

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Women's Perception of Sexuality and Sexual Violence in Turkish Culture - Are Women Aware of This Difficult Distinction? : A Qualitative Research

Türk Kültüründe Kadınların Cinsellik ve Cinsel Şiddet Algısı - Kadınlar Bu Zor Ayrımın Farkında Mı?: Niteliksel Araştırma

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ABSTRACT

Background/Aims: In this study, we aimed to determine the perceptions of women of reproductive age with active sexual lives living in the northwest of Türkiye, and whether they are aware of sexual desire and sexual violence they encounter in their sexual lives.

Methods: This qualitative study was carried out with 18 women by in-depth interviews. In-depth and semi-structured interviews were conducted between December 2021- July 2022. Content analysis was used for data analysis.

Results: Three themes were identified in the study: (1) the building block of marriage (2) sexuality as violence (3) the effects of sexual violence. The participants emphasized that their different expressions of sexuality from their groups. When they do not feel sexual desire, the sexual function is an act of violence in which the woman is the object of sex. Sexual harassment, some women were also exposed to verbal and psychological violence of a sexual nature.

Conclusion: At the end of the research, it was determined that women often perceived sexuality as a fundamental element for the continuation of marriage and commitment to their spouses. Participants stated that they were sometimes exposed to sexual violence and different types of violence in their sexual lives.

Keywords: Perception, sexuality, sexual violence, violence, women

ÖZ

Amaç: Bu çalışmada Türkiye'nin kuzeybatısında yaşayan aktif cinsel hayatı olan üreme çağındaki kadınların, cinsel hayatlarında karşılaştıkları cinsel arzu ve cinsel şiddetin farkında olup olmadıklarına dair algılarını belirlemeyi amaçladık.

Gereç ve Yöntem: Bu nitel çalışma, 18 kadınla derinlemesine görüşme yapılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Aralık 2021-Temmuz 2022 tarihleri arasında derinlemesine ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Verilerin analizinde içerik analizi kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular: Çalışmada üç tema belirlendi: (1) evliliğin yapı taşı (2) şiddet olarak cinsellik (3) cinsel şiddetin etkileri. Katılımcılar cinselliği evliliğin ve eş sadakatinin devamı için temel bir unsur olarak görmekteydi. Katılımcılar cinselliği erkeklerin farklı düşündüklerini, cinsel istek olmadığında cinsel işlevin kadının seks objesi olduğu bir şiddet eylemi olduğunu vurguladı. Cinsel şiddetin yanı sıra bazı kadınlar cinsel içerikli sözel ve psikolojik şiddete de maruz kalmaktaydı.

Sonuç: Araştırmanın sonunda kadınların cinselliği sıklıkla evliliğin devamı ve eşlerine bağlılığın devamı için temel bir unsur olarak algıladıkları belirlendi. Katılımcılar zaman zaman cinsel yaşamlarında, cinsel şiddete ve şiddetin farklı türlerine maruz kaldıklarını belirttiler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Algı, cinsellik, cinsel şiddet, şiddet, kadın

Introduction

Sexuality includes how people perceive their sexual identity, consider themselves or others as a sexual entity, have knowledge and experiences of sexuality through biological, social and cultural environmental factors, and discover physical and spiritual desire and pleasure alone or with others (1). Each individual's willingness to participate in sexual acts whenever and wherever they want protects and strengthens their biopsychosocial health, reduces sexual dysfunctions and prevents exposure to sexual life-based violence (2).

The World Health Organization (WHO) stated that sexual violence is against the fields of Good Health and Well-Being, Gender Equality and Peace Justice and Strong Institutes of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development that should be achieved by 2030 (3). Sexual violence affects people of all ages, genders and sexual orientations and causes serious negativities at the social level. Perpetrators of sexual violence are often the victim's current or former partner, acquaintance, neighbor or family member (4). Violence against

women affects not only the targeted women, but also family members and society, and can cause serious health problems. The physical and mental health of women deteriorates, their self-confidence decreases, and they cannot get out of the situation by behaving submissively. For this reason, it is important to know that violence against women is an important problem that should be prevented (5).

Although sexual violence is very common among women globally, it is emphasized that 1 in 3 women experience sexual violence and harassment (4). The results of studies on domestic violence experienced by married women in Türkiye are comparable with world data (6). According to the 2012 "Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality" report published by the United Nations; 22.0% of women living in Denmark, 25.0% of women in Germany, 13.9% of those living in Norway have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at any point in their lives by their spouse or partner or one of them (7). According to official statistics in Türkiye, 44% of domestic violence is emotional, 36% is physical, 38% is both physical and sexual, 30% is economic and 12% is sexual violence (8).

