In many statements you will find words describing reactions such as “sexually aroused,” or sometimes just “aroused.” With these words we mean to describe “feelings of sexual excitement,” feeling “sexually stimulated,” “horny,” “hot,” or “turned on.” Don’t think too long before answering; please give your first reaction. Try not to skip any questions. Try to be as honest as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Lower-Level Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>When I look at erotic pictures, I easily become sexually aroused.</td>
<td>SES_2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>If I feel that I am being rushed, I am unlikely to get very aroused.</td>
<td>SIS2_3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>If I am on my own watching a sexual scene in a film, I quickly become sexually aroused.</td>
<td>SES_2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Sometimes I become sexually aroused just by lying in the sun/Sometimes just lying in the sun sexually arouses me.</td>
<td>SES_4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Putting on a condom can cause me to lose my erection/Using condoms or other safe-sex products can cause me to lose my arousal.</td>
<td>SIS1_1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>When a sexually attractive stranger accidentally touches me, I easily become aroused.</td>
<td>SES_1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>When I have a quiet candlelight dinner with someone I find sexually attractive, I get aroused.</td>
<td>SES_1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>If there is a risk of unwanted pregnancy, I am unlikely to get sexually aroused.</td>
<td>SIS2_2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I need my penis to be touched to maintain an erection/I need my clitoris to be stimulated to continue feeling aroused.</td>
<td>SIS1_1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>When I am having sex, I have to focus on my own sexual feelings in order to keep my erection/stay aroused.</td>
<td>SIS1_1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>When I feel sexually aroused, I usually have an erection/I usually have a genital response (e.g., vaginal lubrication, being wet).</td>
<td>SES_3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>If I am having sex in a secluded, outdoor place and I think that someone is nearby, I am not likely to get very aroused.</td>
<td>SIS2_1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>When I see someone I find attractive dressed in a sexy way, I easily become sexually aroused.</td>
<td>SES_1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>When I think someone sexually attractive wants to have sex with me, I quickly become sexually aroused.</td>
<td>SES_1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>If I discovered that someone I find sexually attractive is too young, I would have difficulty getting sexually aroused with him/her.</td>
<td>SIS2_3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>When I talk to someone on the telephone who has a sexy voice, I become sexually aroused.</td>
<td>SES_1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. When I notice that my partner is sexually aroused, my own arousal becomes stronger. [This item should not be recoded]

18. If my new sexual partner does not want to use a condom, I am unlikely to stay aroused/If my new sexual partner does not want to use a condom/safe-sex product, I am unlikely to stay aroused.

19. I cannot get aroused unless I focus exclusively on sexual stimulation.

20. If I feel that I'm expected to respond sexually, I have difficulty getting aroused.

21. If I am concerned about pleasing my partner sexually, I easily lose my erection/If I am concerned about pleasing my partner sexually, it interferes with my arousal.

22. If I am masturbating on my own and I realize that someone is likely to come into the room at any moment, I will lose my erection/my sexual arousal.

23. It is difficult to become sexually aroused unless I fantasize about a very arousing situation.

24. If I can be heard by others while having sex, I am unlikely to stay sexually aroused.

25. Just thinking about a sexual encounter I have had is enough to turn me on sexually.

26. When I am taking a shower or a bath, I easily become sexually aroused.

27. If I realize there is a risk of catching a sexually transmitted disease, I am unlikely to stay sexually aroused.

28. If I can be seen by others while having sex, I am unlikely to stay sexually aroused.

29. If I am with a group of people watching an X-rated film, I quickly become sexually aroused.

30. When a sexually attractive stranger looks me straight in the eye, I become aroused/When a sexually attractive stranger makes eye-contact with me, I become aroused.

31. If I think that having sex will cause me pain, I will lose my erection/my arousal.

32. If I am concerned about pleasing my partner sexually, it interferes with my arousal.

33. If I think that I might not get an erection, then I am less likely to get one/If I am worried about being too dry, I am less likely to get lubricated.

34. If having sex will cause my partner pain, I am unlikely to stay sexually aroused.

35. When I have a distracting thought, I easily lose my erection/my arousal.

36. When I think of a very attractive person, I easily become sexually aroused.

37. If I think that having sex will cause me pain, I will lose my erection/my arousal.

38. If I see others engaged in sexual activities, I feel like having sex myself.

39. When I see an attractive person, I start fantasizing about having sex with him/her.

40. When I feel interested in sex, I usually get an erection/I usually have a genital response (e.g., vaginal lubrication, being wet).

41. When I start fantasizing about sex, I quickly become sexually aroused.

42. If I am distracted by hearing music, television, or a conversation, I am unlikely to stay aroused.

43. When I feel interested in sex, I usually get an erection/I usually have a genital response (e.g., vaginal lubrication, being wet).

44. When an attractive person flirts with me, I easily become sexually aroused.

45. During sex, pleasing my partner sexually makes me more aroused. [This item should not be recoded]

Note. When different item versions are used for men and women, both versions are given (male/female). Answer categories are 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly Disagree.