

OPINIONS OF NURSING STUDENTS' ABOUT SEXUAL MYTHS

Hemşirelik Öğrencilerinin Cinsel Mitler Hakkındaki Görüşleri

Fatma KARASU¹, Rabia SOHBET²

¹Kilis 7 Aralık University Y.Ş. Faculty of Health Sciences Department of Nursing Kilis-Turkey, **PhD**

²Gaziantep University Faculty of Health Sciences Department of Nursing Gaziantep-Turkey, **MSN, PhD**

ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of this study was to investigate the views of nursing students who were enrolled in education at a public university in Southeast Anatolia region on sexual myths.

Material and Methods: The population of the study consisted of nursing students attending a public university in the Southeast Anatolian region. In this study, it was aimed to reach the entire population without choosing a sample. The sample consisted of 220 students who were enrolled in the academic year of 2015-2016 agreed to participate in the study. In the form that was developed by the researchers to collect data included questions on the socio-demographic characteristics and sexual myths of the students. For descriptive statistics, chi-squared test was used to determine frequencies, percentages and differences between groups. The written permissions were obtained from the institution, and consent was provided by the students.

Results: 25% of the students thought that a woman expressing her sexual desire is an immodest behavior, 84.5% said that care shall be taken to prevent breakage of the hymen before marriage, 20.0% stated that, if there is no bleeding during the first sexual intercourse, the woman is not a virgin, 24.5% said a man is as strong as the frequency by which he has intercourse, 10.5% stated that a woman who initiates the intercourse is corrupt. While comparing the students' sexual myths based on gender, males were found to believe in sexual myths with a significantly higher rate ($p<0.05$).

Conclusion: The belief in sexual myths among students is high despite the fact that they receive education in health. It is advisable to inform young people and especially those who will provide healthcare services by offering courses on issues such as sexual health information, reproductive health and gender equality.

Keywords: Sexual myths, sexuality, students..

ÖZET

Amaç: Bu çalışmanın amacı, Güneydoğu Anadolu bölgesindeki bir devlet üniversitesinde eğitimlerine devam eden hemşirelik bölümü öğrencilerinin cinsel mitler hakkındaki düşüncelerini araştırmaktır.

Materyal ve Metot: Çalışma evreni, Güneydoğu Anadolu bölgesindeki bir devlet üniversitesine devam eden hemşirelik öğrencilerinden oluşmaktadır. Çalışmada örneklem seçimine gidilmeyerek tüm evrene ulaşılması hedeflenmiştir. 2015-2016 eğitim-öğretime devam eden ve çalışmaya katılmayı kabul eden 220 öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmacılar tarafından oluşturulan veri toplama anketi formunda öğrencilerin sosyo-demografik özellikleri ve cinsel mitlere ilişkin sorular mevcuttur. Tanımlayıcı istatistikler için, gruplar arasındaki sıklık, yüzde ve farkı belirlemek için Chi-square testi kullanıldı. Çalışma yapılacak kurumdan yazılı izinler, öğrencilerden yazılı ve sözlü alındı.

Bulgular: Öğrencilerin %25'i cinsel ilişki arzusunu belli eden kadın hafiftir; %84.5'i evlenmeden önce kızlık zarının bozulmaması için tedbirli olunması gerektiğini, %20.0'ı ilk cinsel ilişkide kan gelmezse kadının bakire olmadığını; %24.5'i erkek ne kadar sık ve üst üste sevişirse o kadar güçlü olduğunu; %10.5'i sevişmeyi başlatan kadına ahlaksız dedikleri saptandı. Öğrenci cinsiyeti cinsel mitlerle karşılaştırıldığında erkeklerin cinsel mitlere inanma oranlarının daha yüksek olduğu belirlenmiş bu istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bulundu ($p<0.05$).

Sonuç: Öğrenciler arasında cinsel mitlere olan inanç, sağlıkta alanında eğitim almalarına rağmen yüksektir. Cinsel sağlık bilgisi, üreme sağlığı ve cinsiyet eşitliği gibi kurslar verilerek gençlere ve özellikle sağlık hizmeti sağlayacak olanlara bilgi verilmesi önerilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Cinsel mitler, cinsellik, öğrenciler.

