



# Gender Differences in the Association Between Frequency and Enjoyment of Oral Sex in College Hook-Up Contexts

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## Introduction

**Hook-up culture** is pervasive on college campuses and glorifies casual sexual encounters.<sup>1</sup> Like traditional sexual scripts that **value male pleasure over female pleasure**,<sup>2</sup> norms of hook-up culture privilege heterosexual men.<sup>1</sup>

In college hook-ups, **women are more likely to perform oral sex and men more likely to receive oral sex**,<sup>3</sup> yet men report more pleasure performing oral sex, whereas women dislike performing oral sex more.<sup>4</sup> Women and men report similar enjoyment of receiving oral sex.<sup>4</sup>

## Study Aims

- (1) Is an individual's enjoyment of performing and receiving oral sex during hook-ups associated with frequency of engaging in these behaviors?
- (2) Does this association depend on one's gender?

## Methods

### Participants

Students at a large university ( $n = 120$ , 50% female,  $M_{\text{age}} = 18.6$ ,  $SD_{\text{age}} = 0.50$ , 87% first-year students responded to anonymous surveys. The sample was 80% White, 4.2% Black, 9.1% Asian, and 72.5% heterosexual.

### Measures

**Frequency of oral sex.** Participants indicated the percentage of hook-ups they *performed* and *received* oral sex. 1 = *Never* to 5 = *Every time*.

**Enjoyment of oral sex.** Participants indicated frequency of enjoying *performing* oral sex and *receiving* oral sex in a hook-up context. 1 = *I've never enjoyed this* to 5 = *I've enjoyed this every time*.

## Results

**Table 1. Gender differences in oral sex experiences in hook-up contexts**

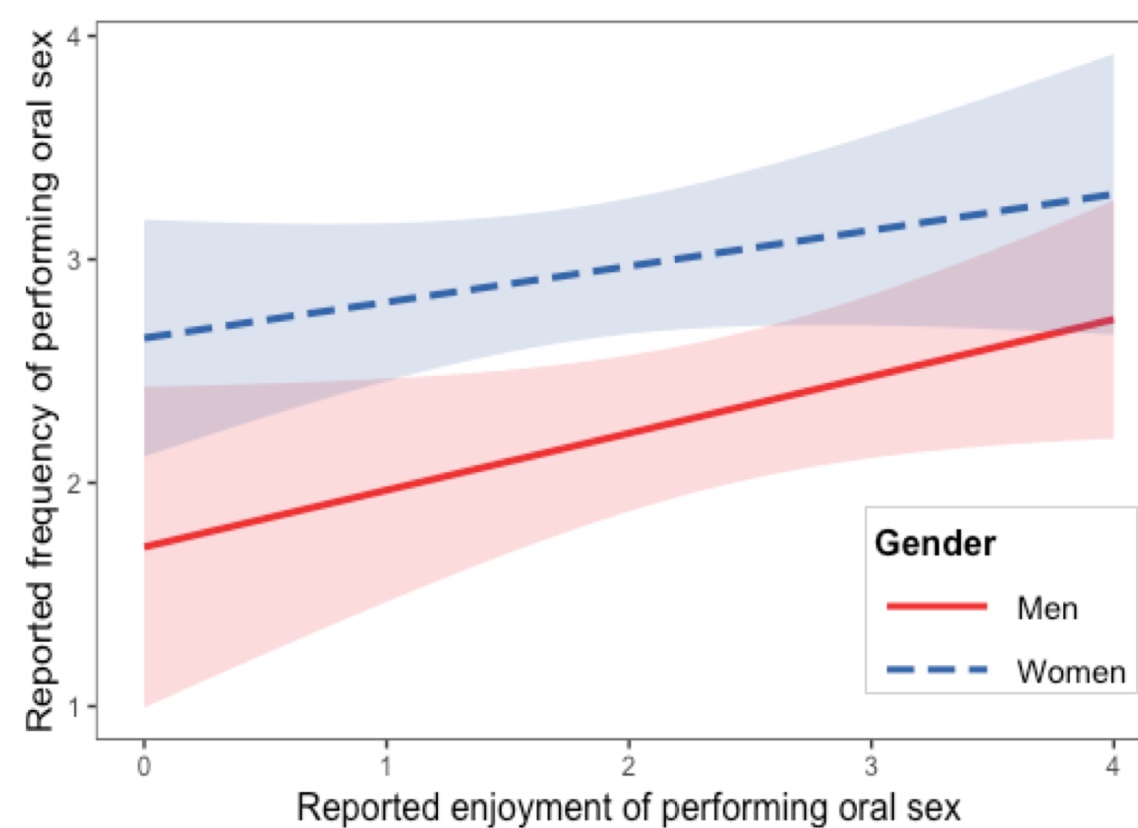
		Women	Men	$t(df)/\chi^2(n, df)$	
Number of hook-ups involving any oral sex $M (SD)$		5.90 (4.38)	6.11 (4.76)	-0.26 (119)	$p = .80$
Frequency of all hook-ups involving $M (SD)$	Performing oral sex	2.83 (1.28)	1.67 (1.40)	4.77 (119)	$p < .001$
	Receiving oral sex	2.22 (1.32)	3.20 (0.95)	-4.69 (118)	$p < .001$
Ever experienced unreciprocated oral sex in hook-up $n (%)$	Received but not performed	34 (57.63)	50 (83.33)	9.47 (119, 1)	$p = .002$
	Performed but not received	46 (76.67)	22 (36.07)	20.26 (121, 1)	$p < .001$
Frequency of enjoying $M (SD)$	Performing oral sex in hook-up	1.73 (1.19)	2.44 (1.24)	-2.94 (98)	$p = .004$
	Receiving oral sex in hook-up	2.63 (1.33)	3.07 (1.05)	-1.92 (109)	$p = .06$

