



# Partners' personality traits and anger styles as mediators in the relationship between borderline personality traits and sexual self-schema

 Kahraman Güler<sup>1</sup>,  Volkan Demir<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, Faculty Of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, İstanbul Nişantaşı University, İstanbul, Türkiye

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Faculty Of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, İstanbul Gelişim University, İstanbul, Türkiye

**Cite this article as:** Güler K, Demir V. Partners' personality traits and anger styles as mediators in the relationship between borderline personality traits and sexual self-schema. *J Med Palliat Care*. 2025;6(4):416-421.

Received: 02.07.2025

Accepted: 15.08.2025

Published: 31.08.2025

## ABSTRACT

**Aims:** This study aims to examine the mediating role of anger styles and personality traits in the relationship between borderline personality traits and sexual self-schemas exhibited by individuals.

**Methods:** In this study, 402 participants aged 18 and older (249 women and 153 men) completed the socio-demographic information form, the borderline personality scale, the sexual self-schema scale, and the state-trait anger expression inventory. The research employed the relational screening model. Statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS 27 software.

**Results:** According to the findings of the study, borderline personality traits were found to be negatively associated with loving/compassionate, sensual/stimulating, and direct/straightforward sexual self-schemas. There is a significant negative correlation between all sexual self-schemas and trait anger, including anger-in and anger-out behaviors. Similarly, a significant negative correlation was found between sexual self-schemas and borderline personality traits. On the other hand, there was a negative correlation between neuroticism, one of the five-factor personality traits, and sexual self-schemas, and a positive correlation between neuroticism and borderline personality traits. Furthermore, mediation analyses suggested that anger styles may function as a possible mechanism in the relationship between borderline personality traits and sexual self-schemas. Neuroticism was also identified as a potential mechanism in this relationship.

**Conclusion:** Based on the findings from this study, borderline personality traits appear to be associated with lower levels of loving/compassionate, sensual/stimulating, and direct/straightforward sexual self-schemas. Anger styles and neuroticism, one of the five-factor personality traits, were also found to be potential mechanisms explaining this relationship.

**Keywords:** Borderline personality traits, sexual self-schema, five-factor personality inventory, trait anger, anger-in, anger-out

## INTRODUCTION

Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is considered one of the most complex and challenging psychopathologies in the psychology literature, characterized by pervasive patterns of instability in emotions, self-image, and interpersonal relationships. Among the most distinguishing features of BPD are impulsivity and intense emotional outbursts. Individuals with BPD have difficulty maintaining emotional stability, exhibit impulsive behaviors, and engage in unstable relationships.<sup>1</sup> This condition leads to severe disruptions in self-perception and relationships with others, which can significantly affect sexual self-schemas.<sup>2</sup> Sexual self-schemas encompass individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions about their sexuality. In this context, the personality traits of partners and anger management styles play a key role in shaping the sexual self-schemas of individuals with BPD.<sup>3</sup>

Research on BPD shows that personality traits have a significant impact on interpersonal dynamics and emotional control. High levels of neuroticism are often associated with ineffective emotional regulation techniques, such as rumination and suppression, which can exaggerate BPD symptoms and negatively affect relationships.<sup>4</sup> However, traits like neuroticism and extraversion are associated with more flexible regulation techniques like reappraisal, which can improve overall well-being and relationship satisfaction.<sup>5</sup> These dynamics can lead to disruptions in the romantic and sexual self-schemas of individuals with BPD. Studies have also shown that individuals with BPD frequently experience deceptive bodily ownership sensations, feeling as though they are under the control of a body that is not their self-control.<sup>6</sup> Distortions in body image can significantly affect

overall psychological functioning, leading to instability in sexual identity and severe problems in relationships. Researchers have specifically linked dissociative symptoms to sexual dysfunctions. In conjunction with sexual trauma, these symptoms can negatively affect sexual identity and behaviors.<sup>7</sup> BPD not only affects an individual's inner world, but also profoundly influences their relationships with partners. The personality traits and anger management styles of partners play a significant role in shaping the sexual self-perception and overall mental health of individuals with BPD.<sup>8</sup> Severe conflict and emotional dysregulation may result from maladaptive expressions of anger, such as outbursts or denial, further clouding the individual's perception of their sexual and romantic identity. These findings may contribute to developing therapeutic interventions aimed at improving the quality of life for individuals with BPD.