Sorumlu Yazar: Fatma Karasu

e-mail: fatmakarasu@kilis.edu.tr

INTRODUCTION

Religious rules, prejudgment, taboos, customs and traditions have affected the sexual behavior of people in the world and in Turkey. In Turkish society, sexuality, being a taboo on its own, was always an embarrassing subject to discuss, sexual desire is considered to be a sin, pre-marriage sexual relations are prohibited and taboo, and sexual function is occasionally considered to be the symbol of a man's strength (1,2). Industrialization, urbanization, educational progress and other factors in the world and in Turkey have resulted in changes in social and cultural aspects. Social norms have started to change unevenly throughout all social regions. Despite all this, sexuality is still avoided in discussions, reproductive health problems of the young generation are still being neglected due to social beliefs, attitudes and taboos, and opportunities for acquiring correct information and services are being impeded (3,4).

Lack of knowledge about sexuality among young generations is mostly due to the fact that their families consider the subject of sexuality to be "shameful and disgraceful." It is also accepted that continuation of traditional approaches is effective in this regard (5,6). A society's culture includes such norms/expectations related to complex sexual models as to what a man's and a woman's behaviors should be, how they should behave and think and how they should be active within a society. Different roles of men and women within a society gain alternative dimensions in relation to sexuality (7,8). While a boy is brought up in the society with more sexual freedom and privilege than a girl, a girl is brought up with sexuality-related pressure such as sexual taboos before marriage (virginity) in accordance with a more conservative, traditional role expectation under strict control (9,10).

Pre-marriage sexual relations, the concept of virginity, etc. are encountered mostly by the young generation as taboos and may affect their future lives in the long term. Especially young girls experience such pressure intensely, young boys are affected as well, and they satisfy their sexual desires in various ways in secrecy (11). The creators of taboos are generally the social environment and families. Despite having various levels of education, most families still have traditional approaches to sexuality, still consider sexual topics as taboo and avoid discussing them. Sexual education that should start with the family is not provided on a sufficient level, the traditions that are carried on quietly continue at schools as well, and most of the young generation do not receive adequate, sufficient and proper information about sexuality in their families and throughout their education. Young people, who are not able to receive sufficient information, may acquire incorrect information about sexuality-related topics

and may tend to develop different behaviors. Sexual knowledge and attitude closely affect the future sexual life of the young generation, as well as their lives and reproductive behaviors (12,13).

Sexual problems are considered to be some of the most unfortunate health problems. Nevertheless, it is seen that sexuality is not adequately examined by nurses and not handled in patient care. Nurses should consider the sexual health of the patient while performing nursing interventions regarding the existing and potential problems of the patient (14). In order to evaluate sexuality, nurses should have a positive attitude towards, as well as information on, this topic. Additionally, nurses should reflect the information they receive about sexuality assessment and their positive attitudes on their practices. In order to provide holistic care and counseling to the society on sexual issues, it is necessary for nurses who need to provide holistic healthcare especially among all healthcare workers to recognize themselves and realize their false beliefs. At this point, the primary goal should be obtaining objective data that enable an effective evaluation of students' sexual myths and their attitudes towards assessment of sexual health.

MATERIAL-METHOD

This is a descriptive study. The aim of this study was to investigate the views on sexual myths of Nursing Department students who continued their education at a public university in the Southeast Anatolia region. The population consisted of nursing students attending a public university in the Southeast Anatolian region. The aim of the study was to reach the entire population by not choosing a sample. There were 574 students in total at the nursing department.

The sample was composed of 220 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th-year students who were receiving education in the academic year of 2015-2016 and agreed to participate in the study (93 students did not complete the questionnaire). The survey form used to collect data during the study contained a total of 44 questions, five of which were directed to identify the social-demographic characteristics of the students and 39 of which were related to sexual myths.

According to the literature review, 39 statement used in the study were considered to be myths (15-17). The sexual myth evaluation form had three answer options for each question: "Agree", "Disagree" and "No idea".

Before the data collection process, the questionnaire was given to the students after the purpose of the study was explained to them. The students were asked to complete the questions

on the forms without filling in their credentials and return them as appropriate to their thoughts. The data collection process took approximately 15-20 minutes.

For statistical analysis, SPSS 22.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences for Windows) was used. While evaluating the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov distribution test was used to analyze the descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage), as well as testing the normal distribution of the data. Chi-squared test was used for the inter-group differences, and the significant differences were examined in the groups by the advanced analyses.

