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# The awareness of low sexual desire in female among married women in Indonesia: a preliminary study



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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Sexual dysfunction is difficulty experienced by any individual or a couple during any stage of normal sexual activity. Sexual dysfunction occurs among men and also women. This study aims to identify the level of awareness, knowledge, and attitude of married women towards hypoactive sexual desire disorder in their life.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among 75 married women using a self-administered questionnaire through social media platforms to ensure easy accessibility to a wider participant. This study's inclusion criteria are married women from the age of 20-40 years old who volunteer themselves and take place in the survey. Factors that influence low sexual desire in married women, such as age, social life, hypoactive sexual desire, and the

level of communications or understanding among their partners, are assessed in this study. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 20 for Windows.

**Results:** From the total of 75 participants, a total of 56.00% haven't heard or came across the term low sexual desire in their life. Meanwhile, a total of have 32.00% came across this term. The survey shows that participants who have participated in this survey have a higher morbidity rate on pregnancy history with complications that represent 59.00% of them. Meanwhile, participants with a history of pregnancy without complications consist of 41.00%.

**Conclusion:** There is still a more significant number of women still unaware of hypoactive sexual desire disorder. Most of them think that hypoactive sexual desire disorder is common.

**Keywords:** Hypoactive, Sexual Desire Disorder, Awareness, Married Woman.

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## INTRODUCTION

Sexual dysfunction is difficulty experienced by any individual or a couple during any stage of normal sexual activity.<sup>1</sup> Sexual dysfunction occurs among men and also women.<sup>1,2</sup> Sexual dysfunction can be classified into different terms such as sexual desires disorders, orgasm disorder, sexual pain disorder, erectile dysfunction, premature ejaculation, uncommon sexual disorders in men, and sexual arousal disorder.<sup>3</sup> However, this study aims to explore the low sexual desire among married woman.

Low sexual desire is also known as Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder (HSDD).<sup>4</sup> HSDD is the most common female sexual dysfunction. The diagnosis of HSDD requires the existence of personal distress or interpersonal difficulties

associated with low sexual desire, which any other psychiatric affection cannot explain and that is not exclusively due to a disease or substance.<sup>5</sup>

The prevalence of the sexual desire/interest disorder, diagnosed when a woman fails to feel desire at any stage during the sexual experience, is uncertain.<sup>6</sup> Studies have focused on a lack of desire at the initiation of and between sexual experiences and a lack of sexual thoughts.<sup>6</sup> However, sexual thoughts are infrequent in many women without apparent sexual dissatisfaction, and the frequency of sexual fantasies or sexual thoughts correlates with sexual satisfaction in women.<sup>6</sup>

Not only have the current definitions of sexual dysfunction in women reflected a change in our understanding of normal sexual.<sup>3</sup> HSDD can have a serious effect on

emotional well-being and interpersonal relationships, and it occurs in menopausal and postmenopausal women.<sup>7</sup> The Decreased Sexual Desire Screener is a shortened diagnostic method designed to help doctors who are not specialized in female sexual dysfunction to diagnose acquired HSDD in women.<sup>8</sup> There is evidence that treatment with androgens or with estrogens is effective in HSDD.<sup>9</sup> Based on those mentioned above, this study aims to study the level of awareness and attitude of married women towards hypoactive sexual desire disorder in their life.

## METHODS

This study is a descriptive cross-sectional study. The subject of the study is married women from the age range 20-40 years old. The study will be conducted by using

a self-administered questionnaire. The survey study will be achieved through social media platforms to ensure easy accessibility to a wider participant. This study will take place all over Indonesia through social media platforms from early November 2016.

This study's target population is married women from the age of 20-40 years old in Indonesia. The criteria of the sample will be divided into inclusion and exclusion. This study's inclusion criteria are married women from the age of 20-40 years old who volunteer themselves and take place in the survey. However, exclusion criteria are women who volunteer themselves and present on the survey conducting day.

There are two variables used in this study, independent and dependent variables. Independent variables are factors that are influencing low sexual desire in married women in Indonesia. This is divided into age, social life, and level of communication or understanding among their partners. In addition, the dependent variable is married women aware of hypoactive sexual desire disorder in their daily lives and overcoming it.

The questionnaire will consist of part A and part B. Before the participants take place in this survey, they will be informed about this survey's importance and purpose. The participants will be notified that their identities will not be known by us, and they are advised to answer the questionnaire privately to avoid misunderstandings. If the participants are ready, they can start to answer the questionnaire.

Data from the survey are primary data. The data are collected and analyzed. Then the data will be processed and presented. Thus, the collected data will be calculated according to the statistics. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 20 for Windows.