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is an important human rights violation that includes both sexual harassment and assault, producing negative consequences for physical and mental health (9). Sexual violence is not a reflection of sexual desire, it is an aggressive act mostly perpetrated by men against women, reflecting feelings of anger and hostility as well as the need to exert power and control (10). Sexual violence refers to any sexual experience that jeopardizes freely given sexual consent. Sexual violence can include forced sexual intercourse (rape), sexual coercion (unwanted verbal or psychological pressure designed to promote sexual compliance), and voluntary sexual compliance (willingness to consent to unwanted sex despite the absence of sexual desire) (11).

Victims of sexual violence may be unaware that their sexual rights have been violated. Therefore, they are unlikely to report sexual violence or leave their sexually challenging relationship. Because male and female sexuality are positioned very differently in societies with pronounced gender roles and gender inequality, the probability of sexual violence in marriages is higher in such societies (12). In cultures with intense gender inequality, women are assigned to meet the sexual needs of their husbands (13). Indeed, a normative and gender-based (traditional) heterosexuality including men presumed to need sex and sexually passive and sensitive women creates a sociocultural framework for sexual violence (14). Insufficient education and economic resources of women, their desire to be an "obedient and good wife" accepted by their husbands and society, their perceived responsibility for meeting the needs of their husbands and protecting their marriage form a basis of an unwanted sexual relationship, namely sexual violence (15).

The Current Study

When the studies conducted on a provincial basis in Türkiye to determine the prevalence of sexual violence are examined, it is seen that women are frequently exposed to sexual violence by their husbands or partners at 4.0% (16), 4.9% (5) levels that should not be underestimated. In a study conducted across Türkiye, 12% of all married women stated that they were exposed to sexual violence at some point in their lives. There are also differences between regions of Türkiye in the incidence of sexual violence. The northeastern region of Türkiye has the highest rate of sexual violence with 16% (17). In the light of this information, it was thought that women might not be able to distinguish between sexual intercourse that develops freely within the framework of sexual desire and desire in heterosexual relationships, and the sexual act, that is, the experience of sexual violence, which must be obligatory participation. Sexuality is a lifelong necessity. Sexual violence is a problem that can be encountered in all periods of life. However, a decrease in the quality of sexual life can be observed during adolescence, when a woman's body and genital organs have not completed their development sufficiently, and during menopause and old age, which are characterized by a decrease in hormone levels. The period in which women maintain quality sexual function in terms of anatomical, hormonal and psychosocial aspects can be considered as the reproductive age (8,9,15). In this respect, in this study, we aimed to determine the perceptions of women of reproductive age with active sexual lives living in the northwest of Türkiye, and whether they are aware of sexual desire and sexual violence they encounter in their sexual lives.

Materials and Methods

Study Design and Participants

The study has adopted an exploratory qualitative research design to obtain a profound understanding of the women's perceptions and experiences of sexual violence risk. The sample included a total of 18 participants. The study employed a convenient sampling technique due to the limited number of available, accessible, and eligible candidates to be included in this study. Participants were not required to be married or not. Apart from this, inclusion criteria include: (1) Having an active sexual life (2) Being in the reproductive age (18-49 years) (3) Having no history of chronic disease (4) Not being diagnosed with breast or gynecological cancer (5) Agreeing to participate in the study. We determined the number of required respondents by interviewing patients who met the inclusion criteria until the data were saturated, and no new topics were generated. Table 1 shows the participants' characteristics.

Data Collection

This qualitative study was conducted with a total of 18 women by in-depth interviews. Individual, in-depth and semi-structured interviews were held between December 2021 and July 2022 to protect women's

privacy. The two authors (ECE, AK) contacted participants prior to interviews to ascertain if there were any changes in their condition. Participants were informed about the identity of the researchers. They were also informed about the study (its purpose, the confidentiality of the responses, where and how the data would be kept). Participation was on a volunteer basis. Participants were asked for their consent to have the discussions recorded on a voice recorder. Each interview took around 30-45 minutes.