In order to carry out the research, the required written permission was obtained from the relevant university. The students were informed about the purpose of the study, and they provided both verbal and written consent.

RESULTS

Sixty-eight point five percent of the students were female, and 31.4% were male. 25.9% were at the ages of 18-19, and 69.1% were 20-23, while 20.5% were 1st year, 29.5% were 2nd year, 32.3% were 3rd year and 17.7% were 4th year students. 61.8% resided in the region, and 25.9% resided in the district, whereas 79.1% were from nuclear families, and 14.5% were from extended families.

Among the students participating in the study, 59.1% indicated that “men continuously experience sexual desire”. 11.4% indicated that “aging eliminates sexual desire”. 24.1% reported “menopause eliminates sexual desire”. 38.2% stated that “women have lesser sexual desire”. 24.1% said “men should not express their feelings”. 77.3% stated that “it is extremely important to be successful in sexuality”. 31.8% indicated that “men should be the ones to express the desire for coitus”. 52.3% stated that “men have a constant desire for coitus and are always prepared for it”. According to 25%, “a woman expressing her sexual desire is an immodest behavior”. 84.5% stated that “the hymen shall not be broken before marriage”. 55.9% indicated that “the first sexual intercourse can be very painful and dangerous for the woman”. 30.9% said “friction can break the hymen”. 20.0% stated that “lack of blood during first coitus means that the woman is not a virgin”. 7.7% said “a man has not become man if he was “unsuccessful” during his first intercourse”. 24.5% believed that “the size of the male sexual organ influences the pleasure”. 38.6% stated that “penetration of the vagina by the penis is difficult. 15.0% said “all physical intimacy should end with coitus”. 45.0% indicated that “strong men are able to perform coitus several times in a row”. 24.5% stated that “a man is as

strong as the amount and frequency of times he can perform coitus in a row". 9.5% said "if a sexual problem occurred once, it will recur again" (Table 1).

It was determined that 31.4% of the students agreed with the myth that "there are certain strict rules as to what is normal during an intercourse"; 49.1% agreed that "sex should always occur on its own accord and discussing, imagining sex would spoil it"; 26.4% agreed that "petting constitutes a sexual intercourse"; 77.3% agreed that "spouses are aware of how to please each other as long as they love one another"; 53.2% agreed that "intercourse requires hardening of sexual organs"; 10.5% agreed that "a woman initiating intercourse is corrupt"; 36.4% agreed that "sexual intercourse should be initiated and carried on by the man"; 65.9% agreed that "a good intercourse means continuous rising of sexual excitement resulting in an orgasm"; 56.4% agreed that "non-ejaculation of an aroused man could be harmful"; 65.9% agreed that "if a man's attention is distracted, premature ejaculation could be prevented"; 40.5% agreed that "the problem of premature ejaculation will not be experienced after the first ejaculation"; 70.5% agreed that "every man should know how to please a woman"; 74.5% agreed that "an intercourse is good when both parties have reached orgasm"; 70.9% agreed that "spouses having an intercourse are aware of what the other partner thinks and desires on a subconscious level"; 59.1% agreed that "masturbation during a sexual intercourse is wrong"; 22.7% agreed that "softening of the male sexual organ means loss of attraction to the partner"; 28.6% agreed that "a man/woman would not be able to refuse coitus"; 51.8% agreed that "mature women can reach orgasm during coitus", 3.2% agreed that "encounters such as kissing, touching could lead to pregnancy" (Table 1).

Twenty-two point five percent of the female students and 27.5% of the male students agreed with the myth that "menopause ends sexual desire"; 49.7% of the female students and 13.0% of the male students agreed with the myth that "women have lesser sexual desire"; 13.2% of the female students and 34.8% of the male students agreed with the myth that "lack of blood during first coitus means that the woman is not a virgin"; 6.0% of the female students and 11.6% of the male students agreed with the myth that "a man has not become man if he was "unsuccessful" during his first intercourse"; 9.3% of the female students and 27.5% of the male students agreed with the myth that "all physical intimacy should end with coitus"; 30.5% of the female students and 76.8% of the male students agreed with the myth that "strong men are able to perform coitus several times in a row"; 15.9% of the female students and 43.5% of the male students agreed with the myth that "a man is as strong as the amount and frequency of times he can perform coitus in a row"; 22.5% of the female students and 50.7% of the male students agreed with the myth that "there are certain strict rules as to what is normal during an

intercourse”; 46.4% of the female students and 68.1% of the male students agreed with the myth that “intercourse requires hardening of sexual organs”, and 29.8% of the female students and 63.8% of the male students agreed with the myth that “the problem of premature ejaculation will not be experienced after the first ejaculation” (Table 2).

