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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Is Sexting a Matter in Marriage? The Role of Body Acceptance by Spouse on Sexual Satisfaction

Natasya Engga Redita¹ , Monique Elizabeth Sukamto^{1,*}  and Angeliqe Felicia Josephine¹ 

¹Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

Abstract:

Introduction:

Sexual satisfaction is considered as an important factor in sexual relations with spouses. One influential factor in sexual satisfaction is body image. Body image and sexual satisfaction have a strong correlation in both males and females. Body image is determined by the individual's perception of his/her body, which can be divided into positive and negative body image. One of the constructs of positive body image is body acceptance by others, which in this study is limited to spouses. Individuals who have greater satisfaction with their physical appearance tend to have better sexual function and pursue new sexual experiences such as sexting. Sexting is a unique sexual behavior and serves as novelty in sexual relations between spouses so that it is considered a factor that can affect one's sexual satisfaction. This study aims to examine the role of body acceptance by a spouse on sexual satisfaction, with sexting behavior as a mediator, in married men and women in early adulthood.

Methods:

The design of this study was correlational and cross-sectional. A total of 384 married men and women between the ages of 20-40 were selected as the research sample using convenience sampling technique. The research instruments used in this study were the Extended Satisfaction with Life Scale (ESWLS), Body Acceptance by Others Scale-2 (BAOS-2), and Sexting Behavior Scale (SBS).

Results:

The data was statistically analyzed using regression analysis and SOBEL mediation analysis. The results showed that sexting behavior was found to partially mediate the indirect role of body acceptance by a partner on sexual satisfaction ($IE = .080$; $z = 3.113$, $sig. = .001 < .05$). In addition, body acceptance by a partner also plays a direct role in predicting increased sexual satisfaction in early-adult married men and women ($B = .604$, $sig. = .001 < .05$).

Conclusion:

Body acceptance by a spouse can predict an increase in sexual satisfaction both directly and indirectly with sexting behavior as a mediator in early-adult married men and women. Sexting behavior can be a fun alternative for married couples to increase sexual satisfaction with their partner.

Keywords: Sexual satisfaction, Sexting behavior, Positive body image, Body acceptance by spouse, Marriage, Early adulthood.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sexual satisfaction within a marriage is crucial to be further discussed. Several impacts will lead to greater intimacy and closeness in the marital relationship. Sexual satisfaction will correspond with the relationship with one's partner, as the higher an individual's sexual satisfaction, the more positive impact it will have on emotional closeness with one's partner, communication intimacy, and relationship satisfaction [1].

During the early adult sexual development period, individuals determine their attitudes toward sexual activities [2]. Sex is an essential and fascinating part of human life that goes beyond just intimate relationships. Closeness, touch, hugs, kisses, and petting are important aspects of sex [3]. One crucial factor in sexuality is sexual satisfaction [4]. Sexual satisfaction is a subjective evaluation of what is positive or negative in relation to sexual relationships [5]. Sexual satisfaction is also influenced by several factors, including body image, gender, body mass index, frequency of sexual activity, commitment in marital relationships, length of marriage, and marital satisfaction [6 - 8].

* Address correspondence to this author at the Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia; E-mail: monique@staff.ubaya.ac.id

Body image is an important factor in the emergence of individual sexual satisfaction [6 - 8]. The opinions of others, such as a partner's opinion of one's body, can cause individuals to feel tense and passive during sexual activity, thus disrupting sexual satisfaction [8]. In early adulthood, both men and women show that body image can affect them during sexual activity [9]. Individuals with a more positive body image will likely feel more confident during sexual activity [10].

Body image is an individual's attitude towards their body in the form of positive and negative evaluations [11]. Body image is an individual's perspective, way of thinking, and feeling towards their physical appearance [12]. Body image varies based on an individual's perception of their body, referred to as positive or negative body image [11].