In conclusion, the complex interactions between personality traits, anger management styles, and sexual self-schemas in individuals with BPD are critical for understanding the challenges these individuals face in both their emotional world and relationships. To create more effective therapeutic interventions, it is necessary to study and understand these connections and interactions in greater detail. Therefore, the data obtained from this study is expected to guide and support future research in the relevant literature.

## METHODS

### Ethics

The study was conducted with the permission of the İstanbul Doğuş University Ethics Committee (Date 26.01.2024, Decision No: 2023/86). Informed consent was obtained from all patients for the procedure. All procedures were carried out following ethical rules and the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki.

This study aims to examine the mediating role of an individual's personality traits and anger styles in the relationship between borderline personality traits and sexual self-schema. The study employed a relational screening model and obtained the sample through a convenience sampling method. While the study population consists of individuals aged 18 and above living in İstanbul, the sample consists of 402 participants, including 249 women and 153 men (Table 1). A total of 13 individuals with a prior psychiatric diagnosis were excluded from the initial pool, resulting in a final sample of 402 participants. The research used the socio-demographic information form, borderline personality scale (Turkish BPQ), sexual self-schema scale, and state-trait anger expression inventory (STAXI).

### Data Collection Tools

**Sociodemographic information form:** These questions were prepared to interpret the participants' information and presented to the sample. The questions in the form related to the participant's age, gender, educational status, and marital status. The form also inquired whether participants had received a prior psychiatric diagnosis to exclude those with such a diagnosis.

**Table 1.** Distribution of demographic information of participants

		n	%
Gender	Woman	249	61.9
	Man	153	38.1
Age	18-25	64	15.9
	26-40	255	63.4
	41-55	83	20.6
Marital status	Single	143	35.6
	Married	259	64.4
Educational status	High-school graduate	43	10.7
	Undergraduate/associate degree	267	66.4
	Master's degree/doctoral degree	92	22.9
	Total	402	100.0

**Borderline personality scale (Turkish BPQ):** The BPQ, an 80-item self-assessment scale developed by Poreh and others<sup>9</sup> based on the DSM-IV criteria for BPD, consists of 9 subscales: impulsivity, affective instability, abandonment, relationships, self-image, suicide and self-mutilation, emptiness, intense anger, and quasi-psychotic states.<sup>10</sup> Participants marked "true" or "false" for each item, and the internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) of the Turkish BPQ was found to be 0.94.<sup>9</sup> The Turkish version has been validated and reliable, making it useful for identifying BPD diagnostic criteria.<sup>9</sup>

**Sexual self-schema scale (SSSS):** Originally based on the SSSS for women<sup>11</sup> and the SSSS for men,<sup>12</sup> these scales were later combined by Hill<sup>13</sup> into a common SSSS for both men and women. The Turkish validation and reliability study showed that the scale had internal consistency and could be used in Turkish measurements.<sup>14</sup>

**State-trait anger expression inventory (STAXI):** Spielberger et al.<sup>15</sup> developed the trait anger and anger expression styles scale with an internal consistency coefficient of 0.73. The scale divides anger into "trait" and "state" components. The Turkish validation and reliability study adapted the scale, which consists of four subscales: trait anger, anger-in, anger-out, and anger control.<sup>16</sup> The trait anger and anger expression styles scale consists of 34 items, rated on a 4-point Likert-type scale.<sup>17</sup>

### Statistical Analysis

All data analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS 27 software in this study. Pearson Correlation analysis was used to examine the level and direction of relationships between the scales. Model 4 was identified using Process Macro 4.2 to evaluate the indirect effect of the mediator variable. All statistical analyses were performed within a 95% confidence interval, with the significance level set at  $p < .05$ .

