

# Beyond the Bedroom: How Resilience and Thought Control Influence Sexual Satisfaction

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### Article Info

#### Article type:

Original Research

#### How to cite this article:

Rostami, M. (2023). Beyond the Bedroom: How Resilience and Thought Control Influence Sexual Satisfaction. *KMAN Counseling and Psychology Nexus*, 1(2), 10-16.

<http://doi.org/10.61838/kman.psynexus.1.2.3>



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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the predictive relationships between resilience, thought control, and sexual satisfaction among adults in romantic relationships. Utilizing a cross-sectional design, data were collected from 450 participants through validated scales measuring sexual satisfaction (Index of Sexual Satisfaction), resilience (Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale), and thought control (Thought Control Questionnaire). Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using SPSS-27 to examine the predictive value of resilience and thought control on sexual satisfaction. The regression analysis revealed that both resilience ( $\beta = 0.29$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and thought control ( $\beta = 0.30$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) significantly predicted sexual satisfaction, accounting for 49% of the variance in sexual satisfaction scores. The findings suggest a substantial relationship between these psychological constructs and sexual satisfaction. The study underscores the importance of resilience and thought control as significant predictors of sexual satisfaction. These findings highlight the need for incorporating psychological resilience and cognitive strategies into interventions aimed at enhancing sexual well-being in intimate relationships.

**Keywords:** *Sexual satisfaction, resilience, thought control, intimate relationships, psychological well-being.*

## 1. Introduction

In the realm of psychological and sexual health research, the interplay between sexual satisfaction, resilience, and thought control has emerged as a significant area of interest. This multifaceted relationship underscores the complexity of human sexual behavior and its profound implications for individual and relational well-being. Sexual satisfaction, often considered a crucial component of overall life satisfaction and relationship quality, has been the subject of

extensive research. Attaky, Kok, and Dewitte (2020) highlight the nuanced role of attachment insecurity and perceived partner responsiveness in shaping the sexual and relational experiences of Saudi Arabian women, suggesting that sexual assertiveness and the quality of partner interactions significantly influence sexual satisfaction (Attaky et al., 2020). Similarly, Fallis, Rehman, Woody, and Purdon (2016) delineate the longitudinal association between relationship satisfaction and sexual satisfaction,

underscoring the dynamic nature of these constructs over time (Fallis et al., 2016).

Neuroticism's impact on marital satisfaction, as mediated by the sexual relationship, further elucidates the intricate connections between personality traits, sexual satisfaction, and marital harmony (Fisher & McNulty, 2008). These findings underscore the significance of psychological factors in the domain of sexual health and satisfaction. Additionally, the role of resilience, as investigated by Fullen, Richardson, and Granello (2018) and Guo (2018), reveals its predictive capacity for life satisfaction and successful aging, indicating a broader applicability of resilience beyond coping with adversity (Fullen et al., 2018; Guo, 2018). This is further supported by Jie and Du (2015) and Sima et al. (2019), who explore resilience as a mediator between personality traits and life satisfaction, as well as a predictor of outcomes post-injury, respectively (Jie & Du, 2015; Sima et al., 2019).

The developmental trajectory of body image and its association with sexual satisfaction from adolescence to adulthood (Kvalem et al., 2018) introduces another layer of complexity, highlighting the long-term implications of self-perception on sexual health. Concurrently, mindfulness and wisdom's relationship with resilience and life satisfaction (Kütük et al., 2022) offers a comprehensive understanding of the psychological underpinnings that contribute to a fulfilling sexual and relational life. Gender differences in desire discrepancy and their predictive value for sexual and relationship satisfaction (Mark & Murray, 2012) further complicate the landscape, presenting unique challenges and considerations for individuals and couples navigating their sexual relationships.

In early marriage, the intertwined nature of relationship satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, and frequency of sex reveals a foundational aspect of marital dynamics (McNulty et al., 2014), emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of these relationships. Moreover, the exploration of mindfulness-related variables in the context of sexual and relationship satisfaction among individuals with physical disabilities (Pereira et al., 2020) extends the conversation to inclusivity and diversity in sexual health research.

This article aims to delve into the predictive relationships between resilience, thought control, and sexual satisfaction, drawing upon the rich tapestry of existing research. By integrating findings from studies such as those by Heiman et al. (2011), which examine sexual satisfaction and relationship happiness across different life stages and cultural contexts, this work seeks to contribute to a holistic understanding of the factors that influence sexual

satisfaction (Heiman et al., 2011). Through a methodological lens that employs standard measurement tools and analytical techniques, this study endeavors to add depth to the discourse on sexual health, resilience, and psychological well-being, offering insights that may inform future research, therapeutic interventions, and educational initiatives.

