

The Role of Sexual Taboos in Explaining Premature Ejaculation in Men: The Mediating Role of Intrusive Memories and Personality Traits

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the Introduction, the paragraph beginning “Premature ejaculation is among the most prevalent male sexual dysfunctions...” is well-grounded but lacks precise prevalence rates and diagnostic thresholds (e.g., IELT criteria). Including standardized diagnostic definitions (DSM-5-TR or ISSM guidelines) would strengthen clinical validity and contextual precision.

The paragraph defining sexual taboos (“Sexual taboos refer to socially prohibited...”) would benefit from theoretical anchoring. Currently, it is descriptive; however, integrating a formal framework (e.g., social constructionism or moral psychology) would enhance conceptual rigor and reduce ambiguity.

In the section discussing intrusive memories (“Intrusive memories are involuntary, recurrent recollections...”), the authors conflate trauma-related intrusions with general intrusive cognition. This conceptual overlap should be clarified, as the mechanisms and clinical implications differ significantly between PTSD-related intrusions and everyday intrusive thoughts.

The use of “convenience sampling combined with a snowball approach” introduces significant sampling bias. The authors should explicitly acknowledge the non-probability nature of the sample and discuss its impact on generalizability.

In the Measures section, the description of the Sexual Taboo Beliefs Questionnaire (“validity coefficients above 0.75...”) lacks specification (construct validity? convergent validity?). More detailed psychometric reporting is required.

The statement regarding the Premature Ejaculation Diagnostic Questionnaire that “discriminant validity results indicated no significant difference between individuals with and without premature ejaculation” is logically inconsistent, as discriminant validity should demonstrate differentiation. This needs clarification or correction.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The paragraph on cognitive-behavioral models (“The interaction between intrusive memories and taboo-related cognitions...”) introduces mechanisms but does not specify hypothesized directional pathways. The authors should explicitly state the proposed causal chain (e.g., taboos → intrusive memories → anxiety → ejaculation control) to align with SEM logic.

In the personality traits section (“The Five-Factor Model of personality...”), the discussion remains overly general. The manuscript would benefit from specifying which traits were expected to act as mediators (e.g., neuroticism vs. emotional stability) rather than treating personality as a unitary construct.

The final paragraph of the Introduction (“Therefore, the present study aims...”) lacks explicit hypotheses. For a structural equation modeling study, directional hypotheses for each path should be clearly stated to improve methodological transparency.

In the Methods section, the sentence “The statistical population... residing in Tehran” contradicts the abstract, which refers to Bushehr. This inconsistency in study location is a major methodological issue and must be corrected to ensure clarity about the sampling frame.

In “the target sample size was determined to be 250 participants”, yet the final sample is reported as 170, there is no explanation of attrition or recruitment limitations. The authors should justify the reduced sample size and discuss its implications for SEM statistical power.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.