



An Exploration of the Relationships Between Body Image, Hair Removal, Pornography, and Women’s Sexual Self-Efficacy



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Purpose

- To explore the relationships between genital body image, pubic hair removal, exposure to pornography, sexual self-efficacy, and demographic variables.
- Results to aid in healthcare provider’s assessment and management of patients with problems in the sexual health construct related to low genital body image.

Variables:

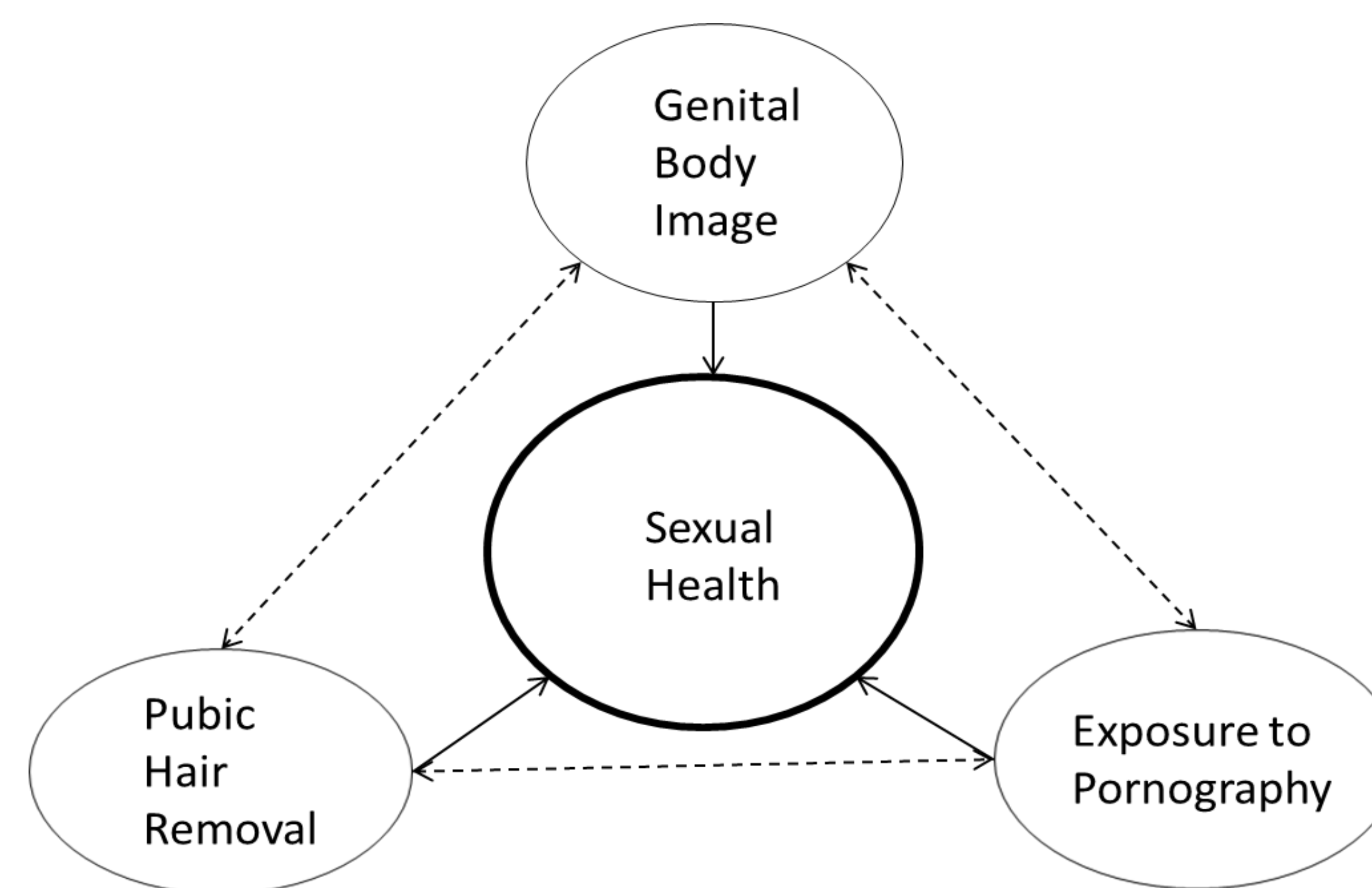


Review of Literature

- Sexual health problems are common in women and have the potential to affect all aspects of their lives.^a
- Causes of sexual health issues can be complex and multifaceted, therefore a holistic perspective where all potential factors are considered is warranted.^a
- Genital body image has implications for women’s sexual function and sexual health but research is lacking.^b
- As women become more aware of what others look like, the question of what is “normal” is asked.^b
- This negates the reality that there are many different types of female genitalia that could be considered “normal.”^c
- Women believe “improving” their genitals through hair removal would somehow improve the way they feel or are seen.^{d,e}
- Current availability of pornography^f through the internet and other media may impact the way women feel about their genital body image, as they compare themselves to a perceived “norm.”
- Pubic hair removal trends may also be related to exposure to pornography as women become aware of perceived expectations about removal and what is “sexy.”^e
- Sexual self-efficacy states that the confidence a woman feels about her ability to perform sexually impacts her sexual decisions.^g
- Theory supports relationships between all four variables, but research is lacking.

Framework

- Sexual dysfunction in women is currently identified using a medical model, but does not address socio-cultural or psychological issues.^a
- A “New View” of women’s health allows women to identify their own dysfunction.^a
- This provides theoretical justification as well as establishes that societal influences may have an impact on sexual health.^a



Sample

- An online participant recruitment system will be utilized to recruit women ages 18 and older for participation in the online survey