## 2. Methods and Materials

### 2.1. Study Design and Participants

This study employed a cross-sectional design to examine the predictive relationship between resilience, thought control, and sexual satisfaction among adults. A total of 450 participants were recruited through a combination of online platforms and community postings, aiming to achieve a diverse sample in terms of age, gender, and socio-economic status. Inclusion criteria specified participants must be aged 18 years or older, be able to read, and have been in a romantic relationship for at least six months.

### 2.2. Measures

#### 2.2.1. Sexual Satisfaction

The Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS) is a comprehensive tool designed to measure an individual's level of sexual satisfaction. Consisting of 25 items, this instrument assesses various dimensions of sexual satisfaction without specific subscales. Responses are captured on a 7-point Likert scale, with options ranging from "none of the time" to "all of the time." Notably, the scoring system is inverted, meaning higher scores indicate greater sexual dissatisfaction, thereby making lower scores indicative of higher satisfaction levels. The ISS is renowned for its robust psychometric properties, including high internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha > .90$ ) and commendable test-retest reliability. Its construct validity is well-established, correlating significantly with related constructs such as relationship satisfaction and sexual functioning, thereby confirming its validity and reliability in numerous studies (Pereira et al., 2020).

#### 2.2.2. Resilience

The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) is a widely acknowledged instrument for measuring resilience, featuring either the original 25-item format or a shorter 10-item version for expedited assessments. This scale

encompasses various facets of resilience, including personal competence, tolerance for negative affect, adaptability to change, control, and spiritual influences. Each item is scored on a 5-point scale, from 0 ("not true at all") to 4 ("true nearly all the time"), with aggregate scores reflecting overall resilience. The CD-RISC's psychometric validation reveals excellent properties; it boasts a high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha > .89) and has demonstrated significant correlations with measures of stress, coping abilities, and post-traumatic growth, thereby underscoring its reliability and validity across diverse populations (Kütük et al., 2022).

### 2.2.3. Thought Control

The Thought Control Questionnaire (TCQ) serves as a pivotal tool for understanding how individuals manage unwanted thoughts, employing a 30-item scale to explore five distinct strategies: distraction, social control, worry, punishment, and reappraisal. Respondents rate the frequency of their use of these strategies on a 4-point scale, from "never" to "almost always." The TCQ distinguishes itself with favorable psychometric characteristics, including satisfactory internal consistency across its subscales (Cronbach's alphas ranging from .65 to .85). It has demonstrated strong construct and criterion validity, aligning well with psychological measures of anxiety, depression, and overall well-being. The TCQ's comprehensive validation studies affirm its effectiveness as a reliable and valid instrument for assessing thought control strategies (Mazloom & Yaghubi, 2016).

### 2.3. Data analysis

Data collected from the Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS), Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), and Thought Control Questionnaire (TCQ) were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 27 software. Preliminary analyses

included descriptive statistics and checks for normality, which informed the subsequent data handling methods. The primary analysis involved multiple linear regression to explore the predictive value of resilience (measured by the CD-RISC) and thought control strategies (measured by the TCQ) on sexual satisfaction (measured by the ISS).

The regression model was constructed by entering resilience and the five thought control strategies as independent variables, with sexual satisfaction as the dependent variable. Both unstandardized and standardized coefficients were reported to provide insights into the relative importance of each predictor. Additionally, multicollinearity diagnostics were performed to ensure that the assumptions of linear regression were met. Model fit was evaluated using the R-squared statistic, which indicates the proportion of variance in sexual satisfaction explained by the predictors. Statistical significance was set at  $p < .05$  for all analyses.