The reliability levels of the scales were assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, and it was found that these coefficients were above 0.60 (Table 1). This finding indicates that the scales are reliable.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently, skewness and kurtosis coefficients were examined to check the normal distribution of the scales, and it was determined that all scales had coefficients within the  $\pm 2$  range. This suggests that the scales meet the assumption of normal distribution<sup>19</sup> (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics, Skewness, Kurtosis, and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for the sexual self-schema scale, trait anger and anger expression scale, five-factor personality inventory, and borderline personality scale

	n	Min	Max	$\bar{M}$	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	( $\alpha$ )
SSSS <sub>Loving/compassionate</sub>	402	11	61	26.06	12.02	-0.23	0.75	0.92
SSSS <sub>Sensual/stimulating</sub>	402	12	66	37.70	13.42	-0.61	-0.21	0.89
SSSS <sub>Direct/straightforward</sub>	402	10	56	27.51	10.11	-0.44	0.17	0.84
STAXI <sub>Trait anger</sub>	402	10	40	24.96	7.31	-0.58	0.10	0.88
STAXI <sub>Anger in</sub>	402	8	32	19.51	5.41	-0.49	-0.04	0.78
STAXI <sub>Anger out</sub>	402	8	32	18.60	5.89	-0.64	0.23	0.86
STAX <sub>Anger control</sub>	402	8	32	21.69	5.41	-0.67	-0.17	0.80
FFM <sub>Extraversion</sub>	402	1	5	2.70	0.90	-1.08	0.15	0.82
FFM <sub>Agreeableness</sub>	402	1	4	2.86	0.72	-0.67	-0.57	0.73
FFM <sub>Conscientiousness</sub>	402	1	5	3.09	0.83	-0.87	-0.28	0.79
FFM <sub>Neuroticism</sub>	402	1	4	2.37	0.79	-0.55	0.16	0.73
FFM <sub>Openness</sub>	402	1	5	2.98	0.69	-0.21	-0.08	0.70
Borderline personality scale	402	0	67	23.27	15.40	-0.33	0.67	0.95
Impulsivity	402	0	9	2.41	2.24	-0.14	0.91	0.77
Affective instability	402	0	10	3.65	2.63	-0.86	0.46	0.77
Abandonment	402	0	9	3.09	2.19	-0.63	0.52	0.70
Relationships	402	0	8	2.43	2.27	-0.49	0.80	0.78
Self-image	402	0	9	2.33	2.16	-0.22	0.87	0.76
Suicide and self-mutilation	402	0	7	2.07	1.91	-0.44	0.77	0.72
Emptiness	402	0	10	2.99	2.34	-0.10	0.81	0.73
Intense anger	402	0	9	2.26	2.11	-0.27	0.78	0.70
Quasi-psychotic states	402	0	7	2.03	1.92	-0.12	1.01	0.78

Min: Minimum, Max: Maximum, SD: Standard deviation, SSSS: Sexual self-schema scale, STAXI: State-trait anger expression inventory

## RESULTS

As a result of the correlation analysis, sexual self-schemas were compared with trait anger, anger styles, and borderline personality traits. A positive correlation was found between the loving/compassionate subdimension of the SSSS and the variable of extraversion ( $r=.11$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Negative correlations were found between this subdimension and the variables of trait anger ( $r=-.12$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), anger-in ( $r=-.22$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), anger-out ( $r=-.12$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), neuroticism ( $r=-.22$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), Turkish BPQ ( $r=-.29$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), impulsivity ( $r=-.27$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), affective instability ( $r=-.21$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), abandonment ( $r=-.20$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), relationships ( $r=-.24$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), self-image ( $r=-.17$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), suicide and self-mutilation, ( $r=-.25$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), emptiness ( $r=-.24$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), intense anger ( $r=-.26$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and quasi-psychotic states ( $r=-.22$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) (Table 3).

Positive correlations were found between the subdimension of sensual/stimulating from the sexual self-schema and the variables of extraversion ( $r=.12$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and conscientiousness ( $r=.13$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). negative correlations were found with the variables of trait anger ( $r=-.14$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), anger-in ( $r=-.24$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), anger-out ( $r=-.11$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), neuroticism ( $r=-.27$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), Turkish BPQ ( $r=-.39$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), impulsivity ( $r=-.32$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), affective instability ( $r=-.31$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), abandonment ( $r=-.32$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), relationships ( $r=-.24$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), self-image ( $r=-.28$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), suicide and self-mutilation ( $r=-.29$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), emptiness ( $r=-.33$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), intense anger ( $r=-.36$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and quasi-psychotic states ( $r=-.27$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) (Table 3).