The data were collected using a "semi-structured interview form" that was prepared by the researchers based on the literature (11,14). The interview form contained open-ended questions regarding the participants' perceptions of sexuality and sexual violence risk. The questions in this form were as follows:

- (1) What is the place and significance of sexual intercourse in marriage?
- (2) What are the factors affecting sexual intercourse?
- (3) What is sexual violence?
- (4) How women who are exposed to sexual violence in their marriage are affected?

A semi-structured interview form was prepared by the researchers. Then, expert opinions were obtained from five faculty members who are experts in their fields. It is important to ensure data saturation in qualitative research. In qualitative interviews, data saturation is reached when the researcher begins to hear the same comments over and over again (18,19). Accordingly, the number of participants to be included in the sample varies in order to ensure data saturation. In this study, the researchers ended the interviews by repeating the same data.

Ethical Approval

The protocol for the research has been approved by the Bartın University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Board (Date: 16.12.2021, Approval Number: 2021-SBB-0487). Institutional permission to carry out the research was obtained from the Bartın Provincial Health Directorate (Approval Number: E26080346-799). The participants were informed about the study, and their verbal and written consent was obtained. The research complies with the provisions of the Declaration of Helsinki (as revised in Brazil 2013).

Data Analysis

It is very important to pay attention to meticulousness in qualitative research. Rigor in qualitative research; It makes the data collection and analysis process systematic, orderly and traceable. In this research, great attention was paid to meticulousness. The data of the study were collected from all participants by the same researcher. The questions stated in the research questions were not deviated, and the same questions were asked to each participant in the same way. We analyzed transcripts using the thematic approach of Braun and Clarke (2006) (18). In line with this approach, data analysis was carried out in six steps.

Beforehand, the audio recordings obtained from the interviews were converted into written documents by two researchers. In the first step, researchers became familiar with the data through rereading and note-taking. In the second step, systematic codes for the data were created. The researchers created a series of code lists (19). In the third step, possible themes were formed by examining the first codes and data obtained in detail. In the fourth step, the themes were created and the codes placed in the themes were reviewed to ensure that the data were suitable for the research questions. In the fifth step, the names, scopes and definitions of the themes were prepared. The final step was the reporting of the findings. The analysis of the research data was carried out independently by two researchers, and then the researchers decided on the themes and sub-themes together. The participants were contacted to avoid doubts during data confirmation. In addition, feedback on the precision and reliability of the themes was received from the interviewed patients (20). This current study was presented by arranging it according to the combined criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ) checklist for qualitative research (21).

Results

Table 2 presents the themes that emerged as a result of the thematic analysis of the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews. Three themes were identified in the study: (1) the building block of marriage (2) sexuality as violence (3) the effects of sexual violence. The first theme, sexuality as the building block of marriage, had four sub-themes. These were; necessity, perception difference between men and women, duty and conditions of sexuality.

The second theme was sex as violence and had three sub-themes. These were; It was sexual object, abuse and verbal sexual violence. The final theme was effects of sexual violence. It had three sub-themes; physical effects, psychological effects and effects on marriage.

Theme 1: Building block of marriage

On the theme of the building block of marriage, women stated that sexuality/sexual intercourse is necessary for marriage, that men and women look at sexuality from different perspectives, that sexuality should not be seen as a duty in marriage, and that there are conditions for a healthy sexual relationship.

Seven of the participants have emphasized the necessity of sexuality/sexual intercourse for marriage. Some of their statements were as follows:

"Sex is an important part of marriage. Sexuality is also a factor that pushes individuals to marry. Because sexuality is an act that is accepted in our society by marriage." Participant 8

"If there is no harmonious sexual life between the spouses, this may be a reason for divorce. It is important for spouses to have sexual compatibility, dyadic adjustment, and understanding each other.

Therefore, marital harmony is also very necessary for marriage." Participant 2

Eight of the participants have stated that men and women have different points of view on sexuality, and therefore they have different expectations from sexuality in marriage:

"I think sex is a chore. It is not necessary for me. However, it is a must-have for men and something that exists to make them happy." Participant 11

"Sex is necessary for men to build trust and loyalty in marriage. The important thing for me is to have a pleasant time with him, to be able to understand him, to share good moments with him. But they do not consider like that. According to men, sexual intercourse is a must for the continuation of marriage." Participant 12

Some women stated that they saw sexuality as an obligation and a duty in their marriages. Some of the participants' statements on this subject were as follows:

"If a woman is subjected to sexual violence by her husband, she feels inadequate, she only fulfills the tasks assigned to her in marriage due to the fear of losing her husband." Participant 9

"There are times when I do not want to have sexual intercourse, I mean when I am tired, I need rest, and I feel bad psychologically. I am not a robot. But according to my husband, when he wants to have sexual intercourse, I should also want it too and I have to be ready immediately (for sexual intercourse)." Participant 12

Almost all of the participants have several conditions for a healthy sexual relationship, including sexual desire/adjustment, personal boundaries, and emotional attachment.