- The maximum number of subjects to be recruited for this study is 1500 with a minimum number of subjects of 90, all from the WMU College of Health and Human Services.



Methods

- The proposed research is descriptive/exploratory.
- The design is cross sectional survey methodology
- Email invitations will be used as recruitment tool. SurveyMonkey.com will be the location of the online survey.
- After survey completion, contact information will be presented on local resources for counseling should women feel they are in need of such services.
- **Genital Body Image:** The Genital Self Image Scale- GSIS-20^b ,a 20 item self report measure, will be used.
- **Pubic hair removal practices:** An 18 question scale used developed by Tiggemann and Hodgson (2008) will be used .
- **Pornography:** A scale used by Morrison, et al. (2011) that includes four questions measured on an interval scale for frequency of viewing pornography.
- **Sexual Health:** The Sexual Self Efficacy Scale developed by Bailes et al. (1989) is a 37 question survey. Higher scores indicate higher confidence related to self-efficacy.
- **Statistical Analysis:** Will include Pearson’s Correlation, Partial Correlations and Multiple Regression

References

- ^a Tiefer, L. (2002). Arriving at a “New View” of women's sexual problems. *Women & Therapy, 24*(1-2), 63-98.
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- ^c Braun, V. & Wilkinson, S. (2001). Socio-cultural representations of the vagina. *Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology, 19*(1), 17-32.
- ^d Smolak, L. & Murnen, S. (2011). Gender, self-objectification and pubic hair removal. *Sex Roles, 65*, 506-517.
- ^e Tiggemann, M. & Hodgson, S. (2008). The hairlessness norm extended: Reasons for and predictors of women’s body hair removal at different body sites. *Sex Roles, 59*, 889-897.
- ^f Morrison, T., Bearden, A., Harriman, R., Morrison, M., Ellis, S. (2004). Correlates of exposure to sexually explicit material among Canadian post-secondary students. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality, 13*(3), 143-156.
- ^g Bailes, S.Creti, L., Fichten, C., Libman, E., Brender, W., & Amsel, R. (1989). Sexual self-efficacy for female functioning. In C. M. Davis' (Ed.), *Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures* (pp. 531-534). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.