Previous research explained that a positive body image consists of various constructs, one of which is body acceptance by others [13]. Body acceptance by others occurs when individuals perceive that their body shape and size can be accepted by significant others, such as their lawful spouse. Individuals who experience body acceptance from others will feel loved, special, and valued because their appearance receives praise from those close to them [14].

The relationship between body positivity and sexual satisfaction was found to be significant [15]. There is a possibility that factors contributing to a positive body image can affect an individual's sexual pleasure. Empirical evidence shows that individuals with greater satisfaction with their physical appearance will have better sexual function, engage in sexual behavior more frequently, tend to pursue new sexual experiences, and have greater sexual self-esteem [16]. Individuals with greater satisfaction with their body image are more likely to engage in sexual activities, even if those sexual activities are mediated by technology, such as sexting [17].

Previous studies have shown that individuals who prefer adventure and risk-taking in their sexual behavior perceive sexting as a new way to increase intimacy with their partners [18]. Sexting involves risky behavior, such as sending and receiving explicit content, such as messages, photos, or videos, *via* the Internet or mobile phones [19]. A study on early adulthood males and females found that respondents perceived sexting as a pleasurable alternative to develop intimacy and commitment with their partners [20].

Sexting is considered a factor that influences an individual's assessment of their sexual life [21]. High sexual satisfaction can also increase an individual's frequency of sexting [22]. When individuals actively participate in sexting, they can express their sexuality with their partners through exchanging sensual content, such as texts, photos, videos, or images, thus increasing sexual satisfaction [23].

Previous research has often shown a relationship between body dissatisfaction and sexting [18, 24]. However, research on the relationship between positive body image and sexual satisfaction is still scarce, particularly among women, and has not yet explored sexting behavior as a mediator [15]. Another study conducted in Indonesia investigated the relationship between sexting and sexual satisfaction among men and women in romantic relationships, revealing a significant association between sexting behavior and sexual satisfaction [24]. However, this study did not include positive body image

as a variable.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of one of the constructs of positive body image: body acceptance by the spouse in sexual satisfaction. Additionally, this study seeks to explore the role of sexting behavior as a mediator between body acceptance by a spouse and sexual satisfaction among married men and women.

1.1. The Objective of the Study

The current study aims to analyze the role of body acceptance by spouses in predicting sexual satisfaction in married men and women, with sexting behavior as a mediator. The hypotheses for this study were as follows:

H1: Body acceptance by a spouse directly predicts increased sexual satisfaction in married men and women.

H2: Body acceptance by a spouse indirectly predicts increased sexual satisfaction in married men and women, mediated by sexting behavior.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research method with a cross-sectional design and a survey method. A correlational research approach was utilized to examine the role of body acceptance by spouses in predicting sexual satisfaction among married men and women, with sexting behavior as a mediator.

2.1. Setting

This study was conducted in Indonesia during October-December 2022. The data collection process was carried out for four weeks using Google Forms through online distribution *via* social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram, and paper-based questionnaires for offline data collection.

2.2. Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 384 married early adult men and women (aged 20-40). The convenience sampling technique was used to select participants who met predetermined criteria and were willing to complete the research questionnaire.

The criteria for participants in this study were men and women who live in Indonesia, are married, are in early adulthood (20-40 years), and have exchanged "sexually charged" messages with their partners (husband/wife). These criteria were determined because this research concerns sexual satisfaction in married men and women. Domicile restrictions in Indonesia were carried out to maintain the homogeneity of research participants by taking into account the possibility of cultural differences related to marital life between Indonesia and other countries. In addition, the selection of participants in early adulthood was based on a literature review from previous studies, which found that sexting behavior was more often performed by couples in early adulthood. All of these criteria were written in the introductory part of the research questionnaire flyer so that respondents could obtain clear information before deciding to fill out the research questionnaire.