For the direct/straightforward subdimension of the sexual self-schema, negative correlations were found with the variables of trait anger ( $r=-.12$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), anger-in ( $r=-.22$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), anger-out ( $r=-.11$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), neuroticism ( $r=-.19$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), Turkish BPQ ( $r=-.33$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), impulsivity ( $r=-.29$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), affective instability ( $r=-.27$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), abandonment ( $r=-.26$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), relationships ( $r=-.22$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), self-image ( $r=-.23$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), suicide and self-mutilation ( $r=-.24$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), emptiness ( $r=-.27$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), intense anger ( $r=-.29$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and quasi-psychotic states ( $r=-.26$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) (Table 3).

Positive correlations were found between trait anger and the variables of the borderline suicide and self-mutilation ( $r=.23$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), emptiness ( $r=.12$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and intense anger ( $r=.17$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) (Table 3).

Additionally, positive correlations were found between anger-in and the variables of the Turkish BPQ ( $r=.27$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), impulsivity ( $r=.19$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), affective instability ( $r=.21$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), abandonment ( $r=.20$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), relationships ( $r=.25$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), self-image ( $r=.21$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), suicide and self-mutilation ( $r=.22$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), emptiness ( $r=.19$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), intense anger ( $r=.27$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and quasi-psychotic states ( $r=.17$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) (Table 3).

A negative correlation was found between anger-out and conscientiousness ( $r=-.10$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), while positive correlations were found between anger-out and the variables of the Turkish BPQ ( $r=.20$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), impulsivity ( $r=.13$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), affective instability ( $r=.12$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), relationships ( $r=.23$ ,

**Table 3.** Examination of the relationship between sexual self schema, trait anger-anger styles, personality traits, borderline personality traits

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1-SSSS Loving/compassionate	1																					
2-SSSS Sensual/stimulating	.67**	1																				
3-SSSS Direct/straightforward	.60**	.79**	1																			
4-STAXI <sub>Trait</sub> anger	-.12*	-.14**	-.12*	1																		
5-STAXI <sub>Anger in</sub>	-.22**	-.24**	-.22**	.56**	1																	
6-STAXI <sub>Anger out</sub>	-.12*	-.11*	-.11*	.79**	.61**	1																
7-STAXI <sub>Anger control</sub>	.05	-.04	-.04	-.36**	-.28**	-.36**	1															
8-FFM <sub>Extra-version</sub>	.11*	.12*	.06	-.04	.02	-.06	.00	1														
9-FFM <sub>Agreeableness</sub>	.00	.07	.00	-.03	.00	-.09	-.01	.53**	1													
10-FFM <sub>Conscientiousness</sub>	.04	.13*	.05	-.06	-.04	-.10*	-.03	.55**	.73**	1												
11-FFM <sub>Neuroticism</sub>	-.22**	-.27**	-.19**	-.04	-.05	-.01	-.02	-.51**	-.36**	-.32**	1											
12-FFM <sub>Openness</sub>	.03	.09	.07	-.08	-.02	-.09	-.05	.52**	.43**	.43**	-.30**	1										
13-Borderline personality scale	-.29**	-.39**	-.33**	.16**	.27**	.20**	-.02	-.15**	-.10*	-.11*	.21**	-.11*	1									
14-Impulsivity	-.27**	-.32**	-.29**	.11*	.19**	.13**	-.03	-.12*	-.09	-.09	.15**	-.09	.79**	1								
15-Affective instability	-.21**	-.31**	-.27**	.09	.21**	.12*	-.01	-.16**	-.09	-.07	.23**	-.10*	.78**	.58**	1							
16-Abandonment	-.20**	-.32**	-.26**	.09	.20**	.09	.00	-.16**	-.04	-.10*	.21**	-.15**	.78**	.57**	.61**	1						
17-Relationships	-.24**	-.24**	-.22**	.20**	.25**	.23**	.00	-.10*	-.07	-.09	.12*	-.07	.82**	.56**	.56**	.58**	1					
18-Self-image	-.17**	-.28**	-.23**	.06	.21**	.10*	.06	-.13**	-.07	-.10	.16**	-.11*	.79**	.55**	.54**	.61**	.67**	1				
19-Suicide and self-mutilation	-.25**	-.29**	-.24**	.23**	.22**	.26**	-.03	-.14**	-.10*	-.09	.15**	-.11*	.75**	.56**	.54**	.51**	.71**	.50**	1			
20-Emptiness	-.24**	-.33**	-.27**	.12*	.19**	.17**	-.02	-.13**	-.15**	-.12*	.16**	-.10	.83**	.61**	.52**	.58**	.66**	.61**	.61**	1		
21-Intense anger	-.26**	-.36**	-.29**	.17**	.27**	.18**	-.04	-.09	-.05	-.08	.17**	-.03	.81**	.63**	.56**	.56**	.56**	.59**	.50**	.66**	1	
22-Quasi-psychotic states	-.22**	-.27**	-.26**	.10	.17**	.16**	-.07	-.03	-.05	.00	.07	.01	.65**	.43**	.43**	.38**	.44**	.43**	.38**	.56**	.60**	1

