

Sexual Behavior in Turkish 'Normal' Couples

Cennet Şafak Öztürk¹, Haluk Arkar²

¹Assist. Professor, Adnan Menderes University
Faculty of Arts and Sciences Department of
Psychology, Aydın, Turkey

²Professor, Ege University Faculty of Arts
Department of Psychology, Izmir, Turkey

Corresponding Author: Cennet Şafak Öztürk, Adnan Menderes University Faculty of Arts and Sciences Department of Psychology, Block C 09100 Merkez/Aydın-Turkey

Phone: +90 256 212 84 98

Mobile Phone: +90 532 776 77 37

Fax: +90 256 213 53 79

E-mail: cennet.ozturk@adu.edu.tr

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of this study is to obtain descriptive data as concerns sexual behavior of normal married couples.

Method: The sampling of the study consists of 100 married couples at 18-55 age. Sociodemographics and Sexual History Form (SHF) were used in collecting the data.

Results: The age of first sexual intercourse was seen to be 18-24 age group for both gender. It was found that 42% of women stated their frequency of sexual intercourse as twice a week and 38% of men stated as 3 or 4 times a week. It was observed that 46% of women said "my husband usually initiates the sexual intercourse" and 34% of men said "my wife and I initiate the sexual intercourse". 56% of women said that they regarded masturbation as usual, whereas 44% of them said that they regarded it as negative; on the other hand, 81% of men stated that they regarded masturbation as usual. 85% of women and 45% of men stated that they never masturbated. It was found out that 32% of women and 30% of men replied that the time for foreplaying is between 7-10 minutes. 32% of women were observed to show negative-disgusting reactions to erotic or pornographic materials.

Conclusion: It was observed that the frequency of masturbating is low, the duration of foreplay is short, and women have a more negative attitude towards masturbation and pornographic materials.

Keywords: Sexuality, sexual behavior, marriage, sexual function

ÖZET

Türk 'Normal' Çiftlerde Cinsel Davranışlar

Amaç: Bu araştırmanın amacı evli çiftlerin cinsel davranışları hakkında tanımlayıcı veriler elde etmektir.

Yöntem: Çalışmanın örneklemini 18-55 yaş arasında 100 evli çift oluşturmuştur. Verilerin toplanmasında Sosyodemografik Form ve Cinsel Öykü Formu (CÖF) kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular: Her iki cinsiyet içinde ilk cinsel birleşme yaşının 18-24 yaş dilimi içerisinde olduğu görülmüştür. Cinsel ilişki sıklıklarını kadınların %42'sinin haftada 2 kez, erkeklerin ise %38'inin haftada 3 ya da 4 kez olarak belirttikleri bulunmuştur. Kadınların %46'sının "genellikle cinsel ilişkiyi eşim başlatır", erkeklerin ise %34'ünün "eşim ve ben başlatırız" dedikleri görülmüştür. Kadınların %56'sı masturbasyonu olağan karşıladığını derken %44'ü ise olumsuz düşünürüm demiş erkeklerin ise %81'i masturbasyonu olağan karşıladığını ifade etmiştir. Kadınların %85'i ve erkeklerin %45'i hiçbir zaman masturbasyon yapmadığını ifade etmiştir. Kadınların %32'si ve erkeklerin %30'unun ön sevişmeye ayrılan zaman için 7-10 dakika arasındadır yanıtını verdikleri saptanmıştır. Erotik ya da pornografik materyale karşı kadınların %32'sinin olumsuz-tiksinme şeklinde tepki verdiği görülmüştür.

Sonuç: Çalışmamızda masturbasyon yapma sıklığının düşük, ön sevişme süresinin kısa olduğu, kadınların masturbasyon ve pornografik materyale karşı olumsuz bir tutum içerisinde oldukları görüldü.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Cinsellik, cinsel davranış, evlilik, cinsel işlev

INTRODUCTION

Sexuality is an important aspect of physical and emotional health and is also milestone of close relations. Sexuality, which originates its real importance from the need for species to propogate and reproduce, is not only a biological function for the continuation of generations but also a main function that is of use to communication of feelings among people and that gives pleasure.¹ Sexuality, an inseparable part of the personality of every person covers sex, sexual identity and role, sexual tendency, erotism, pleasure, intimacy, and reproduction in its definition.²

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the sample

	N	%
Gender		
Female	100	50.0
Male	100	50.0
Age		
18-28	28	14.0
29-39	113	56.5
40-55	59	29.5
Education		
Primary Education	87	43.5
High School	66	33.0
University	47	23.5
Income Level		
Lower	34	17.0
Middle	133	66.5
Good	30	15.0
Very Good	3	1.5
Settlement Place		
Village	19	9.5
Town	19	9.5
City	49	24.5
Metropolitan	113	56.5
Occupational Statusional Statusn		
Unemployed	4	2.0
Officer	53	26.5
Worker	82	41.0
Housewife	37	18.5
Retired	2	1.0
Self-Employment	22	11.0