Sixty-nine point five percent of the female students and 85.5% of the male students agreed with the myth that “an intercourse is good when both parties have reached orgasm”; 55.0% of the female students and 68.1% of the male students agreed with the myth that “masturbation during a sexual intercourse is wrong”; 21.9% of the female students and 43.5% of the male students agreed with the myth that “a man/woman would not be able to refuse coitus”, 44.4% of the female students and 68.1% of the male students agreed with the myth that “mature women can reach orgasm during coitus”. The differences in the opinions of the students on the myths described above were found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) (Table 2).

	Agree		Disagree		No idea	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Thoughts on the Sexual Desire						
Men continuously experience sexual desire	130	59.1	88	40.0	2	0.9
Aging eliminates sexual desire.	25	11.4	193	87.7	2	0.9
Menopause eliminates sexual desire.	53	24.1	160	72.7	7	3.2
Women have lesser sexual desire.	84	38.2	132	60.0	4	1.8
Men should not express their feelings.	53	24.1	164	74.5	3	1.4
It is extremely important to be successful in sexuality.	170	77.3	45	20.5	5	2.3
Men should be the ones to express the desire for coitus.	70	31.8	144	65.5	6	2.7
Men have a constant desire for coitus and are always prepared for it.	115	52.3	94	42.7	11	5.0
A woman expressing her sexual desire is an immodest behavior.	55	25.0	161	73.2	4	1.8
The hymen shall not be broken before marriage.	186	84.5	33	15.0	1	0.5
The first sexual intercourse can be very painful and dangerous for the woman.	128	55.9	89	40.5	8	3.6
Friction can break the hymen.	68	30.9	145	65.9	7	3.2
Lack of blood during first coitus means that the woman is not a virgin.	44	20.0	172	78.2	4	1.8
A man has not become man if he was “unsuccessful” during his first intercourse.	17	7.7	198	90.0	5	2.3
A man is capable of giving pleasure in proportion to the size of his sexual organ.	54	24.5	153	69.5	13	5.9
Penetration of the vagina by the penis is difficult.	85	38.6	118	53.6	17	7.7
Thoughts on Sexual Functions						
All physical intimacy should end with coitus.	33	15.0	178	80.9	9	4.1
Strong men are able to perform coitus several times in a row.	99	45.0	111	50.5	10	4.5
A man is as strong as the amount and frequency of times he can perform coitus in a row.	54	24.5	154	70.0	12	5.5
If a sexual problem occurred once, it will recur again.	21	9.5	184	83.6	15	6.8
Thoughts Related to Behavior During Sexual Intercourse						
There are certain strict rules as to what is normal during an intercourse.	69	31.4	135	61.4	16	7.3
Sex should always occur on its own accord and discussing, imagining sex would spoil it.	108	49.1	95	43.2	17	7.7
Petting constitutes a sexual intercourse.	58	26.4	148	67.3	14	6.4
Spouses are aware of how to please each other as long as they love one another.	170	77.3	36	16.4	14	6.4
Intercourse requires hardening of sexual organs.	117	53.2	88	40.0	15	6.8
A woman initiating intercourse is corrupt.	23	10.5	182	82.7	15	6.8
Sexual intercourse should be initiated and carried on by the man.	80	36.4	125	56.8	15	6.8
A good intercourse means continuous rising of sexual excitement resulting in an orgasm	145	65.9	62	28.2	13	5.9
Non-ejaculation of an aroused man could be harmful.	124	56.4	76	34.5	20	9.1
If a man’s attention is distracted, premature ejaculation could be prevented.	145	65.9	57	25.9	18	8.2
The problem of premature ejaculation will not be experienced after the first ejaculation.	89	40.5	107	48.6	24	10.9
Every man should know how to please a woman.	155	70.5	48	21.8	17	7.7
An intercourse is good when both parties have reached orgasm.	164	74.5	40	18.2	16	7.3
Spouses having an intercourse are aware of what the other partner thinks and desires on a subconscious level.	156	70.9	47	21.4	17	7.7
Masturbation during a sexual intercourse is wrong.	130	59.1	71	32.3	19	8.6
Softening of the male sexual organ means loss of attraction to the partner.	50	22.7	150	68.2	20	9.1
A man or a woman would not be able to refuse coitus.	63	28.6	139	63.2	18	8.2
Mature women can reach orgasm during coitus.	114	51.8	85	38.6	21	9.5
Encounters such as kissing, touching could lead to pregnancy.	7	3.2	208	94.5	5	2.3

