

**INTRODUCTION**

Sexual fantasies are a mystery to many people. It’s common to wonder if sexual fantasies have any utility and whether they are meaningful. Why do we have them? Are they related to people’s identities, age, gender, race or ethnicity, relationship status? Do they cause people to have more or less real-life sexual experiences? The purpose of the current study is to examine identity characteristics that differentiate the type and complex nature of sexual fantasies. Prior research found that there was different types of sexual fantasies (aggressive versus non-aggressive) when it comes to gender (Conley, 1978). There is also research suggesting that men are twice as likely to report frequency of sexual fantasies (Ellis & Symonds, 1990). Prior research reported very little on any differences in sexual preference as it pertained to sexual fantasies so one aim of the current study is to explore whether heterosexuals, homosexuals, or bisexuals have different types of sexual fantasies, what is their frequency, and does it have an effect on their real-life sexual experiences. Leitenberg & Henning (1995) reported that heterosexuals and homosexuals have very similar content in their sexual fantasies.

**Hypotheses**

1. A positive correlation will be found between the number of sexual fantasies and real-life sexual experiences.
2. The number of sexual fantasies is different for individuals of different sexual preference.
3. The number of real-life sexual experiences will differ in relation to sexual preference.

**METHODS**

**Participants**

Participants in the current study consisted of 70 (50 females, 20 males) undergraduate majors in psychology at Eastern Kentucky University. Participants were given full outside participation credit for their participation.

**Materials**

The materials used in this study consisted of an online survey that assessed participants sexual fantasies and sexual experiences that included information on participants’ age, gender, sexual preference, race or ethnicity, and relationship status. The survey consisted of sixty-seven questions on sexual experiences and forty-five questions on sexual fantasies. Each had a scale of: 1) never; 2) less than once a month; 3) less than once a week; 4) one to three times a week; 5) four or more times a week; 6) daily; or 7) two or more times a day.

**Sample Survey**

Sexual Experiences
- Actually have experienced kissing of sensitive areas (non-genital)
- Actually have experienced stroking/petting partner’s genitals

Sexual Fantasies
- Have fantasized about touching/kissing sensuously
- Have fantasized about watching partner undress

**RESULTS**

Although I had anticipated that many homosexuals would participate in the study, my post analysis of the data revealed that only 6 of the 70 participants reported any orientation different from being a heterosexual (1 homosexual, 5 bisexual). Therefore, I was not able to perform statistical analyses that examined homosexual versus heterosexual responses given such a low number of homosexuals. Therefore, no analyses could be done in relation to Hypotheses 1 or 2.

To examine the relationship between sexual experiences and sexual fantasies, I performed a Spearman correlation. As Figure 1 shows, there is a positive correlation between the two variables. This result confirms Hypothesis 1.

In addition, I examined gender effects on both sexual experiences and sexual fantasies using independent-measures t-tests. Figure 2 shows that males reported more sexual experiences than females, and Figure 3 shows that males also reported more sexual fantasies than females.

**DISCUSSION**

The current study adapted a survey of sexual experiences and sexual fantasies from previous research (Hsu et al., 1994). Of the three previous stated hypotheses, only one was shown to have significance. A positive correlation between sexual fantasies and real-life sexual experiences was found. The other two hypotheses could not be found due to lack of a diverse sample. In the future, such research would likely be more fruitful if the sample was gathered from a more sexually diverse population. Also, to minimize inaccurate responses, I would have participants complete the study in person. Last, a larger sample size would clearly be of benefit.

In addition to my hypotheses, I also examined gender differences in sexual experiences and sexual fantasies. The results showed that men have more sexual experiences and sexual fantasies than women. I believe that this might be due to the fact that men actually report their sexual experiences and sexual fantasies compared to women.

**References**