In recent years, the interest in drugs over sexuality in general and in sexual therapies in particular has been seen to increase. It is seen that the focus on sexuality has changed since the nineteenth century and it is on understanding the normal sexual function in this century.³ The first comprehensive and systematical studies to be performed in this sense are the classic studies conducted by Kinsey et al.^{4,5} and Masters and Johnson.⁶ It is observed that the studies performed afterwards are the studies focusing either on sexuality and marriage^{7,8} or on the prevalence of sexual dysfunction in

whole society,⁹ the frequency of sexual intercourse, foreplay, and masturbation.^{10,11} The recent studies of sexuality in Turkey are seen to be the ones focusing on prevalence and marriage and sexual problems.^{12,13}

The most ignored issue in literature is sexuality in marriage¹⁴ and this insufficiency makes it a condition to study this title. The high proportion of sexual dysfunction in society and in marriages also provide an additional rationale for sexual intercourse to be studied in married couples. In many studies performed about the sexual tendency of the woman and her husband, it is seen that the opinion of only one party is taken¹⁵ or separate opinions are taken for men and women.^{16,17} Whereas, sexuality is a dual process and it is important to take the opinions of both sides in this process. For these reasons, the objective of this study is to obtain descriptive data about sexual behavior of normal married couples.

METHODS

Participants

The sample of the study consisted of married couples at the age of 18-55, who were living in houses located in the streets incidentally chosen by going to various districts of Izmir such as Konak, Karabağlar, Gaziemir, Karşıyaka, Buca, Bornova and Bergama, and who did not have any sexual problem and who volunteered to participate in the study. Rural regions were mostly taken from Bergama. Scales were given to a total of 350 married couples and 140 married couples returned the scales. 40 married couples were left out of the study because of insufficient data or for not meeting the study standards. Finally, 100 married couples were included in the study. Being illiterate and having any physical, psychological or psychiatric disorders are the criteria of exclusion. The average age of women is 33.63±5.89, while the average age of men is 37.76±6.79. 43.5% of the sample is primary school graduate and 33% is high school graduate. 41% of the married couples is composed of those having been married for 13 or more years, while 91% of them said that this is their first marriage. The demographic features of the sample and data about marriage condition are given in Table 1 and Table 2.

Measures

Sociodemographics. There are questions about marital status and also sexual development features in the form prepared to get information about demographic features of participants. Concerning the sexual development features of the participants, two questions were asked for them to reply separately, but other questions were replied in common. Besides, two questions were asked to determine whether the participants have ever applied to psychologists or psychiatrists or not, and whether they have chronic/ongoing medical diseases or not.

Sexual History Form (SHF). SHF is a form assessing the frequency of sexual activity; sexual function relating to desire, arousal, orgasm, and pain; and overall sexual satisfaction for men and women.^{8,18} This form is of 28 items and three questions are replied only by women and one question is replied only by men but other questions are

Table 2. Marriage condition of the sample

	N	%
Year of Marriage		
0-11 month	8	4.0
1-3 years	28	14.0
4-6 years	29	14.5
7-9 years	23	11.5
10-12 years	30	15.0
13 years and over	82	41.0
Number of Marriages		
First	182	91.0
Second	15	7.5
Third +	3	1.5
Way of Getting Married		
Companionate Marriage	140	70.0
Arranged Marriage	55	27.5
Other	5	2.5
Kinship With The Partner		
Yes	22	11.0
No	178	89.0
Do You Have Children?		
Yes	146	73.0
No	54	27.0
Number of Children		
1	59	29.5
2	68	34.0
3	19	9.5

replied by both women and men commonly. SHF was translated into Turkish by the parallel-blind method by the researchers and checked by two other bilingual professionals.

Procedure

Before starting the data collection, ethical approval of the study was received from the Clinical Studies Ethical Committee of Ege University. The data were collected according to the accessibility and convenience principle. For this, various districts of Izmir were visited, and incidentally-chosen streets were entered. The people living in the houses in these streets were reached and informed about the study. Participants who accepted to take part in the study were given the scales in large envelopes; the participants were informed about privacy policy; they were told that attendance was based on voluntariness and they were made to fill in the informed volunteer approval forms. Participants were asked to fill in the scales separately and to submit to the researcher after closing the envelopes. Participants filled in the scales at home. Approximately 10 days after, the researcher went to the participants' homes and received the envelopes.

Statistical Analysis

The data were assessed with SPSS 16 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Inc.; Chicago, IL, ABD) package. For the sexual behavior of married couples, the frequencies and percentages of SHF were evaluated.

