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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Spanish version of the Sexual Excitation/Sexual Inhibition Inventory for Women: Factorial structure, reliability and validity evidences



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Abstract *Background/Objective:* The Dual Control Model suggests that sexual excitation and associated behaviors are the result of the balance between relatively independent excitatory and inhibitory mechanisms. Based on this theoretical model, the Sexual Excitation/Sexual Inhibition Inventory for Women (SESII-W) was developed to evaluate excitation and inhibition dimensions in women. The aim was to adapt and validate the SESII-W in the Spanish population. *Method:* A sample of 1,380 heterosexual women (aged 18 to 52) completed the Spanish SESII-W, together with other related instruments. After the translation and adaptation of the SESII-W, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed. *Results:* CFA resulted in a version consisting of 33 items divided into eight sub-factors, which were grouped into two higher-order factors (*Sexual Excitation* and *Sexual Inhibition*). The sub-factors demonstrated adequate internal consistency values except for *Sexual Power Dynamics* and *Concerns about Sexual Function*. Test-retest reliabilities were good. Their scores correlated with erotophilia, sexual sensation seeking, age at first intercourse, and number of sexual partners in the expected direction. *Conclusions:* The Spanish version of SESII-W has adequate psychometric guarantees for use in clinical practice and research, although it would be necessary to further revise factors that showed a lower level of reliability.

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PALABRAS CLAVE

Inhibición/excitación sexual;
 SESII-W;
 validación española;
 estudio instrumental

Versión española del Sexual Excitation/Sexual Inhibition Inventory for Women: estructura factorial, fiabilidad y evidencias de validez

Resumen *Antecedentes/Objetivo:* El Modelo de Control Dual plantea que la excitación sexual y conductas asociadas son resultado del balance de mecanismos de inhibición y excitación relativamente independientes. Basado en este modelo teórico, se desarrolló el *Sexual Excitation/Sexual Inhibition Inventory for Women* (SESII-W), que permite la evaluación de las dimensiones excitación/inhibición sexuales en mujeres. El objetivo fue adaptar y validar el SESII-W en población española. *Método:* Una muestra de 1.380 mujeres heterosexuales (edad 18-52 años) completó el SESII-W junto con otros cuestionarios afines. Después de la traducción y adaptación lingüística se realizó un Análisis Factorial Confirmatorio (AFC). *Resultados:* El AFC dio lugar a una versión de 33 ítems organizados en ocho subfactores, agrupados en dos factores de orden superior (*Excitación Sexual e Inhibición Sexual*). Los subfactores muestran aceptables valores de consistencia interna a excepción de *Dinámicas sexuales de poder y Preocupaciones por el funcionamiento sexual*. La fiabilidad test-retest fue aceptable. Sus puntuaciones correlacionaron en la dirección esperada con erotofilia, búsqueda de sensaciones sexuales, edad de la primera relación sexual y número de parejas sexuales. *Conclusiones:* La versión española del SESII-W presenta adecuadas propiedades psicométricas para su uso en clínica e investigación, aunque las subescalas con menor fiabilidad deberían ser revisadas.

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The Dual Control Model of sexual response (DCM) suggests that sexual excitation and associated behaviors are the result of the balance between excitatory and inhibitory mechanisms, relatively independent, present in the central nervous system (Bancroft, 1999; Bancroft, Graham, Janssen, & Sanders, 2009). This theoretical model is based on the assumption that individuals differ in their propensity for sexual excitement or sexual inhibition. Thus, high levels of sexual inhibition are associated with a greater likelihood of developing sexual dysfunctions (Bancroft, Carnes, Janssen, Goodrich, & Long, 2005; Moyano, Vallejo-Medina, & Sierra, 2016), particularly if high sexual inhibition is paired with low levels of sexual excitation (Bancroft & Janssen, 2000). In contrast, low levels of sexual inhibition increase the probability of participating in risky sexual behaviors (Bancroft et al., 2004; Moyano & Sierra, 2016), especially if sexual excitation is high (Bancroft et al., 2003).

Based on this theoretical model, the Sexual Inhibition/Sexual Excitation Scales (SIS/SES; Janssen, Vorst, Finn, & Bancroft, 2002) were developed to assess variation in individual propensity for becoming sexually excited or inhibited. These scales, originally developed for males, have a three-factor structure. The items of the first factor, *Sexual Excitation* (SES), refer to tactile, olfactory, visual, and imaginary stimuli, as well as sexually exciting social interactions. Items in *Sexual Inhibition* are divided into two factors: (a) *Inhibition due to the threat of performance failure* (SIS1) and (b) *Inhibition due to the threat of performance consequences* (SIS2). SIS1 and SIS2 items reflect situations in which sexual excitation could disappear because of an intra or interpersonal threat (e.g., losing an erection easily, problems in sexual performance, distractions, negative consequences of sex, physical and psychological damage, etc.). Correlations between SES and the two SIS factors

were low, which suggests that *Sexual Inhibition* and *Sexual Excitation* are relatively independent. In addition, a significant but modest correlation revealed a slight overlap between the two scales of *Sexual Inhibition* (Janssen et al., 2002). Higher SES scores predict less sexual satisfaction in married couples (Lykins, Janssen, Newhouse, Heiman, & Rafeali, 2012). Furthermore, SES has been positively related to a greater number of sexual partners, use of alcohol and drugs in sexual situations, casual sex, and negatively related to using contraceptive methods (see Granados & Sierra, 2016). For its part, SIS1 predicted erectile difficulty (Bancroft, Carnes et al., 2005), premature ejaculation, low sexual desire (Bancroft, Herbenick et al., 2005) and has been related to unprotected sex (Nguyen et al., 2012) and to having suffered sexual aggression (Carvalho, Quinta-Gomes, & Nobre, 2013). Furthermore, SIS1 together with SIS2 predicted the probability of having one night stands (Bancroft et al., 2004), of using aggressive methods to have sexual relations (Peterson, Janssen, & Heiman, 2010) and has been linked to unprotected sex (Nguyen et al., 2012). Hereupon, SIS2 predicted the number of sexual partners without using condoms (Bancroft et al., 2004).

Subsequently, SIS/SES were applied to a sample of 1,067 female university students (Carpenter, Janssen, Graham, Vorst, & Wicherts, 2008), and an acceptable fit of the original three-factor model was obtained. When the scores in this sample of women were compared with those of male college students, it was observed that males had higher SES scores whereas women had higher SIS1 and SIS2 scores. Therefore, Graham, Sanders, and Milhausen (2006) developed a scale specifically designed for women, which questioned whether the items in the SIS/SES are equally suited to use with women and whether they faithfully represent sexual excitement and inhibition in females (Graham, Sanders,

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