"Sexuality consists of desire, willingness, passion, and intense pleasure. The reluctance of even one of the couples in sexual intercourse affects their relationship negatively after a while. That is why desire is important in sexual intercourse." Participant 1

"We need to be able to do this (sexual intercourse) within the limits of mutual trust between spouses, and most importantly, we need to know the limit of the other, we need to know how far we can go." Participant 4

"Emotional bond is the most important thing in a sexual relationship. If there is an emotional bond between the spouses, I do not think such a situation (sexual violence) will occur." Participant 9

"Desire is important in sex life. If one of the spouses is not willing to have sexual intercourse, this will also affect the other, therefore the marriage may break down, they may begin fighting, their trust in each other is shaken, and the marriage may even end." Participant 7

Theme 2: Sexuality as violence

On the theme of sexuality as violence, women stated

that they were seen as sexual objects by their husbands, that sexual violence was abuse, and that they could also be subjected to verbal sexual violence.

Some of the participants described it as sexual violence when men considered women sexual objects. Their statements were as follows:

"Sexual violence refers to a man's insistently forcing his wife when she does not want to have sex, considering her as "an always ready-to-use machine" and starting sexual intercourse directly without a nice word or small gesture." Participant 7

"Since I work in a night shift job, when I go home in the morning, my husband wants to have direct sexual intercourse without preparing a breakfast for me, without a nice word or a smiling face, it really makes me angry. I am not a sex object or a sex machine." Participant 9

Almost half of the participants have stated that sexual violence is a type of abuse, even if it occurs among married people. Their statements on this subject were as follows:

"Sex is pleasurable when it is optional. Here, if there is no pleasure and pleasure in sexual intercourse, then it turns into rape." Participant 3

"I think the partner's endless and unlimited desires in sexual life are sexual violence. Because even if women do not want to have sex, men can have sexual intercourse due to their endless desires and abuse women just because they want sex." Participant 7

Six of the participants have stated that sexual violence can occur not only through physical contact but also verbally. Their statements were as follows:

"When I took off my clothes, I was very annoyed by his statements like "did you have a belly?", "did you gain weight?", "you are not fit as before". Unfortunately, men always consider themselves as superior and women as inferior." Participant 9

"Besides a direct touch or sexual intercourse, he may also say something that denigrates or insults my sexuality. Men's mouths get a little dirty and they can't think in detail like women." Participant 12

Theme 3: Effects of sexual violence

In the theme of the effects of sexual violence, women talked about the physical and psychological consequences of sexual violence and stated that it could cause disagreements between spouses/partners.

Six of the participants have stated that sexual violence/forced intercourse can have some physical consequences such as bleeding in women. Their statements were as follows:

"In one of my shifts, a sex worker came to be examined because she was exposed to sexual violence from her partner. Her physical and psychological condition was so bad, she was examined and cared for, but she was still bleeding." Participant 5

"If a woman does not want to have sex, she may experience undesirable situations such as vaginal bleeding and tearing due to lack of adequate vaginal lubricity." Participant 9

Almost all of the participants have emphasized that sexual violence have negative psychological effects on women:

"The quality of life of a woman who experiences sexual violence from her husband in her marriage decreases, she cannot enjoy life, does not want to involve in society, and feels guilty. However, maybe there is no fault of the woman here." Participant 3

"If a woman is sexually abused by her husband, she looks for the cause of every event in herself, consider herself failed in her marriage, and ultimately becomes unhappy." Participant 4

More than half of the participants have stated that sexual violence can cause conflict between spouses and end their marriage.