RESULTS

Sexual development features

The participants were observed to give, with the highest ratio, the statement that the source they got the first sexual information was their friends (women 48%, men 63%). 73% of women and 53% of men replied that they experienced their first sexual intercourse at 18-24 age group. It was observed that a great majority of women (92%) had their first intercourse with their husbands, but men had their first intercourse in brothel at most (38%). The data about the sexual development features of the sample are given in Table 3.

Sexual behavior

For the sexual behavior of married couples, the frequencies and percentages of SHF were evaluated. The obtained data are given in Table 4.

The frequency of sexual intercourse

It was found that 42% of women stated their frequency of sexual intercourse as twice a week and 38% of men stated as 3 or 4 times a week.

Initiating sexual intercourse

It was observed that 46% of women said "my husband usually initiates the sexual intercourse" and 34% of men said "my wife and I initiate the sexual intercourse".

Masturbation

56% of women said that they regarded masturbation as usual, whereas 44% of them said that they regarded it as negative; on the other hand, 81% of men stated that they regarded masturbation as usual. About the frequency of masturbation, 85% of women and 45% of men stated that they never masturbated.

Foreplaying

It was found out that 32% of women and 30% of men replied that the time for foreplaying is between 7-10 minutes.

Length of time intercourse lasts

To the question of the duration of sexual intercourse from the entry of penis to ejaculation of men, 25% of women said it to be 7-10 minutes, 25% of men to be 4-7 minutes.

Satisfaction with sexual relationship

It was found out that 48% of women and 60% of men replied that

they were "extremely satisfied" with sexual relationship, and 56% of women and 53% of men replied that the "sexual relationship satisfied their partners excessively".

Reaction to erotic or pornographic material

45% of women and 52% of men were seen to get partly aroused with erotic or pornographic material, while 32% of women were seen to react in a negative-disgust way.

Table 3. The sexual development features of the sample

	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
The Age of First Menstruation (years)				
9-11	9	9.0		
12-14	75	75.0		
15-18	16	16.0		
The Age of First Night Ejaculation (years)				
9-12			14	14.0
13-16			69	69.0
17-19			17	17.0
The Age From Whom He / She Get First Sexual Information (years)				
6-11	4	4.0	8	8.0
12-17	71	71.0	73	73.0
18-23	24	24.0	18	18.0
24-35	1	1.0	1	1.0
The Source From Whom He / She Get The First Sexual Information				
Family	19	19.0	3	3.0
Friends	48	48.0	63	63.0
Media (newspaper, magazine etc.)	14	14.0	26	26.0
Other	19	19.0	8	8.0
The Age of First Intercourse (years)				
10-17	8	8.0	29	29.0
18-24	73	73.0	53	53.0
25-31	15	15.0	16	16.0
32-37	4	4.0	2	2.0
The Person With Whom He / She Had The First Sexual Intercourse				
With My Spouse	92	92.0	23	23.0
With My Date	5	5.0	23	23.0
With My Fiance	2	2.0	2	2.0
Brothel	-	-	38	38.0
Other	1	1.0	14	14.0
Way of Statement About The First Sexual Intercourse				
I had sex willingly	90	90.0	94	94.0
I had sex on my partners wish	7	7.0	5	5.0
I had sex unwillingly	3	3.0	1	1.0
The Age of First Masturbation (years)				
10-15	11	11.0	63	63.0
16-21	12	12.0	25	25.0
22-30	2	2.0	0	0.0
Attitude Towards Masturbation				
Usual, I regard it natural	56	56.0	81	81.0
I thing negatively	44	44.0	19	19.0
Being Ashamed of Talking About Sexual Issues				
Yes	42	42.0	35	35.0
No	58	58.0	65	65.0
The Person to Whom He/ She Talk Sexual Issues				
With My Girl Friends	54	54.0	6	6.0
With My Male Friends	1	1.0	48	48.0
With My Mother	6	6.0	0	0.0
With My Sibling (Sister / Brother)	6	6.0	2	2.0
With My Spouse	23	23.0	29	29.0
Other	10	10.0	15	15.0

Arousal

41% of women and 76% of men were found to give the reply of “nearly always” to the question of feeling sexually aroused while having sexual intercourse with the partner.

Achieving orgasm with sexual intercourse

39% of women and 88% of men gave the reply that they achieved orgasm through sexual intercourse “nearly always”.

Others

The findings about the other questions replied by women and men commonly and those replied only by women and men are given in Table 4.