Table1: Views of students on sexual myths (n=200)

Table 2: Distribution of student gender in terms of views on sexual myths

	Female		Male		Test Value
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Menopause eliminates sexual desire.					
Agree	34	22.5	19	27.5	x ² = 11.211 p=0.004
Disagree and No idea	127	77.5	50	72.5	
Women have lesser sexual desire.					
Agree	75	49.7	9	13.0	x ² = 32.894 p=0.000
Disagree and No idea	76	50.3	60	87.0	
Lack of blood during first coitus means that the woman is not a virgin.					
Agree	20	13.2	24	34.8	x ² = 18.376 p=0.000
Disagree and No idea	131	86.8	45	65.2	
A man has not become man if he was “unsuccessful” during his first intercourse.					
Agree	9	6.0	8	11.6	x ² = 8.050 p=0.018
Disagree and No idea	143	94.1	61	88.4	
All physical intimacy should end with coitus.					
Agree	14	9.3	19	27.5	x ² = 12.481 p=0.002
Disagree and No idea	130	86.1	48	69.6	
No idea	7	4.6	2	2.9	
Strong men are able to perform coitus several times in a row.					
Agree	46	30.5	53	76.8	x ² = 41.337 p=0.000
Disagree and No idea	105	69.5	16	23.2	
A man is as strong as the amount and frequency of times he can perform coitus in a row.					
Agree	24	15.9	30	43.5	x ² = 19.737 p=0.000
Disagree	117	77.5	37	53.6	
No idea	10	6.6	2	2.9	
There are certain strict rules as to what is normal during an intercourse.					
Agree	34	22.5	35	50.7	x ² = 18.139 p=0.000
Disagree	106	70.2	29	42.0	
No idea	11	7.3	5	7.2	
Intercourse requires hardening of sexual organs.					
Agree	70	46.4	47	68.1	x ² = 9.020 p=0.011
Disagree	69	45.7	19	27.5	
No idea	12	7.9	3	4.3	
The problem of premature ejaculation will not be experienced after the first ejaculation.					
Agree	45	29.8	44	63.8	x ² = 23.161 p=0.000
Disagree	88	58.3	19	27.5	
No idea	18	11.9	6	8.7	
An intercourse is good when both parties have reached orgasm.					
Agree	105	69.5	59	85.5	x ² = 6.374 p=0.041
Disagree	33	21.9	7	10.1	
No idea	13	8.6	3	4.3	
Masturbation during a sexual intercourse is wrong.					
Agree	83	55.0	47	68.1	x ² =7.504 p=0.023
Disagree	50	33.1	21	3.4	
No idea	18	11.9	1	1.4	
A man or a woman would not be able to refuse coitus.					
Agree	33	21.9	30	43.5	x ² = 11.467 p=0.003
Disagree	103	68.2	36	52.2	
No idea	15	9.9	3	4.3	
Mature women can reach orgasm during coitus.					
Agree	67	44.4	47	68.1	X ² = 10.731 p=0.005
Disagree	67	44.4	18	26.1	
No idea	17	11.2	4	5.8	
Total	151	100.0	69	100.0	