Table 1. Demographic information of participants

Demographic Data	Category	N = 384	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	191	49.74
	Female	193	50.26
Age	20-25 years	123	31.9
	26-30 years	181	47
	31-35 years	70	18.2
	36-40 years	10	2.6
Marital Age	0-5 years	325	84.7
	6-10 years	47	12.1
	11-15 years	10	2.6
	16-20 years	0	0
	21-25 years	2	.52
Domicile	Java	309	80.5
	Sumatra	26	6.8
	Borneo	23	6.0
	Bali	14	3.6
	Sulawesi	10	2.6
	Papua	2	.5

Based on the demographic data (Table 1), it was found that the participants were equally distributed between genders (male = 49.74%, female = 50.26%). The majority of participants were between 26-30 years (47%), had been married for 0-5 years (84.7%), and resided in Java (80.5%).

The researcher included several questions regarding demographic data (e.g., gender, age, age of marriage, domicile) and open-ended questions to ensure the participants met the established criteria. Data regarding gender were obtained by asking respondents to choose the answer according to their gender, namely “male” or “female.” Respondents were also asked to determine their age range by selecting the answer options, namely 20-25 years, 26-30 years, 31-35 years, or 36-40 years. To ensure the participant's marital status, the respondents were asked to write down their age of marriage in the space provided.

Furthermore, to ensure that the participant had ever engaged in sexting, the respondent was asked, “Have you ever sent seductive “sexually charged” messages or pictures to your partner or received seductive “sexually charged” messages or pictures from your partner?” If the respondent chose the answer “Never,” then the respondent would be directed directly to the end of the questionnaire. Respondents who chose “Ever” can continue filling out the questionnaire. In addition, the researcher also ascertained whether the respondent was domiciled in Indonesia by providing answer choices such as Java, Bali, Borneo, Sulawesi, Sumatra, Papua, or “other.” If, for “other” answers, the respondent filled in areas outside Indonesia, then the data would not be used (deleted).

Several open-ended questions were also added to ensure that the participants lived a married life. Some examples of open-ended questions include: “In your opinion, what can affect your sexual satisfaction with your partner?”, “In your opinion, how can the body acceptance by your partner affect your sexual satisfaction?”, and “In your opinion, how do the “sexually charged” messages or pictures you send to your

partner or receive from your partner affect your sexual satisfaction?” In each of these open questions, participants can choose more than one answer according to their situation, including the answer choices “Other” and “None.” The “Other” answer choices were provided so that participants could add their answers freely if they had answers that were not listed in the answer choices.

2.3. Ethics

Ethical clearance to conduct the research was obtained prior to the commencement of the study. We confirm that the Declaration of Helsinki has been followed in this study involving human subjects by fulfilling several requirements; namely, there are no ethical problems that may be encountered, potential dangers directly or indirectly, as well as side effects or complications for participants because all questions asked to participants does not trigger psychological trauma/conflict. In data collection conducted online or offline, participants were allowed to read informed consent, accompanied by an explanation of participant involvement, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the benefits and risks for participants, before they consented to be involved in this research. All ethical procedures were followed, and after the approval process was completed, permission was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of Surabaya (No: 129/KE/X/2022). The questionnaire was completed within approximately 15-20 minutes.

2.4. Study Size

The sample size for this study was determined using Raosoft's sample size calculator with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level, resulting in a sample size of 377. Data was collected over 1.5 months, from October 23 to December 8, 2022. Initially, data were collected online by distributing the questionnaire to married men and women through social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Telegram using Google Forms. The main challenge during online data

collection was finding participants who met the study's inclusion criteria. For instance, the researchers encountered participants who met the criteria for gender, age, and marital status but reported never engaging in sexting and therefore had to be excluded from the study.

To overcome these challenges, the researchers also collected data through offline methods in Surabaya by providing paper-based questionnaires to participants through surveyors. After reaching the target number of participants, the surveyors collected the completed questionnaires and returned them to the researchers. The researchers also conducted screening to ensure the suitability of data from the 394 respondents, ultimately resulting in a final sample size of 384.