## RESULTS

Based on [Table 1](#) shows that participants from the age range between 30-34 years old are predominant (41.00%), followed by 35-40 years old (27.00%), 25-29 years old (17.00%), and 20-24 years old (15.00%). The result also shows that participants who have participated in this survey have

**Table 1. Baseline characteristic of respondents**

Variable	Frequency (N=75)	Percentage (%)
Age (Years)		
20-24	11	15.00
25-29	13	17.00
30-34	31	41.00
35-40	20	27.00
History of Pregnancy		
With Complications	44	59.00
Without Complications	31	41.00
Knowledge of Low Sexual Desire		
Yes	28	32.00
No	42	56.00
Maybe	5	7.00
Communication Level		
Yes	25	33.00
No	43	57.00
Maybe	7	9.00
Maintain Lubrication		
Extremely difficult	28	37.00
Difficult	27	36.00
Not Difficult	20	27.00

a higher morbidity rate on pregnancy history with complications that represent 59.00% of them ([Table 1](#)). Meanwhile, participants with a history of pregnancy without complications consist of 41.00% of respondents ([Table 1](#)).

From [Table 1](#), it is depicted that from the total of 75 participants, a total of 56.00% haven't heard or came across the term low sexual desire in their life. Meanwhile, a total of 32.00% of participants came across this term ([Table 1](#)). Finally, a total of 7.00% of participants have answered that they maybe have heard about this term ([Table 1](#)).

The participants have agreed that most of them did not discuss with their partners regarding sexual desire from the survey. In [Table 1](#), it has been clearly shown that only 33.00% of participants stated 'yes' that they would discuss with their partner regarding sexual desire. While 57.00% of participants answered 'no' for this question and about 9.00% participants answered 'maybe'. Besides, [Table 1](#) also shows that 37.00% of women stated that it was tough and 36.00% answered it difficult for them to maintain their lubrication until completion of their sexual intercourse. However, only 27.00% of participants have agreed that it is not difficult for them to maintain their lubrication ([Table 1](#)).

## DISCUSSION

As been stated earlier, this survey is conducted to study the awareness of low sexual desire in female among married women in Indonesia. The survey results show that married women from the age range of 30-34 years old have shown more interest in this survey. As we know clearly, one of the causes of hypoactive sexual desire disorder is pregnancy with complications, as mentioned in the previous studies.<sup>10,11</sup>

Women who tend to have complications during pregnancy have a higher risk of suffering from hypoactive sexual desire disorder.<sup>12</sup> A total of 44 women participants agreed that after their pregnancy, their sexual desire started to decrease. From the previous research, it has also been confirmed that motherhood and pregnancy play a significant role in hypoactive sexual desire.<sup>13</sup>

From this survey, it shows that level of awareness of women towards hypoactive sexual desire is still lacking. Almost 42 women stated that they have not come across this term. It is also clearly proven that women are not aware of hypoactive sexual desire disorder, where only 36.00% of women answered that they are bothered about their sexual life. In addition, 45.00% of women stated that they are entirely not

concerned about their sexual life. These results are similar with previous studies which assessed the relationships between hypoactive sexual desire and sexual life.<sup>14,15</sup>

Based on the data analyzed, most women who suffer from low sexual desire disorder have agreed that they did not discuss with their partner regarding their sexual desire. Lack of communication is also another factor of hypoactive sexual desire.<sup>16</sup> If women fail to communicate with their partners, this will lead them to a stressful life.<sup>17</sup> When their stress level increases, they tend to show less care for their sexual life as well.<sup>17</sup>

This was also clinically proven by the International Society for The Study of Women's Sexual Health that hypoactive sexual desire disorder in women have strong positive associations with low feelings of physical, lack of interaction among partner and emotional satisfaction which cause low feelings of happiness.<sup>18</sup> Thus, female hypoactive sexual desire disorder can significantly impact their quality of life.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, lack of vaginal lubrication is also another risk factor of hypoactive sexual desire disorder.<sup>19</sup> From the survey, 37% of women stated that in the past 4 weeks, it was challenging for them to maintain their vaginal lubrication until the completion of their sexual intercourse. Meanwhile, only 27% of women answered that they did not face any difficulty maintaining their vaginal lubrication.

## CONCLUSION

Sexual dysfunction is difficulty experienced by any individual or a couple during any stage of normal sexual activity. Throughout the study, there are still many women who are still unaware of hypoactive sexual desire disorder. They think that hypoactive sexual desire disorder is a common thing and not to be worried about.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no competing interest regarding manuscript.

## ETHICS CONSIDERATION

Ethics approval has been obtained from the Ethics Committee, Faculty of Medicine,

Universitas Udayana, Bali, Indonesia, prior to the study being conducted.

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None.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

All authors equally contribute to the study from the conceptual framework, data gathering, data analysis until reporting the study results through publication.

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