

Protocol: Self-Reported Measures of Sexual Consent. A Systematic Review of Findings and Factors Among Heterosexual and Sexual Minority Populations

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Sanchez-Fuentes, M; Villegas-Navas, V; Prieto-Patiño, L; Hidalgo-Muñoz, A; Gonzalez-Mendonado, L; Moyano, N.

Corresponding author:

Victoria Villegas

villegas@ujaen.es

Author Affiliation:

University of Jaen.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

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Amendments - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 27 February 2026 and was last updated on 27 February 2026.

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective The aim of this systematic review is to examine the information provided to us by studies based on the use of valid and reliable self-reported measures for the purpose of: a) Characterize sample demographics and geographic scope: to map participants and locations, identifying biases toward Western, heterosexual, and undergraduate populations to evaluate the generalizability of current findings. b) Identify and compare determinants of sexual consent: to examine variables influencing consent, including individual differences (gender, orientation, victimization history) and contextual factors (relationship type, substance use, and rape myths). c) Evaluate the application and complementarity of measurement scales: to analyze how the four primary scales (SCS-R, ICS/ECS, PBCS, and ACS) capture consent dimensions—such as physical readiness or reversibility—and their effectiveness in representing the construct's real-world complexity.

Condition being studied The phenomenon of sexual consent, as measured in studies that report valid and reliable instruments assessing the construct, ultimately represents sexual aggression when it is absent. Sexual consent measure.

METHODS

Search strategy The literature search was conducted in Scopus, Web of Science and PsycInfo in June 2024. Four independent searches were performed, one for each self-reported measure. The search terms used were: "Sexual Consent Scale", "Internal Sexual Consent", "External Sexual Consent", "Process Based Consent Scale" and "Alcohol and Sexual Consent Scale". The search was open to: All fields, scientific articles, without restriction of years of publication and language.

Participant or population No restriction of population (including heterosexual and sexual minority groups).

Intervention Not applicable.

Comparator Not applicable.

Study designs to be included Self reported studies.

Eligibility criteria (a) original research articles; (b) focused on the study of sexual consent by using at least one of the self-reported measures previously indicated (i.e., Sexual Consent Scale-Revised; Internal and External Consent Scale; Process-Based Consent Scale; Alcohol and Consent Scale); (c) that provides empirical information on some other related variables.

Information sources Electronic databases: Scopus, Web of Science and PsycInfo.

Main outcome(s) Results derived from studies incorporating the following four scales—Sexual Consent Scale-Revised (SCS-R; Humphreys & Brousseau, 2010), the Internal and External Consent Scale (ICS/ECS; Jozkowski et al., 2014), the Process-Based Consent Scale (PBCS; Glace et al., 2021), and the Alcohol and Consent Scale (ACS; Ward et al., 2012)—reveal patterns with other variables of interest related to sexual consent, such as rape myth acceptance and alcohol use and consumption.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis Not reported.

Strategy of data synthesis The articles meeting the inclusion criteria were thoroughly reviewed independently by two researchers to guarantee the objectivity and rigor of the results. A data extraction form was developed, and the collected data were compared. Any discrepancies were resolved through discussion. The extracted data included: (a) authors and year of publication, (b) country, (c) characteristics of the participants (sample size, sexual orientation, distribution by gender identity, belonging or not to the group exclusively of university students, age range, and mean age), (d) instrument applied to assess sexual consent and their main factors or items employed (e) additional measures or scales used in the specific study and (f) main findings.

Subgroup analysis Not reported.

Sensitivity analysis Not reported.

Country(ies) involved Spain.

Keywords Sexual consent, self-reported measures, sexual violence, past non-consensual experiences, systematic review.

Contributions of each author

Author 1 - Maria del Mar Sanchez-Fuentes.

Author 2 - Victoria Villegas.

Email: villegas@ujaen.es

Author 3 - Luis Enrique Prieto Patiño.

Author 4 - Antonio R. Hidalgo-Muñoz.

Author 5 - Lucia Gonzalez-Mendiondo.

Author 6 - Nieves Moyano.