2.5. Measures

The current study employed three measurement instruments to collect data, namely the Extended Satisfaction with Life Scale (ESWLS [25]), the Body Acceptance by Others Scale-2 (BAOS-2 [26]), and the Sexting Behavior Scale (SBS [19]).

Extended Satisfaction with Life Scale (ESWLS [25]); is a measure of life satisfaction divided into several dimensions, but in this study, only the satisfaction with sexual life dimension was used. The sexual satisfaction dimension consisted of a Likert scale of five favorable items with a response range of 1-7. The response options are “strongly disagree,” “disagree,” “somewhat disagree,” “neither agree nor disagree,” “somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree.” An example item from this scale was “I am satisfied with my sex life.” Scoring in this scale involved calculating the average of the total participant responses to items 1-5. A higher score indicates greater sexual satisfaction. The reliability test results of the ESWLS instrument in this study showed good reliability with CITC values of .531 - .598 and a Cronbach's alpha value of .791. No items were dropped from this study.

Body acceptance by a spouse was measured using the Body Acceptance by Others Scale-2 (BAOS-2) developed by Swami, Todda, Stiegerc, Furnhamd, Hornee, and Tyłka [26]. The BAOS-2 is a revision and adaptation of the previous measurement tool, the Body Acceptance by Others Scale (BAOS). The BAOS-2 scale is a unidimensional scale

consisting of 13 items using a Likert scale with response options ranging from 1-5. The response options are “never,” “rarely,” “sometimes,” “often,” and “always.” In this study, the term “important others” in each item was replaced with “my partner.” The scoring procedure for the BAOS-2 scale involved calculating the average of responses to items 1-13. A higher score indicates higher body acceptance by the spouse perceived by the subject. The reliability test results showed CITC values in the range of .283 - .474 and a Cronbach's alpha value of .787, with no items dropped.

The Sexting Behavior Scale (SBS) was developed by Dir, Coskunpinar, Steiner, and Cyders [19]. The SBS scale has two aspects: sending and receiving sexual messages. The scale consists of eight items with response options ranging from 1-5. The response options are “never,” “rarely (a few times a year),” “sometimes (2-3 times a month),” “often (2-3 times a week),” and “always (every day).” An example item from the sending sexual messages aspect is “How often have you sent suggestive or sexually charged text messages?” while an example item from the receiving sexual messages aspect is “How often have you received suggestive or sexually charged text messages?” Scoring in this scale involves calculating the average responses to items 1-8. A higher score indicates more frequent sexting with a legitimate partner. The reliability test results of the SBS instrument showed CITC values of .668 - .755 and Cronbach's alpha value of .911, with no items dropped.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics to calculate the frequency and percentage of categorical variables. Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis was used to test the correlation among the three study variables. Furthermore, regression analysis with a mediator was employed to examine the significance of the direct role of body acceptance by the spouse (independent variable) on sexting behavior (mediator variable), sexting behavior on sexual satisfaction (dependent variable), and body acceptance by the spouse on sexual satisfaction. Additionally, the SOBEL test was employed to examine the significance of the indirect role of body acceptance by the spouse on sexual satisfaction through the mediation of sexting behavior. All data were analyzed using SPSS version 27 (IBM Corp, 2020).

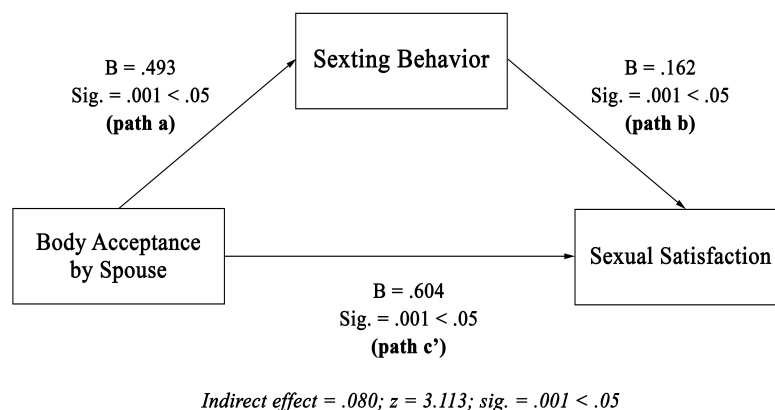


Fig (1). Shows a direct and indirect relationship between body acceptance by spouse and sexual satisfaction with sexting behavior as a mediator.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Characteristics of Participants