*x²= chi-squared, p< 0.05

Table 3: Distribution of student age in terms of views on sexual myths

	17-19 age group		20-23 age group		24-27 age group		Test Value
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Penetration of the vagina by the penis is difficult.							
Agree	22	38.6	62	40.8	1	9.1	x ² =15.333 p=0.004
Disagree	25	43.9	84	55.3	9	81.8	
No idea	10	17.5	6	3.9	1	9.1	
Softening of the male sexual organ means loss of attraction to the partner.							
Agree	14	24.6	32	21.1	4	36.4	x ² =12.153 p=0.016
Disagree	32	56.1	111	73.0	7	63.6	
No idea	11	19.3	9	5.9			
Encounters such as kissing, touching could lead to pregnancy.							
Agree	4	7.0	3	2.0			x ² =11.930 p=0.018
Disagree and No idea	53	95.0	149	98.1	11	100.0	
Total	57	100.0	152	100.0			

*x²= ki-kare, p< 0.05

Three-eight point six percent of the 17-19-year-old age group and 40.8% of the 20-23-year-old age group agreed, while 81.8% of the 24-27-year-old age group disagreed with the myth that “penetration of the vagina by the penis is difficult”; 24.6% of the 17-19-year-old age group and 21.1% of the 20-23-year-old age group agreed, while 63.6% of the 24-27-year-old age group disagreed with the myth that “softening of the male sexual organ means loss of attraction to the partner”, and 7.0% of the 17-19-year-old age group and 2.0% of the 20-23-year-old age group agreed, while 100.0% of the 24-27-year-old age group disagreed with the myth that “encounters such as kissing, touching could lead to pregnancy”. These differences were statistically significant (p<0.05) (Table 3).

DISCUSSION

It was determined that over a third of the students believed in the myth that women have a lesser sexual desire. According to the research performed by Ejder et al. with female students, it was determined that 27.2% believed that women have a lesser sexual desire (17). This is one of the most frequent incorrect beliefs taught to girls in Turkish culture, which constitutes that sexuality for a woman is not a source of pleasure but only an action to be performed as a duty. A woman brought up in such manner is ashamed of her own sexuality and impedes herself from having pleasure during coitus.

It was determined that approximately one third of students believe in the myth that sexual desire shall be expressed by men. According to the research performed by Torun et al. with males, 48.5% indicated their beliefs in the myth that a sexual intercourse should be initiated by men (15). In both studies, the rates were high. This myth, which suggests a strict and unchangeable role and expresses that the responsibility of initiating a sexual intercourse

lies with the man, encourages women to continue with their traditionally passive roles. Moreover, a man, who agrees with such a myth, would feel angry with his partner who initiates the intercourse and feel inadequate. However, according to studies, a sexual action initiated by a woman is more exciting for both genders (18).

One fourth of the students indicated their agreement with the myth that a woman expressing her sexual desire is an immodest behavior. According to the research performed by Torun et al. with males, 34.1% indicated a woman expressing her sexual desire is an immodest behavior (15). Ejder et al., in their study with female students, reported that 9.3% agreed with this myth (17). According to the research conducted by the Sexual Education Treatment and Research Association throughout Turkey, 8% agreed completely and 13% agreed partially with the myth that a woman expressing her sexual desire is an immodest behavior (5). The rate of sexual myths in these studies was high. This belief impedes the sexual life of women and causes males to be judgmental towards their partners. Therefore, most men are disturbed by their spouses openly expressing their sexual interest and desire.

Over three fourths of the students participating in our study agreed with the myth that care shall be taken not to break the hymen before marriage, one third agreed that friction may result in breakage of the hymen, and one fifth agreed that lack of blood during first intercourse means that the woman is not a virgin. According to the research performed by Kisa et al. with couples in preparation for marriage, 67.3% of females and 64.7% of males agreed with the myth that “breakage of the hymen is an indicator of a woman’s virginity” (19). Tokuc et al. performed a study with males and reported that 69.2% indicated that it is important for a woman to be a virgin when marrying, while 66.9% agreed that having sexual relations before marriage is wrong (20). As reported by Civil et al., 60.5% of students indicated that virginity is important, and 32.2% indicated negative attitudes towards pre-marital sex. During this modern age, when virginity is disregarded in Western countries, a belief that shows a woman as not virgin may cause tragic events from time to time due to the traditional, conservative and patriarchal society in the East, and many such examples can still be found.

Approximately half of the students agreed with the myths that strong men are able to perform coitus several times in a row, one fourth of the students agreed that a man is as strong as the frequency he is able to perform coitus in a row. According to Ejder et al., among female students, 30.2% were found to agree that strong men are able to perform coitus several times in a row without stopping (17). This wrong belief reduces sexual life and relationships to the number of intercourses and causes the rise of discriminating approaches that perceive women only as sexual objects.