SSSS: Sexual self-schema scale, STAXI: State-trait anger expression inventory

$p < 0.01$ ), self-image ( $r = .10$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), suicide and self-mutilation ( $r = .26$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), emptiness ( $r = .17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), intense anger ( $r = .18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and quasi-psychotic states ( $r = .16$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) (Table 3).

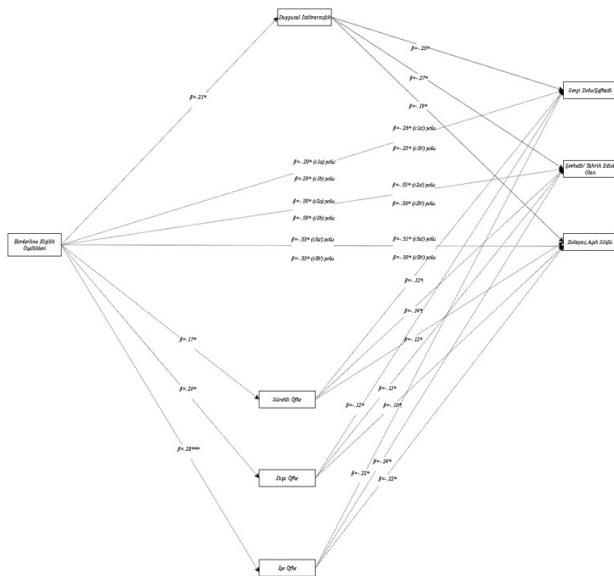
A negative correlation was found between extraversion and Turkish BPQ ( $r = -.15$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), impulsivity ( $r = -.12$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), affective instability ( $r = -.16$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), abandonment ( $r = -.16$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), relationships ( $r = -.10$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), self-image ( $r = -.13$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), suicide and self-mutilation ( $r = -.14$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and emptiness ( $r = -.13$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). A negative correlation was also found between agreeableness and Turkish BPQ ( $r = -.10$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), suicide and self-mutilation ( $r = -.10$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and emptiness ( $r = -.15$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); and between conscientiousness and Turkish BPQ ( $r = -.11$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), abandonment ( $r = -.10$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and emptiness ( $r = -.12$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). A positive correlation was observed between neuroticism and Turkish BPQ ( $r = .21$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), impulsivity ( $r = .15$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), affective instability ( $r = .23$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), abandonment ( $r = .21$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), relationships ( $r = .12$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), self-image ( $r = .16$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), suicide and self-mutilation ( $r = .15$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), emptiness ( $r = .16$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and intense anger ( $r = .17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). A negative correlation was found

between openness to experience and Turkish BPQ ( $r = -.11$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), affective instability ( $r = -.10$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), abandonment ( $r = -.15$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), self-image ( $r = -.11$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and suicide and self-mutilation ( $r = -.11$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) (Table 3).