Table 1 shows that the number of male (49.74%) and female (50.26%) research participants is balanced. The majority of participants are aged 26-30 years (47%) and are in the 0-5 years of marriage age range (84.7%). Most participants reside in Java Island (80.5%).

Table 2 shows a more detailed description of the characteristics of the participants related to the three research variables, namely sexual satisfaction, body acceptance by a spouse, and sexting behavior. Table 3 shows a significant positive correlation between body acceptance by spouse and sexual satisfaction ($r = .412, sig. = .001 < .05$). Sexting behavior also has a significant positive correlation with sexual satisfaction ($r = .281, sig. = .001 < .05$). Furthermore, there is a significant positive correlation between body acceptance by

spouse and sexting behavior ($r = .258, sig. = .001 < .05$). These significant correlations between the three variables support the use of regression analysis with a mediator.

(Table 4 and Fig. 1) shows that body acceptance by a spouse has a significant direct role in predicting increased sexual satisfaction ($B = .604, sig. = .001 < .05$), thus supporting the first hypothesis of this study. Sexting behavior can also partially mediate the relationship between body acceptance by the spouse and sexual satisfaction, as the direct role of body acceptance by the spouse on sexting behavior ($B = .493, sig. = .001 < .05$) and the direct role of sexting behavior on sexual satisfaction ($B = .162, sig. = .001 < .05$) are also significant. In addition, the SOBEL test shows that body acceptance by a spouse has a significant indirect role in predicting sexual satisfaction through sexting behavior as a mediator (I.E. = .080; $z = 3.113, sig. = .001 < .05$), thus supporting the second hypothesis of this study.

Table 2. Description of participant responses regarding sexual satisfaction, body acceptance by spouse, and sexting behavior.

Participant Responses	Frequency	%	Participant Responses	Frequency	%
<i>Things that Influence Sexual Satisfaction</i>			<i>Views of Participants' Sexual Life with Spouses</i>		
Variation of sexual relations	277	72.14	Exciting	287	85.16
Frequency of sexual intercourse	247	64.32	Warm	245	63.80
Duration of sexual intercourse	185	48.18	Varies	222	57.81
Orgasm of a spouse	177	46.09	Boring	7	1.82
Self-orgasm	149	38.80	Monotone	7	1.82
Partner body shape	100	26.04	Satisfying	2	.52
Own body shape	51	13.28	Pleasant	1	.26
<i>Effects of Body Acceptance by Spouse on Sexual Satisfaction</i>			<i>Participants' Feelings about Body or Physical Appearance Influenced by</i>		
Increase sexual arousal	297	77.34	Spouse (husband/wife)	327	85.16
Increase sexual satisfaction	290	75.52	Family	174	45.31
Nothing	19	4.95	Friend	155	40.36
Reduce sexual satisfaction	16	4.17	Social media	108	28.13
Reduce sexual arousal	7	1.82	Local communities	70	18.23
Sexual dissatisfaction and no sexual desire	3	.78	None	23	5.99
<i>Part of Participant's Body Liked by Spouse</i>			<i>Part of Participant's Body Disliked by Spouse</i>		
Face (face shape and skin tone)	198	51.56	None	266	69.27
Upper body (ex: chest, bust, shoulders, arms)	180	46.88	Weight	34	8.85
Overall appearance	145	37.76	Mid-body (ex: waist, abdomen)	33	8.59
Hair	109	32.39	Hair	23	5.99
Lower body (ex: hips, buttocks, thighs, calves)	108	28.13	Height	20	5.21
Mid-body (ex: waist, abdomen)	96	25	Upper body (ex: chest, bust, shoulders, arms)	18	4.69
Height	72	18.75	Lower body (ex: hips, buttocks, thighs, calves)	17	4.43
Muscle shape	56	14.58	Muscle shape	13	3.39
Weight	31	8.07	Face (face shape and skin tone)	13	3.39
None	12	3.13	Overall appearance	8	2.08
<i>Spouse's Responses to Participant's Body</i>			<i>Participant's Feelings of Spouse's Evaluations of Participant's Body</i>		
Happy	310	80.73	Accept or approve	335	87.24
Satisfied	264	68.75	Make certain efforts to improve	142	36.98
Proud	221	57.55	Think about it constantly	55	14.32
Embarrassed	9	2.34	Do not think or worry about it	45	11.72
Not satisfied	2	.52	Refuse or disagree	4	1.04
Disappointed	1	.26	Angry or disappointed	3	.78
<i>Purposes of Participant's Sexting</i>			<i>Effects of Sexting on Participant's Sexual Satisfaction</i>		