Over one fourth of the students agreed with the myth that a man/woman would not be able to refuse coitus. According to the research performed by Torun et al. with males, 18.0% were found to agree that a man/woman would not be able to refuse coitus (15). In a study carried out by Ejder et al. with female students, 22.4% were found to agree that a man/woman would not be able to refuse coitus (17). The wrong belief that refusing to have intercourse means rejecting the partner causes many men and women to have intercourse despite their unwillingness to only avoid hurting their sexual identities and capabilities. However, men, as well as women, have the right to refuse sexual intercourse.

Students were found to agree with the myth that actions such as kissing, touching could lead to pregnancy. Ejder et al.'s study with female students revealed that 4.1% agreed that actions such as kissing, touching could lead to pregnancy (17). The reason for the presence of this belief is the presence of beliefs that various sexual intimacies could lead to pregnancy without sexual intercourse. The purpose of such beliefs is to "protect" the young generation from sexual intimacy before marriage and create a belief that all kinds of sexual intimacy are dangerous. Thus, attempts are made to conserve a woman's virginity until marriage. Multiple sexual myths were formed due to such causes as the cultural structure and social pressure, and these myths are able to cause serious problems.

According to our study, the rate of believing in sexual myths was higher among males. A section related to evaluation of sexual myths in the sexual health and reproductive health research conducted by the Sexual Education Treatment and Research Association reported that males have a higher rate of belief in sexual myths (22). According to the research performed by Torun et al. with males, 45% of were found to believe in sexual myths (15). These studies show parallel properties with our study. Turkish society is seen to still have a traditional, conservative and patriarchal structure. However, correct knowledge of individuals regarding the subject of sexuality allows them to correctly educate their own children on this topic.

According to the study, the rate of belief in sexual myths decreased as the age of the participants increased. Sohbet et al. stated that students' sexual education levels rise as their ages increase (23). Studies performed by Adinew et al. showed that sexual knowledge increases as an individual's age increases (24). According to the public opinion research conducted by the Sexual Education, Treatment and Research Association, while 57.0% of females describe themselves in the subject of sexuality as "I am not very informed or not informed at all", 34.0% of males indicated not having knowledge in the field of sexuality (25). Negative attitudes and views, judgmental approaches and lack of education and experience in the subject of sexuality decrease as the age advances, and sexual knowledge increases.

CONCLUSION

The rate of belief in sexual myths among the students, despite the fact that they were receiving education in the field of healthcare, was high, the male students believed in sexual myths at a higher rate than the female students, and as the students' age increased, their rates of believing in sexual myths decreased.

It is certain that having a correct source for obtaining information about sexuality constitutes a key factor for experiencing a healthy sexual life. Sexual education should be included in formal education. Beliefs of adult individuals in sexual myths will decrease proportionally to their possession of correct knowledge about sexuality.

An individual's possession of correct knowledge about sexuality would not only allow them to provide proper information for their children, but it will also deem them effective in correcting the wrong beliefs of their acquaintances. We believe that our research would be a contribution to the literature in a subject which is difficult to research and collect data in.

REFERENCES

1. Erman, G. (2002) Legal Approach to the Sexual Abuse Towards Women in Comparison to Violence Against, Women, Istanbul Bar Association Women Rights Application Center, Istanbul, 15-23.
2. Aygün, D., Açıl, H., Yaman, Ö., Çelik, Y.A. (2017). Üniversitede okuyan kadın öğrencilerin cinsel mitler ile ilgili görüşleri, *Androloji Bülteni*, 19(2), 44-49.
3. Brown, A.D., Jejeebhoy, S.J., Shah, I., Youth, K.M. (2001). Sexual relations among young people in developing countries; Evidence From WHO Case Studies Report. Geneva: World Health Organization.
4. Karabulutlu, Ö, ve Yılmaz, D. (2018). Üniversite öğrencilerinde cinsiyete göre cinsel mitler, *STED*, 27(3), 155-164.
5. Sexual Education, Treatment and Research Association: "Sexual Life and Problems" File, 1st Informative File Press Bulletin, June 2006 / Istanbul. <https://docplayer.biz.tr/11208399-Cinsel-yasam-ve-sorunlari-dosyasi.html>
6. Evcili, F, & Demirel, G. (2018). Sexual myths of midwifery and nursing students and their attitude regarding the assessment of sexual health, *Journal of Human Sciences*, 15(4), 2280-2288.
7. Civil, B, ve Yıldız, H. (2010). Sexual experiences of male students and their views of sexual taboos, *Ninth September University Nursing College Magazine*, 3(2), 58-64.