It was determined that borderline personality traits significantly predicted the loving/compassionate sexual self-schema ( $\beta = -.29$ ,  $p < .05$ ). When neuroticism was included as a mediator in the relationship, a decrease was observed in the beta value of borderline personality traits as the independent variable ( $\beta = -.26$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and it was concluded that the mediator variable was statistically significant ( $\beta = -.03$ , 95% CI). When anger styles were included as a mediator, a decrease was observed in the beta value of borderline personality traits ( $\beta = -.25$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and the mediator variable was found to be statistically significant ( $\beta = -.04$ , 95% CI) (Figure).

It was determined that borderline personality traits significantly predicted the sensual/stimulating sexual self-schema ( $\beta = -.39$ ,  $p < .05$ ). When neuroticism was included as a mediator, a decrease was observed in the beta value of borderline personality traits ( $\beta = -.35$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and the mediator





\* $p < .05$  Test used: Process Macro 4.2

**Figure.** The mediating role of partners' personality traits and anger styles in the relationship between borderline personality organization and sexual self-schema

variable was found to be statistically significant ( $\beta = -.04$ , 95% CI). When anger styles were included as a mediator, a decrease was observed in the beta value of borderline personality traits ( $\beta = -.36$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and the mediator variable was found to be statistically significant ( $\beta = -.03$ , 95% CI) (Figure).

Mediation analyses indicated that the association between borderline personality traits and the direct/straightforward sexual self-schema was explained in part by neuroticism and anger styles. Specifically, when neuroticism was included in the model, the beta value of borderline personality traits decreased from  $\beta = -0.33$  to  $\beta = -0.31$  ( $p < .05$ ), and the indirect effect was statistically significant ( $\beta = -0.02$ , 95% CI). When Anger Styles were included, the beta value decreased to  $\beta = -0.30$  ( $p < .05$ ), with a statistically significant indirect effect ( $\beta = -0.03$ , 95% CI).

## DISCUSSION

This study revealed a significant relationship between borderline personality traits, sexual self-schemas, personality traits, and anger expression styles. The findings indicated that individuals with borderline personality traits tend to exhibit sexual self-schemas characterized by loving/compassionate, sensual/stimulating, and direct/straightforward patterns. Prior research has consistently shown that neuroticism is linked to less adaptive emotion regulation strategies—such as rumination and suppression—rather than flexible approaches like reappraisal.<sup>5</sup> Individuals high in neuroticism typically experience greater emotional instability, heightened stress reactivity, and a tendency to dwell on negative experiences, which may intensify both interpersonal and intrapersonal difficulties.<sup>4</sup> Within the context of this study, such maladaptive regulation patterns may help explain the negative association observed between neuroticism and sexual self-schemas, as these strategies can hinder the development of positive sexual self-perceptions.<sup>11</sup> Considering that individuals with BPD often display low self-regulation and control,<sup>20</sup> the association

with the direct/straightforward sexual self-schema appears consistent with existing literature. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the link between borderline personality traits and the loving/compassionate sexual self-schema may stem from the inappropriate and frequent sexual behaviors often observed in borderline individuals,<sup>21</sup> as well as from a heightened need for approval and validation.<sup>22</sup>

This study identified the mediating role of anger in the relationship between borderline personality traits and sexual self-schemas, finding that individuals with borderline patterns, who also scored high on trait anger, displayed such patterns. Studies in the literature also show that an increase in borderline personality traits leads to higher levels of trait anger.<sup>23</sup> Consistent with these findings, the literature also indicates that individuals with borderline personality traits experience more difficulty in anger control compared to others.<sup>24</sup> The use of anger as a defense mechanism to cope with negative emotions can explain the negative relationship between anger control, borderline personality traits, and sexual self-schemas.<sup>25</sup> The findings of Howard et al.<sup>26</sup> explain the mediating role of anger, demonstrating that individuals with BPD display angry and aggressive behaviors towards others. Individuals with borderline traits outwardly express anger, which corresponds to the direct/straightforward dimension of sexual self-schemas.

