

Female Intrasexual Competitiveness Interacts with Body Mass Index to Predict Willingness to Use a Risky Diet Pill

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Introduction

Previous research has highlighted the putative role of intrasexual competition (IC) in predicting women's body dissatisfaction, weight loss effort, and eating disorders. Extant research reporting on these links is limited by its exclusion of potential confounds, including psychopathologies such as depression. Moreover, it is presently unclear whether women higher in Body Mass Index (BMI) may be more prone to the influence of IC in taking dieting risks.

The present study investigated whether women's IC and BMI interact to predict willingness to use a risky diet pill, and whether this finding holds given depressive symptoms.

Sample

- 179 women
- Aged 17-37 ($M_{age} = 20, SD = 2.60$)
- Predominantly Caucasian

Methods

- Detecto Apex-SH clinical scale with sonar height rod
- 12-item Intrasexual Competition Scale¹
- 13-item adult short version of the Mood and Feelings Questionnaire²
- Attitude Toward Risky Diet Pill³

Results

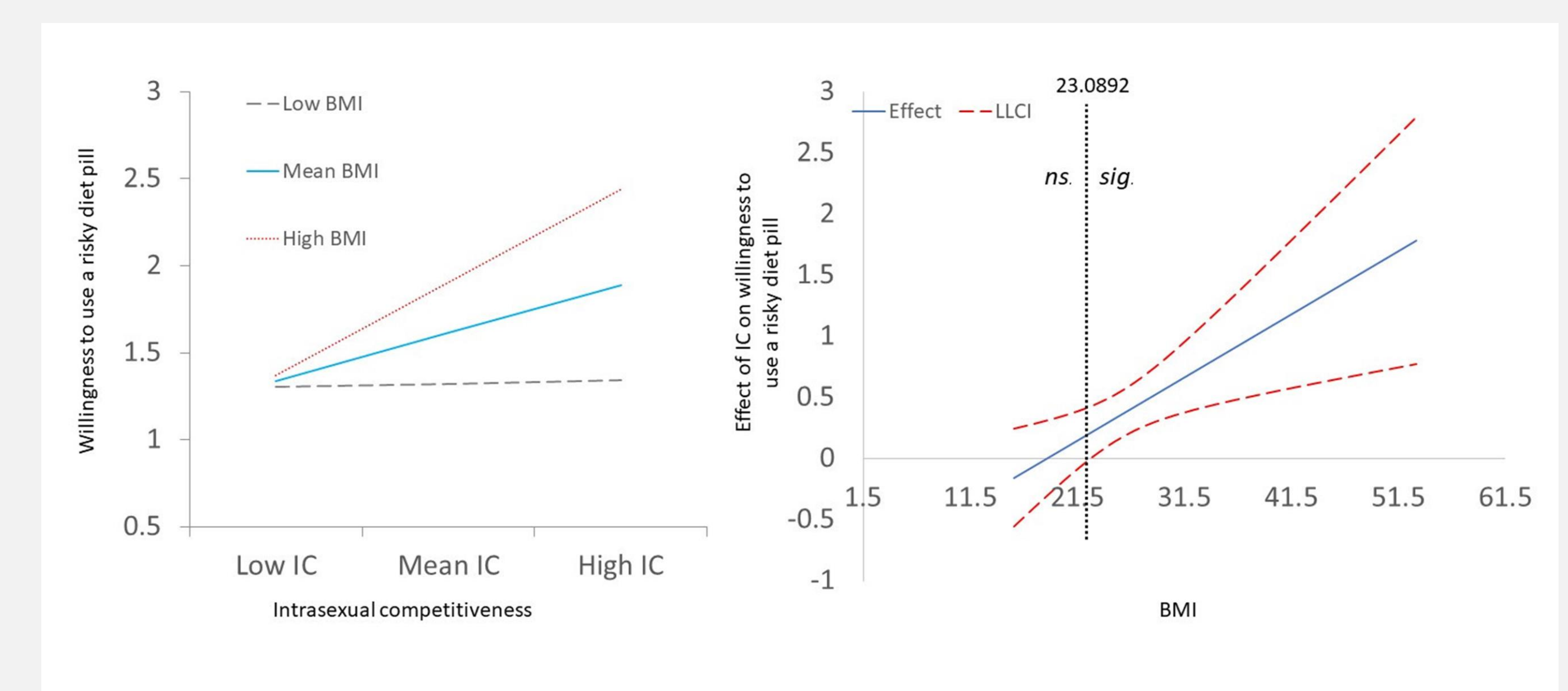


Figure 1: BMI moderates relationship between women's IC and willingness to use a risky diet pill.

Conclusion

IC interacted with BMI to predict willingness to use a risky diet pill, such that women high in both IC and BMI were most likely to take the risky diet pill. These links hold when considering depressive symptoms.

References

- ¹Buunk, A., & Fisher, M. (2009). Individual differences in intrasexual competition. *Journal of Evolutionary Psychology*, 7(1), 37-48.
²Costello, E. J., & Angold, A. (1988). Scales to assess child and adolescent depression: Checklists, screens, and nets. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 27(6), 726-737.
³Hill, S. E., & Durante, K. M. (2011). Courtship, competition, and the pursuit of attractiveness: Mating goals facilitate health-related risk taking and strategic risk suppression in women. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37(3), 383-394.

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