

Body- and sex related problems are separate from other forms of psychological problems

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Body- and sex related problems constitute a distinct group of psychological ailments that is most common in middle aged women, according to scientific research. The project was financed by the Academy of Finland.

A recent study shows that psychological problems relating to one's body and sexuality, such as [body dissatisfaction](#), disordered eating, or sexual distress, are linked to each other but not strongly linked to externalizing – such as aggression or substance abuse – or internalizing – such as anxiety or depressive symptoms. Women reported more [psychological problems](#) related to their body and sexuality than men.

Using data from 13,000 adult women and men in Finland, researchers at the Department of Psychology at Åbo Akademi University have discovered that body- and sex related symptoms are not expressions of internalizing or externalizing disorders, as was earlier believed. Comparing the levels of symptoms across gender and age groups, middle age women reported higher levels of body- and sex related problems.

The result of the study, published online in *PLoS One*, can inform further research on diagnostics and treatment of [psychological disorders](#).

More information: Patrizia Pezzoli et al. Phenotypic factor analysis of psychopathology reveals a new body-related transdiagnostic factor, *PLOS ONE* (2017). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0177674](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0177674)

Provided by Academy of Finland

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