Researchers have found that personality traits may function as a possible mechanism in the relationship between sexual self-schemas and borderline personality traits. In this context, it was determined that individuals with high neuroticism scores from the five-factor personality model have negative sexual self-schemas and exhibit borderline personality traits more frequently. Boldero et al.<sup>27</sup> concluded in their study that individuals with BPD behave impulsively and experience emotional inconsistency, supporting the relationship between neuroticism from the five-factor personality traits and borderline personality traits. Several studies suggest that individuals with neuroticism personality traits in the borderline pattern are more likely to have direct/straightforward sexual self-schemas. These studies relate borderline personality traits to early attachment styles, which in turn shape the sexual self-schemas assimilated in adulthood.<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, the study has revealed the relationship between variables that have not been sufficiently studied in the literature by focusing on the behaviors of individuals with borderline personality traits and the underlying reasons for these behaviors.

## Limitations

The study has certain limitations. The most significant limitation is the difficulty in forming the framework of the discussion section, which arises from the scarcity of articles that measure the relationship between the study variables during the literature review. On the other hand, the fact that the sub-dimensions of the SSSS differ between the original and the Turkish validity and reliability studies makes interpreting the literature more challenging. Another limitation is that only the characteristics measured by the scales are evaluated

in the study. Additionally, the sample was drawn from a single city (İstanbul) using a convenience sampling method, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other populations.

## CONCLUSION

The study's findings reveal that individuals with borderline personality traits often exhibit three sexual self-schemas: loving/compassionate, sensual/stimulating, and direct/straightforward. It was determined that anger styles play a mediating role in the relationship between borderline personality traits and sexual self-schemas. Additionally, neuroticism, among the five-factor personality traits, also plays a mediating role in this relationship.

## ETHICAL DECLARATIONS

### Ethics Committee Approval

The study was carried out with the permission of the İstanbul Doğuş University Ethics Committee (Date 26.01.2024, Decision No: 2023/86).

### Informed Consent

All patients signed and free and informed consent form.

### Referee Evaluation Process

Externally peer-reviewed.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The author have no conflicts of interest to declare.

### Financial Disclosure

The author declared that this study has received no financial support.

### Author Contributions

All of the authors declare that they have all participated in the design, execution, and analysis of the paper, and that they have approved the final version.

