




Online Sexual Exposure and Risky Behaviors: The Mediating Role of Sensation Seeking

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence “Risky sexual behaviors, which include unprotected intercourse, multiple sexual partners, and engagement in casual or coerced encounters, contribute to elevated rates of STIs...” is well written, but lacks mention of psychological consequences (e.g., anxiety, depression). Consider broadening the scope to emphasize psychosocial outcomes.

In the statement “Among men who have sex with men (MSM), gay dating applications represent a notable avenue of online sexual exposure...” it would be valuable to explain why this specific population is highlighted, given that the study sample includes both heterosexual and non-heterosexual youth.

The minimum score of 21 for risky behaviors seems unusual given the YRBS typically has larger item pools. Please clarify whether this represents a subscale or adapted scoring.

The sentence “The Canadian sample in this study adds to the international body of evidence...” would benefit from explicitly discussing unique Canadian cultural or policy factors (e.g., sexual health education curricula, digital access rates) that contextualize findings.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The authors cite “Hormonal influences, including interactions between testosterone and cortisol, have been shown to intensify sensation-seeking tendencies”. This is an important point, but please elaborate on whether biological variables were considered or controlled for in this study, since it raises expectations for such inclusion.

The sentence “These studies emphasize the importance of situating sensation seeking within cultural and gendered frameworks” would be strengthened by briefly noting how Canada’s multicultural context may shape these dynamics, as this is directly relevant to the present sample.

The sentence “These results provide strong support for the theoretical framework...” should identify explicitly which theoretical framework is referenced (e.g., Zuckerman’s Sensation Seeking Theory, Social Learning Theory, etc.), to enhance theoretical grounding.

The authors state “Our findings align with prior evidence showing that hormonal interactions... are linked to heightened sensation seeking”. Since biological data were not collected here, this comparison risks overstating. Consider softening the claim.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.