(Table 2) contd.....

Participant Responses	Frequency	%	Participant Responses	Frequency	%
Increase spouse's sexual arousal	244	63.54	Increase sexual arousal	324	84.38
Invite spouse to have sex	225	58.69	Support sexual satisfaction	250	65.10
Increase sexual satisfaction with spouse	171	44.53	Nothing	11	2.86
Just for fun	145	37.76	Reduce sexual satisfaction	10	2.60
Never sent	3	.78	Reduce sexual arousal	7	1.82
<i>Responses of Participant Spouses when Receiving Sexting from Participants</i>			<i>Participant Responses when Receiving Sexting from a Spouse</i>		
Interested in having sex	262	68.23	Happy	279	72.66
Happy	257	66.96	Interested in having sex	246	64.06
Respond by sending "sexually charged" messages or pictures	169	44.01	Respond by sending "sexually charged" messages or pictures	174	45.31
Do not like	16	4.17	Not responding anything	8	2.08
Not responding anything	10	2.60	Not interested in having sex	7	1.82
Not interested in having sex	5	1.30	Never received	6	1.56

Table 3. Correlation analysis between sexual satisfaction, body acceptance by the spouse, and sexting behavior (N = 384).

No.	Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
1	Sexual Satisfaction	31.143	2.577	-	-	-
2	Body Acceptance by Spouse	57.724	4.04	.412**	-	-
3	Sexting Behavior	33.039	4.76	.281**	.258**	-

Note: **Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1-tailed).

Table 4. Regression analysis and mediation analysis with sobel test of body acceptance by spouse on sexual satisfaction with sexting behavior as a mediator.

Variable	B	Std. Error	Sig.	
BAOS → S.B. (path a)	.493	.095	.001	
S.B. → ESWLS.BAOS (path b)	.162	.041	.001	
BAOS → ESWLS. S.B. (path c')	.604	.079	.001	
BAOS → ESWLS (path c)	.684	.077	.001	
Variable	Value	S.E	t/z	Sig.
BAOS → SBS → ESWLS	.080	Indirect .025	3.113	.001

Note: BAOS = body acceptance by spouse, SB = sexting behavior, ESWLS = sexual satisfaction.

Table 5. Median analysis of sexual satisfaction, body acceptance by spouse, and sexting behavior.

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Median
Sexual Satisfaction	2	7	6.4
Body Acceptance by Spouse	2	5	4.4
Sexting Behavior	1	5	4.3

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that body acceptance from one's partner plays a significant role in predicting increased sexual satisfaction, both directly and indirectly, through the mediation of sexting behavior, in married men and women. These findings are consistent with previous research on young adult men and women in Norway, which found that perceived intimacy with one's partner and body image were essential factors in predicting sexual satisfaction. Concerns about negative thoughts from one's partner about their body and appearance during sexual activity are likely to hinder

individuals from enjoying sex [1]. The direct role of body acceptance from one's partner on sexual satisfaction suggests that the higher the level of acceptance from one's partner towards the bodies of married male and female participants, the more likely it is to predict an increase in sexual satisfaction.