"If a woman experiences sexual violence in her marriage, she is completely alienated from her husband, her trust in her husband is broken, and this negatively affects all marriage processes." Participant 5

Table 1. Participants' characteristics

Informant	Age	Educational level	Employment status	Duration of marriage (year)	Type of marriage
Participant 1	29	Graduate	Employed	3	Love marriage
Participant 2	38	Undergraduate	Employed	10	Love marriage
Participant 3	31	Undergraduate	Employed	6	Love marriage
Participant 4	27	Undergraduate	Employed	2	Love marriage
Participant 5	33	High school	Employed	5	Arranged marriage
Participant 6	31	Undergraduate	Employed	2	Love marriage
Participant 7	28	Undergraduate	Employed	1	Love marriage
Participant 8	32	Undergraduate	Employed	2	Love marriage
Participant 9	41	Undergraduate	Employed	19	Love marriage
Participant 10	40	Undergraduate	Employed	12	Love marriage
Participant 11	42	Undergraduate	Employed	10	Arranged marriage
Participant 12	45	Primary school	Unemployed	34	Arranged marriage
Participant 13	45	Primary school	Unemployed	0	Arranged marriage
Participant 14	38	High school	Employed	10	Arranged marriage
Participant 15	31	Undergraduate	Employed	6	Love marriage
Participant 16	27	Undergraduate	Employed	2	Love marriage
Participant 17	33	High school	Employed	5	Arranged marriage
Participant 18	44	Undergraduate	Employed	14	Arranged marriage

Table 2. Theme and sub-themes

Themes	Building block of marriage	Sex as violence	Effects of sexual violence
Sub-Themes	Necessity (n=9)	Sexual object (n=5)	Physical effects (n=6)
	Perception difference between men and women (n=8)	Abuse (n=7)	Psychological effects (n=14)
	Duty (n=5)	Verbal sexual violence (n=6)	Effects on marriage (n=9)
	Conditions of sexuality (n=12)		

Discussion

This study aimed to examine women's perceptions of sexuality and sexual violence risk using qualitative methods. The themes were: (1) building block of marriage (2) sexuality as violence (3) effects of sexual violence. Participants were aware of sexual violence when sexual intercourse took place against the will of one party, even if it was between married people. They saw this as a risk to their health. It was stated that sexual violence could be seen not only as sexual intercourse but also verbally.

The theme of "building block of marriage" is derived from the participants' expressions that reveal their feelings, thoughts and experiences related to sexuality, such as the difference between men and women, the perception of sexuality as a marriage duty, and the conditions of sexuality including sexual desire, harmony, and personal boundaries. In the present study, participants have stated that the significance of sexuality for the continuation of marriage is undeniable. Studies have reported that unlike women, men cannot control their sexual desire, and when men want to have sex, women fulfill this demand to avoid major problems such as fighting and divorce (11,14). Yang et al. (2016) have argued that women are expected to meet their husbands' sexual needs regardless of their own desires to maintain marital and family harmony (22). In a qualitative study conducted by Farvid and Saing (2022) in Cambodia, it was stated that a woman's refusal of sexual intercourse in her marriage may result in her being beaten by her husband, being separated from her children, her husband finding a mistress, or not being able to provide financial support for herself and her children (11). For these reasons, women may have sexual intercourse and fulfill their marital duties in line with the demands of their husbands, against their wishes and desires, to ensure the continuation of their marriage.

In the present study, participants have emphasized that sexual intercourse requires sexual desire, sexual harmony and protecting personal boundaries. In the study of Balarabe (2022), one third of the participants reported to have the right to discover and use their sexual preferences freely, whereby their freely given consent should be asked before sexual intercourse (9). One study has determined that men use sexual coercion as a tool for sex when women do not consent to sexual intercourse (12). Thanks to increased access to information in modern societies and spread of

sexual education compared to previous years, women in modern societies can make choices about their own sexuality, however, men in patriarchal societies are still a decision-making power over women (11). In this regard, it is thought that it is very important in the context of sexual rights for women to respect their decisions freely, without pressure or coercion in sexual life.

In our study, participants drew attention to the violence dimensions of sexuality. They have stated that men consider women as sexual objects and want to have sexual intercourse without establishing an emotional bond or saying a nice word; and even worse, women are exposed to men's sexual and physical humiliations. One of the reasons why men consider women sexual objects may stem from gender-based social messages stating that women have a role of being mothers and fulfilling their husband's sexual needs (11,23). Abdolmanafi et al. (2022) have found that some participants consider women as a means to satisfy men's sexual desire and sexual satisfaction (14). Gender roles that privilege men and normalize sexual coercion and violence against women cause women to be exposed to sexual violence, making sexual violence acceptable by social learning (12). In this regard, while transferring information to new generations, it is important to purify sexuality from violence, especially for women, along with the developments in gender roles, especially with the influence of sexual health training given.