## REFERENCES

- Clarkin JF, Widiger TA, Frances A, Hurt SW, Gilmore M. Prototypic typology and the borderline personality disorder. *J Abnorm Psychol.* 1983;92(3):263-275. doi:10.1037//0021-843x.92.3.263
- Bouchard S, Sabourin S, Lussier Y, Villeneuve E. Relationship quality and stability in couples when one partner suffers from borderline personality disorder. *J Marital Fam Ther.* 2009;35(4):446-455. doi:10.1111/j.1752-0606.2009.00151.x
- Haggard P. Sense of agency in the human brain. *Nat Rev Neurosci.* 2017; 18(4):196-207. doi:10.1038/nrn.2017.14
- Kobylińska D, Zajenkowski M, Lewczuk K. The mediational role of emotion regulation in the relationship between personality and subjective well-being. *Curr Psychol.* 2020;41(6):4098-4111. doi:10.1007/s12144-020-00861-7
- Bilge Y, Emiral E. The mediator role of BIS/BAS systems in the relationship between psychological symptoms and borderline personality features: conformation from a non-Western sample. *Curr Psycho.* 2021;41(12):9008-9018. doi:10.1007/s12144-021-01386-3
- Neustadter ES, Fineberg SK, Leavitt J, Carr MM, Corlett PR. Induced illusory body ownership in borderline personality disorder. *Neurosci Conscious.* 2019;2019(1):1-10. doi:10.1093/nc/niz017
- Engbert K, Wohlschläger A, Thomas R, Haggard P. Agency, subjective time, and other minds. *J Exp Psychol Hum Percept Perform.* 2007;33(6): 1261-1268. doi:10.1037/0096-1523.33.6.1261
- Gunderson JG, Kolb JE, Austin V. The diagnostic interview for borderline patients. *Am J Psychiatry.* 1981;138(7):896-903. doi:10.1176/ajp.138.7.896
- Poreh AM, Rawlings D, Claridge G, Freeman JL, Faulkner C, Shelton C. The BPQ: a scale for the assessment of borderline personality based on DSM-IV criteria. *J Pers Disord.* 2006;20(3):247-60. doi:10.1521/pedi.2006.20.3.247
- Ceylan, V. Borderline kişilik ölçeği (Türkçe BPQ): geçerlik, güvenirliği, faktör yapısı. *Hasan Kalyoncu Üniversitesi.* 2017:1-106. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11782/1622>
- Andersen BL, Cyranowski JM. Women's sexual self-schema. *J Pers Soc Psychol.* 1994;67(6):1079-1100. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.67.6.1079
- Andersen BL, Cyranowski JM, Espindle D. Men's sexual self-schema. *J Pers Soc Psychol.* 1999;76(4):645-661. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.76.4.645
- Hill DB. Differences and similarities in men's and women's sexual self-schemas. *J Sex Res.* 2007;44(2):135-143. doi:10.1080/00224490701263611
- Koçak G, Fışıloğlu H. Cinsel benlik şeması ölçeği'nin üniversite örnekleminde geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışması. *Klinik Psikiyatri.* 2010; 13(4):159-169. <https://toad.halileksi.net/olcek/cinsel-benlik-semasi-olcegi/>
- Spielberger CD, Jacobs G, Russell S, Crane RS. Assessment of anger: the state-trait anger scale. In: Butcher JN, Spielberger CD, eds. *Advances in personality assessment.* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum; 1983.
- Özer AK. Sürekli öfke ve öfke ifade tarzı ölçekleri ön çalışması. *Türk Psikoloji Dergisi.* 1994;9(31):26-35.
- Ulu S. Ergenlerde algılanan duygusal istismar ile sürekli öfke düzeyi ve öfke ifade biçimleri arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi. (Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi), Maltepe Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İstanbul. 2011. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12415/10584>
- Can A. SPSS ile bilimsel araştırma sürecinde nicel veri analizi. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Pegem Akademi Yayıncılık; 2013.
- Haahs-Vaughn DL, Lomax R. An introduction to statistical concepts. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Routledge; 2020.
- Bornoalova MA, Fishman S, Strong DR, Kruglanski AW, Lejuez CW. Borderline personality disorder in the context of self-regulation: understanding symptoms and hallmark features as deficits in locomotion and assessment. *Personality Individual Differences.* 2008;44(1):22-31. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2007.07.001
- Rickards S, Laaser M. Sexual acting-out in borderline women: impulsive self-destructiveness or sexual addiction/compulsivity? *Sexual Addiction Compulsivity.* 1999;6(1):31-45. doi:10.1080/10720169908400177
- Anello K, Lannin DG, Hermann AD. The values of narcissistic grandiosity and vulnerability. *Personality Individual Differences.* 2019; 150:1-6. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2019.06.021
- Armenti NA, Babcock JC. Borderline personality features, anger, and intimate partner violence: an experimental manipulation of rejection. *J Interpers Violence.* 2018;36(5-6):1-26. doi:10.1177/0886260518771686
- Nickel MK, Nickel C, Mitterlehner FO, et al. Topiramate treatment of aggression in female borderline personality disorder patients: a double-blind, placebo-controlled study. *J Clin Psychiatry.* 2004;65(11):21-31. doi:10.4088/jcp.v65n1112
- Chapman AL, Cellucci T. The role of antisocial and borderline personality features in substance dependence among incarcerated females. *Addict Behav.* 2007;32(6):1131-1145. doi:10.1016/j.addbeh.2006.08.001
- Howard J, De Jesu S-Romero R, Peipert A, Riley T, Rutter LA, Lorenzo-Luaces L. The significance of anxiety symptoms in predicting psychosocial functioning across borderline personality traits. *PLoS One.* 2021;16(1):e0245099. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0245099
- Boldero JM, Hulbert CA, Bloom L, et al. Rejection sensitivity and negative self-beliefs as mediators of association between the number of borderline personality disorder features and self-reported adult attachment. *Personality Mental Health.* 2009;3(4):248-262. doi:10.1002/pmh.93
- Widiger TA, Trull TJ. Personality and psychopathology: an application of the five-factor model. *J Pers.* 1992;60(2):363-393. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6494.1992.tb00977.x