The direct role of body acceptance from one's partner, as one of the dimensions of positive body image, in increasing sexual satisfaction is consistent with previous research that found positive body image is associated with sexual desire, enjoyable orgasms, and overall sexual satisfaction [27]. Participant response descriptions (Table 2) show that for most

participants, their partner (85.16%) is the person who influences their feelings about their body or physical appearance. A partner's opinion about one's body causes individuals to feel tense and tend to be passive during sexual activity, thus impeding sexual satisfaction [8]. These findings are consistent with the descriptions of most married male and female participants (Table 2) that body acceptance from their partner can increase sexual desire (77.34%) and sexual satisfaction (75.52%).

The results of the median analysis (Table 5) show that the body acceptance by the spouse (median = 4.4) and sexual satisfaction (median = 6.4) of most participants were relatively high (approaching the maximum value). These results indicate that the increased body acceptance perceived by participants aligns with high sexual satisfaction. Body acceptance by a spouse occurs when an individual perceives that their body shape and size are acceptable to their spouse [28]. Participant response descriptions (Table 2) indicate that most participants reported body parts that their partner liked, including the face (51.56%), upper body (chest, breasts, shoulders, arms; 46.88%), and overall appearance (37.76%). Conversely, most participants (69.27%) reported that there were no body parts that their partner did not like. Most participants have a positive view of their sexual life with their partner, such as arousing (85.16%), warm (63.80%), and varied (57.81%).

Previous research explains that body acceptance by a spouse means that an individual's physical characteristics are valued, respected, and unconditionally accepted by others deemed significant such as a spouse [26]. The relatively high body acceptance by spouses is also demonstrated through the responses of most participants (Table 2) that their partners feel happy (80.73%), satisfied (68.75%), and proud (57.55%) of their bodies, and almost all (87.24%) participants accept or agree with their partner's assessment of their body. This indicates that when an individual feels body acceptance by their partner, they tend to be more accepting of their body.

This study also found that sexting behavior can serve as a partial mediator between body acceptance by a spouse and sexual satisfaction, meaning that body acceptance by a spouse can predict an increase in sexual satisfaction, with or without the participants engaging in sexting. Although sexting can enhance sexual satisfaction, it is just one form of variation in sexual relationships, and therefore, individual sexual satisfaction can occur through various forms of communication with a partner or other sexual activities that are commonly perceived [22]. If individuals do not engage in sexting, they can still experience sexual satisfaction through communication with their partners, such as through body acceptance by their spouses.

The results of this study indicate that sexting behavior plays a direct and significant role in predicting an increase in sexual satisfaction among married male and female participants. The median analysis results (Table 5) show that most participants tend to engage in sexting frequently (median = 4.3, maximum value = 5) and have relatively high levels of sexual satisfaction (median = 6.4, maximum value = 7). Research on sexting using a sample of adult men and women shows that sexting behavior decreases significantly in older

adults. Previous research has found that the frequency of sexting behavior is high (> 50%) in early adulthood for both men and women, but it decreases after approaching middle age [29]. Other research on sexting in adolescents and early adulthood also shows that the majority of sexting actors are in early adulthood [30]. In line with previous research, a study with a sample of middle-aged adults showed that only 43% of participants engaged in sexting to communicate their sexual interests [17].

Sexual satisfaction includes various concepts, such as positive feelings, frequency of sexual activity, exciting orgasms, and experimentation with new sexual styles [31, 32]. Consistent with previous research, the description of participant responses (Table 2) shows that the sexual satisfaction of most participants is influenced by variations in sexual relationships (72.14%) and the frequency of sexual relationships (64.32%). Variations in sexual relationships are necessary to overcome monotonous sexual relationships in marriage, thereby increasing sexual satisfaction. In addition, the frequency of sexual relationships can develop intimacy with a partner, which is also essential in increasing sexual satisfaction in marriage.