In the present study, participants have stated that sexual violence is an abuse and can occur in both physical and verbal forms. When partners have sexual pleasure and orgasm in sexual act, there is no abuse and sexual violence. In a heterosexual sexual intercourse, if partners have a respectful, reliable and satisfactory communication, then their sexual pleasure facilitates sexual intercourse and orgasm (1). However, several studies have reported that women have less pleasant sexual experience compared to men and are exposed to many humiliating and contemptuous words, threats and behaviors during sexual acts, and therefore, their probability of experiencing a positive sexual life decrease (1,11,24). In addition, one study found that one participant did not feel any desire during sexual intercourse and was tired of having sex with her husband, but had to have sexual intercourse without being satisfied because her husband wanted it (11). It is thought that when all individuals respect sexual desire, the concept of sexual violence will disappear and the quality of sexual life will increase by providing pleasant and positive sexual experiences.

In our study, participants have stated that sexual violence and forced intercourse can have some physical consequences, such as bleeding in women. In one study, a woman with uterine prolapse stated that although she had bleeding and pain during sexual intercourse, she felt sorry for her husband because she could not have sex with him, and despite this she tried to have sex with him (11). In a different study, it is stated that the negative physical effects of

sexual violence are more common in young women due to physical disabilities and mobility limitations in men, and that there are no significant differences in terms of psychological and verbal violence (24).

In this study, almost all of the participants have emphasized that sexual violence can have negative psychological effects (humiliation, stigma, feeling worthless, guilt, etc.) on women. Women are exposed to various forms of sexual violence such as staring, verbal abuse, and non-consensual touching (10). In addition, women are socially excluded and isolated in societies that blame female victims of sexual violence (25). As a result, women feel offended, humiliated and worthless (11). Since the feelings, thoughts and wishes of women are not valued in sexual violence, it creates a traumatic effect on their psychology (24). Women who have been sexually abused may hesitate to seek help for various reasons, including cultural factors (25).

In our study, more than half of the participants have stated that sexual violence can cause conflict between spouses and end their marriage. Studies indicate that some women engage in sexual intercourse to survive their marriage and meet their husbands' sexual needs (11,14). In this context, it is thought that sexuality for women is perceived as a duty that must be fulfilled for the continuation of the marriage.

Limitations

As far as we know, this is the first research that investigates whether women's sexual acts occur as a result of a desired action or exposure to power and authority, and raises awareness of women in society, who assume that sexuality is a duty that women should fulfill. The data of this study were collected to determine the views of women living in the north-west of Türkiye, as studies across Türkiye show that the rates of sexual violence are highest among women living in the north-east of the country. For this reason, it is accepted as a limitation of the research as it will affect the generalization of the results. Although progress has been made in sexuality in our country compared to the past years, unfortunately, sexuality is still seen as a taboo in our country. In this context, raising awareness about sexuality and sexual violence to women is a strong aspect of this study. On the other hand, it is another limitation that the findings on sexuality may lag behind the countries of the world.

Conclusion

At the end of the research, it was determined that women often perceived sexuality as a fundamental element for the continuation of marriage and commitment to their spouses. Participants stated that they were sometimes exposed to sexual violence and different types of violence in their sexual lives. In the present study, participants stated that they considered sexuality as a fundamental element for the continuation of marriage and spousal loyalty. Participants have also emphasized that men think differently about sexuality, and have argued that sexual intercourse turns into an act of violence in which women are sex objects

when there is no sexual desire between partners. In addition, some participants were exposed to verbal and psychological sexual violence. Sex education has become a basic necessity in Türkiye, which has a patriarchal society and where sexuality is considered taboo. Therefore, sex education should be provided to individuals through lifelong learning trainings starting from an early age. There is a need for further studies to examine different dimensions of this subject.

Authors Contribution

Study design: ECE, AK, Data collection: ECE, AK., Data analysis and interpretation: AK, ECE., Writing-Reviewing and Editing: AK, ECE., Drafting of the article: ECE, AK, Critical review: AK, ECE.

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Consent to Participate

The participant has consented to the submission to this journal.

Consent For Publication

The participant has consented to the submission to this journal.

Ethics Approval

The protocol for the research has been approved by Ethical permission for the study was obtained from Bartın University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Board (Date: 16.12.2021, Approval Number: 2021-SBB-0487).

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no competing interests.

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