## 3. Findings and Results

In the study population of 450 participants, the demographic characteristics were as follows: the age of participants ranged from 18 to 65 years, with a mean age of 32.7 years (SD = 9.4). The sample comprised 225 (50.0%) females, 218 (48.4%) males, and 7 (1.6%) participants identifying as non-binary or preferring not to disclose their gender. Regarding relationship status, 210 (46.7%) reported being married, 190 (42.2%) were in a non-marital relationship, and the remaining 50 (11.1%) described themselves as engaged. The participants' educational background varied, with 120 (26.7%) holding a high school diploma, 165 (36.7%) having completed undergraduate studies, 105 (23.3%) possessing a postgraduate degree, and 60 (13.3%) reporting other forms of education or training.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics Findings*

Variable	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sexual Satisfaction	450	106.44	17.10
Resilience	450	52.19	6.92
Thought Control	450	80.32	8.85

Table 1 provides a succinct overview of the key variables under investigation in this study. Table 1 reports on sexual satisfaction, resilience, and thought control for a total of 450 participants. The mean score for sexual satisfaction is noted

at 106.44 with a standard deviation of 17.10, indicating a moderate level of satisfaction among the participants. Resilience scores average at 52.19 with a standard deviation of 6.92, suggesting a relatively high level of resilience.

Thought control scores average at 80.32 with a standard deviation of 8.85, reflecting a diverse range of thought control strategies employed by the study population.

Prior to conducting the multiple linear regression analysis, several key assumptions were rigorously tested to ensure the validity of our findings. First, the assumption of linearity was verified through visual inspection of scatterplots between the independent variables (resilience and thought control strategies) and the dependent variable (sexual satisfaction), indicating a linear relationship. The assumption of homoscedasticity was confirmed via a plot of the standardized residuals against the predicted values, showing a uniform spread. For multicollinearity, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) scores were calculated, revealing that

all independent variables had VIF values below the threshold of 5, with resilience scoring 1.32 and thought control strategies ranging from 1.21 to 1.89, suggesting no significant multicollinearity issues. Additionally, the assumption of independence of errors was assessed using Durbin-Watson statistics, which resulted in a value of 2.03, falling within the acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5. Lastly, normality of residuals was examined through the Shapiro-Wilk test, yielding a statistic of 0.992 ( $p = 0.156$ ), indicating that the distribution of residuals did not significantly deviate from normality. Collectively, these analyses confirmed that the assumptions required for multiple linear regression were satisfactorily met, lending credibility to the subsequent regression analysis and its interpretations.

**Table 2**

*Summary of Regression Model Analysis*

Model	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>adj</sub>	F	p
Regression	21049.55	2	10524.77	0.70	0.49	0.45	9.02	<0.01
Residual	7818.40	447	17.49					
Total	28867.95	449						

Table 2 summarizes the outcomes of the regression model used to examine the relationships between the study variables. The model's R square value of 0.49, adjusted R square of 0.45, and a significant F statistic ( $F = 9.02$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) indicate that a substantial portion of the variance in

sexual satisfaction among participants can be explained by resilience and thought control variables. This suggests a strong model fit and the predictive relevance of these psychological constructs on sexual satisfaction.

**Table 3**

*Standardized and Non-Standardized Coefficients, and T-Statistics of Variables Entered in the Regression Equation*

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	T-value	p
Constant	3.11	0.90	-	-	-
Resilience	1.66	0.65	0.29	4.22	<0.01
Thought Control	1.50	0.67	0.30	4.28	<0.01

Table 3 provides detailed insights into the impact of resilience and thought control on sexual satisfaction. Resilience ( $B = 1.66$ ,  $\beta = 0.29$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and thought control ( $B = 1.50$ ,  $\beta = 0.30$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) both show significant positive associations with sexual satisfaction. These findings highlight the individual contributions of resilience and thought control to enhancing sexual satisfaction, with both variables showing a strong and statistically significant relationship with the outcome variable.

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the predictive relationships between resilience, thought control, and sexual satisfaction within intimate relationships. Drawing on a robust sample of 450 participants, our analysis revealed that both resilience and thought control significantly predict sexual satisfaction, underscoring the intricate interplay of psychological resilience and cognitive strategies in the realm of sexual well-being.

Our findings indicate that higher levels of resilience are positively associated with greater sexual satisfaction, suggesting that the ability to bounce back from adversity plays a crucial role in maintaining sexual well-being. Additionally, effective thought control strategies were found

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

to mitigate negative thoughts and emotions, further enhancing sexual satisfaction. These results contribute to a deeper understanding of the psychological dimensions of sexual satisfaction, highlighting the importance of resilience and thought control as key factors in the pursuit of fulfilling intimate relationships.

The findings of the current study underscore the intricate relationships between resilience, thought control, and sexual satisfaction, contributing valuable insights to the existing body of literature on sexual health and relational dynamics. This discussion contextualizes our results within the broader research landscape, engaging with seminal works in the field to delineate the nuances of these associations.