**Table 2. Multivariate linear regression analyses of associations with frequency of oral sex in hook-ups**

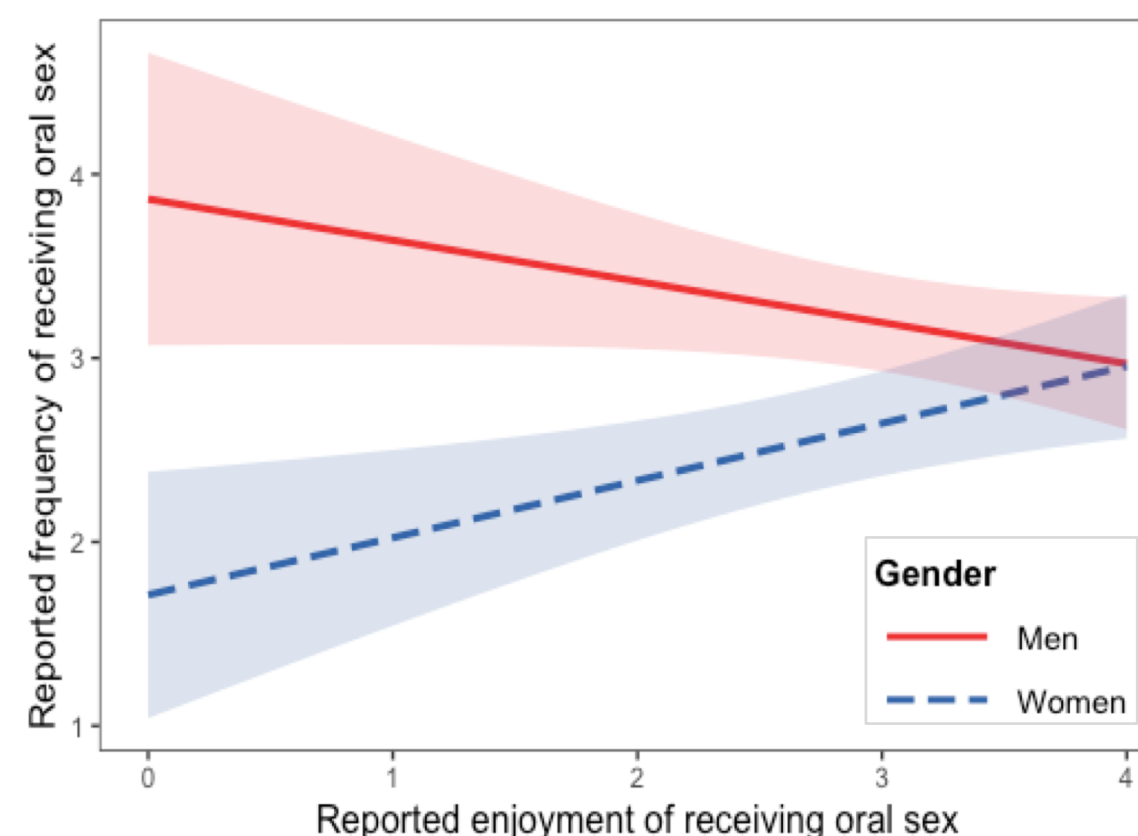
	Frequency of receiving			Frequency of performing		
	b	SE	$\beta$	b	SE	$\beta$
<b>Step 1</b>						
Gender	0.59**	0.21	0.28	-0.74**	0.24	-0.31
Sexual orientation	0.05	0.25	0.02	0.64*	0.25	0.25
Race	0.25	0.27	0.09	-0.15	0.28	-0.05
Enjoyment of oral sex	0.08	0.09	0.09	0.20*	0.09	0.22
<b>Step 2</b>						
Gender	2.15***	0.52	1.01	-0.94*	0.45	-0.40
Sexual orientation	0.09	0.24	0.04	0.64*	0.26	0.25
Race	0.10	0.26	0.04	-0.15	0.28	-0.05
Enjoyment of oral sex	0.31**	0.11	0.35	0.16	0.12	0.17
Gender x Enjoyment of oral sex	-0.54**	0.16	-0.86	0.09	0.18	0.12

Note. Gender coded as 0 = female, 1 = male. Sexual orientation coded as 0 = sexual minority, 1 = exclusively heterosexual. Race coded as 0 = racial minority, 1 = white. Enjoyment of oral sex = enjoyment of performing/receiving (corresponds with outcome). \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1. Multivariate linear regression analyses controlled for race and sexual orientation (see Table 3). See Figures 1 and 2 for associations between enjoyment and frequency of oral sex behaviors by gender.



**Figure 1. Main effect of enjoyment of performing oral sex on frequency of performing oral sex**



**Figure 2. Interaction between gender and enjoyment of receiving oral sex on frequency of receiving oral sex**

## Discussion

The results highlight the favoring of men's pleasure over women's in hook-up culture.

However, men may be less able than women to overcome the hook-up script and engage in preferred behaviors.

### Limitations

The cross sectional design bars interpretations of temporality: enjoyment of a behavior may lead to more engagement or engagement may lead to subsequent changes in enjoyment.

The homogenous sample also limits generalizability. Future research should investigate how sexual orientation and race affect these associations.

### Conclusions

More work is needed to understand how engaging in behaviors one enjoys or does not enjoy during a hook-up may be related to later mental and behavioral health outcomes.

Although rigid hook-up scripts are often harmful for women, men who prefer not to engage in behaviors prescribed by hook-up culture may also be at risk of negative outcomes.

Understanding differences in hook-up behavior by gender and individual preferences can highlight inequalities and identify individuals most vulnerable to risk.

## References

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- [4] Kaestle, C. E. (2009). Sexual insistence and disliked sexual activities in young adulthood: Differences by gender and relationship characteristics. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 41(1), 33-39.