Sexual style can develop intimacy and eroticism in a relationship [33]. Sexting is a new way to engage intimacy with a partner [18]. Based on the participant response description (Table 2), most participants engage in sexting to increase sexual desire with their partner (63.54%) and invite their partner to engage in sexual activity (58.69%). When someone actively participates in sexting, they have a means of expressing their preferences with their partner, which can increase sexual satisfaction [23]. The results of the study (Table 2) show that most participants reported that sexting had an impact on improving sexual desire (84.38%) and supporting sexual satisfaction (65.10%).

Sexting is a strategy to bring a partner closer, so individuals feel they will not be left by their partner. Individuals also use sexting as a new strategy and way to satisfy their sexual needs and overcome boredom with their partner [34]. This is consistent with the participant response description (Table 2), which shows that the responses from most participant partners when receiving sexting from the participant were interested in engaging in sexual activity with the participant (68.23%), feeling happy (66.96%), and responding by sending sexual messages or images (44.01%). The responses from most participants when receiving sexting from their partner (Table 2) are also more or less the same, namely feeling happy (72.66%), interested in engaging in sexual activity with their partner (64.06%) and responding by sending sexual messages or images to their partner (45.31%). Previous studies have also shown that sexting is a fun alternative to developing intimacy and commitment with a partner in early adulthood for both men and women [20]. Therefore, sexting behavior can mediate between body acceptance by a spouse and sexual satisfaction, although its role is only partial.

6. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The limitations of this study were related to the lack of

participant data regarding the types and forms of sexting behavior, and other sexual activities that can enhance sexual satisfaction have not been explored. In addition, researchers also did not have information about the social media platforms used by participants in sending and receiving sexting.

Future research can do a similar analysis focusing on one aspect of sexting behavior, such as sending or receiving sexual messages. Future researchers can also develop preventive programs on literacy about body acceptance by spouses and sexting behavior, which can be a way to enhance sexual satisfaction for married couples.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion of the results above, the researchers conclude that body acceptance by a spouse can, directly and indirectly, predict increased sexual satisfaction in married men and women. Body acceptance is indicated by positive responses from one's partner, such as feeling happy, satisfied, and proud of the participant's body, which affects increased sexual desire and satisfaction with the partner.

Body acceptance by a spouse can also indirectly predict increased sexual satisfaction in married men and women through the mediation of sexting behavior. Sexting behavior is one variation of sexual relationships that can increase sexual desire with one's partner and invite them to engage in sexual activity. The responses of participants and their partners when receiving sexting include feeling happy, interested in engaging in sexual activity, and responding by sending sexting in return. Sexting behavior can be a fun alternative for married couples to increase sexual satisfaction with their partner.

However, sexting in the form of text messages, pictures, and videos is sensitive and confidential. Therefore, participants also need to have digital literacy in terms of choosing a secure social media platform as a medium for sending messages and making efforts to maintain the confidentiality of messages sent (for example, by selecting the end-to-end encryption setting on WhatsApp social media).

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The first author compiles research designs, collects data, conducts theoretical studies, and compiles research drafts. The second author is the corresponding author, doing literature reviews, analyzing and interpreting data, performing translation, and proofreading. The third author contributes to compiling research questionnaires and collecting data.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESWLS	=	Extended Satisfaction with Life Scale
BAOS-2	=	Body Acceptance by Others Scale-2
SBS	=	Sexting Behavior Scale

ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

This research was approved by the University of Surabaya Ethics Committee (Ethical code No: 129/KE/X/2022 and approval date: October 19, 2022).

HUMAN AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

No animals were used in this research. All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of institutional and/or research committees and with the 1975 Declaration of Helsinki, as revised in 2013.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

All human subjects gave their consent to participate in this study.

STANDARDS OF REPORTING

COREQ guidelines were followed.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

All the data and supportive information are provided within the article.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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