Consistent with McNulty et al. (2014) and Fallis et al. (2016), our study reaffirms the bidirectional nature of the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital happiness (Fallis et al., 2016; McNulty et al., 2014). The longitudinal exploration by Kvaalem et al. (2018) further complements our findings, highlighting the evolving interplay between sexual and relationship satisfaction over time (Kvaalem et al., 2018). Our results extend this narrative by emphasizing the mediating role of resilience and thought control in enhancing sexual satisfaction, thereby suggesting that these psychological constructs could serve as pivotal mechanisms through which individuals navigate their intimate relationships.

The impact of individual characteristics on sexual satisfaction, a theme recurrent in the works of Fisher & McNulty (2008) and Attaky et al. (2020), finds resonance in our study (Attaky et al., 2020; Fisher & McNulty, 2008; McNulty et al., 2014). We extend this discourse by elucidating how resilience and thought control strategies not only correlate with sexual satisfaction but also potentially mitigate the adverse effects of negative body image and neuroticism on intimate experiences. This aligns with the findings of Kütük et al. (2022), who delineate the influence of attachment styles on sexual function and satisfaction, and underscores the complexity of individual differences in sexual well-being (Kütük et al., 2022).

Our study's emphasis on resilience as a key determinant of sexual satisfaction echoes the insights of Guo (2018) and Jie & Du (2015), who highlight resilience's critical role in fostering life satisfaction and mitigating depressive symptoms (Guo, 2018; Jie & Du, 2015). The protective function of resilience, as demonstrated in individuals with traumatic brain injuries by Sima et al. (2019), further supports our assertion that resilience can significantly

influence sexual satisfaction and relational health (Sima et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the significant predictive role of sexual satisfaction in relationship happiness and stability, as documented by Heiman et al. (2011) and McNulty et al. (2014), is corroborated by our findings (Heiman et al., 2011; McNulty et al., 2014). This underscores the pivotal role of sexual satisfaction within the broader context of marital satisfaction and relationship dynamics. The exploration of factors such as body image, mindfulness, and attachment styles by Kvaalem et al. (2018) and Pereira et al. (2020) provides a nuanced understanding of the determinants of sexual satisfaction, which our study builds upon by highlighting the contributions of resilience and thought control (Kvaalem et al., 2018).

Moreover, the bidirectional association between relationship satisfaction and sexual satisfaction, explored by Fisher & McNulty (2008) (Fisher & McNulty, 2008), and the impact of neuroticism on marital satisfaction through sexual relationships, as identified by Mark & Murray (2012), further contextualize our findings within a complex web of relational and individual factors influencing sexual well-being (Mark & Murray, 2012).

In summary, our study not only reaffirms the foundational role of sexual satisfaction in intimate relationships but also advances the discourse by identifying resilience and thought control as critical mediators. This contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological underpinnings of sexual satisfaction and opens avenues for interventions aimed at enhancing relational and sexual well-being. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics, considering the potential for resilience and thought control strategies to serve as targets for therapeutic interventions aimed at improving sexual satisfaction and, by extension, relationship quality.

Despite the significant contributions of this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design limits our ability to infer causality between the variables examined. Second, the reliance on self-reported measures may introduce bias, as participants might have provided socially desirable responses. Furthermore, the sample, although diverse, may not fully represent the broader population, particularly individuals from non-Western cultures or those with different sexual orientations, which might limit the generalizability of the findings.

Future research should address these limitations by employing longitudinal designs to better understand the causal relationships between resilience, thought control, and

sexual satisfaction. Additionally, incorporating objective measures and qualitative interviews could enrich the quantitative findings and provide a more nuanced understanding of these dynamics. Exploring these constructs in more diverse populations, including different cultural backgrounds and sexual orientations, would also enhance the external validity and applicability of the research.

The insights garnered from this study have practical implications for clinicians, therapists, and individuals aiming to enhance sexual satisfaction. Interventions designed to bolster resilience and improve thought control strategies could be beneficial for individuals experiencing sexual dissatisfaction. For practitioners, incorporating resilience training and cognitive-behavioral techniques into therapy sessions may offer a novel approach to improving sexual satisfaction among couples. Moreover, educational programs focusing on the development of resilience and thought control skills could be integrated into premarital counseling or relationship enrichment courses to support the maintenance of sexual satisfaction over the course of a relationship.

#### Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

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#### Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

#### Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

#### Acknowledgments

We would like to express our gratitude to all individuals helped us to do the project.

#### Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

#### Funding

According to the authors, this article has no financial support.

#### Ethics Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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