8. Duyan, V. (2004). Sexual Attitude Scale, Hacettepe University Social Services College, ss: 2-12, Ankara: ABC Publications.
9. Inanc, N. Social Gender, 3rd International congress on reproductive health and family planning (Congress Book), 123-125, Ankara, 20–23 April 2003.
10. Özsoy, S, ve Bulut S. (2017). Cinsel sağlık bilgisi dersinin hemşirelik öğrencilerinin cinsel mitleri üzerine etkisi, *KASHED*, 3(2), 54-67.
11. Akin, A, & Ozvaris, B.S. (2003). The Project on factors affecting the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents, Hacettepe University Women Problems Research and Application Center, Ankara.
12. Giray, H, & Kilic B. (2004). Single women and reproductive health. *STED*, 13(8), 286-289.
13. Kukulu, K., Gursoy, E., Sozer, G.A. (2009). Turkish University Students' Beliefs in Sexual Myths, *Sex Disabil*, 27, 49–59.
14. Algier, L, & Kav, S. (2008). Nurses' approach to sexuality-related issues in patients receiving cancer treatments, *Turk J Cancer*, 38(3), 135-141.
15. Torun, F., Torun, S.D., Ozaydin, A.N. (2011). Rate of belief in sexual myths among men and factors affecting belief in myths, *Thinking Psychiatry and Neurologic Sciences Magazine*, 24, 24-31.
16. Kayır, A. (2001). Cinsellik kavramı ve cinsel mitler: İçinde Yetkin N, İncesu C (editörler). Cinsel işlev bozuklukları monograf serisi. İstanbul: Roche Müstehzarları Sanayi A.Ş. 34-39.
17. Ejder, A.S., Balci, A.R., Arslan, S. (2013). Examining Sexual Myths of Students, *Anadolu Nursing and Health Sciences Magazine*, 16(2), 96-102.
18. Sexual Education, Treatment and Research Association: “Male Sexuality” File, 6th Informative File Press Bulletin, June 2006 / İstanbul. <https://docplayer.biz.tr/3846174-Cinsel-egitim-tedavi-ve-arastirma-derneği-bilgilendirme-dosyasi-6-erkek-cinselligi-cinsel-egitim-tedavi-ve-arastirma-derneği.html>
19. Kısa, S., Zeyneloğlu, S., Yılmaz, D., Verim, E. (2013). Evlilik hazırlığı yapan çiftlerin cinsellikle ilgili bilgi ve inanışları, *TAF Prev Med Bull*, 12(3), 297-306.
20. Tokuç, B., Berberoglua, U., Saracoglub, G.V., Celikkalp, U. (2011). Health college students on the matters of extramarital sex, voluntary abortion and use of contraceptives, *Turkish Public Health Magazine*, 9(3), 166-173.
21. Civil, B, & Yildiz, H. (2010). Sexual experiences of male students and their views of sexual taboos, *DEUHYO ED*, 3(2), 58-64.
22. Sexual Education, Treatment and Research Association: “Sexual Health and Reproductive Health Research”, Ankara, 2007. <http://www.nd.org.tr/images/other/245.pdf>

23. Sohbet, R, & Gecici F. (2014). Examining the Level of Knowledge on Sexuality and Reproductive Health of Students of Gaziantep University, *Sexuality and Disability*, 32(1), 75-84.
24. Adinew, Y.M., Gebeyehu, W.A., Mengesha, Z.B. (2013). Knowledge Of Reproductive And Sexual Rights Among University Students In Ethiopia: Institution-Based Cross-Sectional, *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 13(12), 1-13.
25. Sexual Education, Treatment and Research Association: “Female Sexuality” File, 5th Informative File Press Bulletin, 27 February 2007/ Istanbul.
<https://docplayer.biz.tr/6972020-Kadin-cinselligi-dosyasi.html>