Table 4. The frequencies and percentages of Sexual History Form

	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
How frequently do you and your partner have sexual intercourse or activity?				
More than once a day	0	0.0	3	3.0
Once a day	6	6.0	6	6.0
3 or 4 times a week	30	30.0	38	38.0
Twice a week	42	42.0	33	33.0
Once a week	13	13.0	12	12.0
Once every 2 weeks	5	5.0	5	5.0
Once a month	3	3.0	2	2.0
Less than once a month	1	1.0	1	1.0
Not at all	0	0.0	0	0.0
How frequently would you like to have sexual intercourse or activity?				
More than once a day	0	0.0	7	7.0
Once a day	4	4.0	18	18.0
3 or 4 times a week	34	34.0	48	48.0
Twice a week	39	39.0	19	19.0
Once a week	17	17.0	6	6.0
Once every 2 weeks	2	2.0	2	2.0
Once a month	2	2.0	0	0.0
Less than once a month	1	1.0	0	0.0
Not at all	1	1.0	0	0.0
Who usually initiates sexual intercourse or other sexual activities?				
I always do	1	1.0	27	27.0
I usually do	9	9.0	31	31.0
My partner and I initiate equally	39	39.0	34	34.0
My partner usually does	46	46.0	7	7.0
My partner always does	5	5.0	1	1.0
Who would you like to have initiate sexual intercourse or activity?				
Myself, always	2	2.0	12	12.0
Myself, usually	2	2.0	9	9.0
My partner and I equally often	30	30.0	52	52.0
My partner, usually	54	54.0	23	23.0
My partner, always	12	12.0	4	4.0
How often do you masturbate?				
More than once a day	0	0.0	0	0.0
Once a day	0	0.0	2	2.0
3 or 4 times a week	0	0.0	9	9.0
Twice a week	2	2.0	4	4.0
Once a week	2	2.0	11	11.0
Once every 2 weeks	1	1.0	3	3.0
Once a month	5	5.0	10	10.0
Less than once a month	5	5.0	16	16.0
Not at all	85	85.0	45	45.0

Table 4. The frequencies and percentages of Sexual History Form (continued)

	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
How frequently do you feel sexual desire? This feeling may include wanting to have sex, planning to have sex, feeling frustrated due to a lack of sex, etc.				
More than once a day	0	0.0	13	13.0
Once a day	5	5.0	26	26.0
3 or 4 times a week	28	28.0	43	43.0
Twice a week	32	32.0	12	12.0
Once a week	18	18.0	4	4.0
Once every 2 weeks	8	8.0	1	1.0
Once a month	4	4.0	0	0.0
Less than once a month	2	2.0	0	0.0
Not at all	3	3.0	1	1.0
How many years have you and your partner been having sexual intercourse?				
Less than 6 months	1	1.0	1	1.0
Less than 1 years	3	3.0	3	3.0
1 to 3 years	12	12.0	12	12.0
4 to 6 years	17	17.0	19	19.0
7 to 10 years	12	12.0	10	10.0
More than 10 years	55	55.0	55	55.0
How long do you and your partner usually engage in sexual foreplay (kissing, petting, etc) before having intercourse?				
Less than 1 minute	1	1.0	1	1.0
1 to 3 minutes	6	6.0	11	11.0
4 to 6 minutes	27	27.0	22	22.0
7 to 10 minutes	32	32.0	30	30.0
11 to 15 minutes	24	24.0	18	18.0
16 to 30 minutes	9	9.0	16	16.0
30 minutes to 1 hour	1	1.0	2	2.0
How long does intercourse usually last, from entry the penis until the male reaches orgasm (climax)?				
Less than 1 minute	1	1.0	0	0.0
1 to 2 minutes	5	5.0	3	3.0
2 to 4 minutes	12	12.0	12	12.0
4 to 7 minutes	18	18.0	25	25.0
7 to 10 minutes	25	25.0	17	17.0
11 to 15 minutes	10	10.0	18	18.0
15 to 20 minutes	16	16.0	19	19.0
20 to 30 minutes	10	10.0	3	3.0
More than 30 minutes	3	3.0	3	3.0
Does the male ever reach orgasm while he is trying to enter the woman's vagina with his penis?				
Never	47	47.0	45	45.0
Rarely, less than 10% of the time	22	22.0	34	34.0
Seldom, less than 25% of the time	14	14.0	12	12.0
Sometimes, 50% of the time	14	14.0	9	9.0
Usually, 75% of the time	2	2.0	0	0.0
Nearly always, more than 90% of the time	1	1.0	0	0.0

Table 4. The frequencies and percentages of Sexual History Form (continued)

	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
Overall, how satisfactory to you is your sexual relationship with your partner?				
Extremely unsatisfactory	0	0.0	1	1.0
Moderately unsatisfactory	2	2.0	2	2.0
Slightly unsatisfactory	2	2.0	5	5.0
Slightly satisfactory	13	13.0	11	11.0
Moderately satisfactory	35	35.0	21	21.0
Extremely satisfactory	48	48.0	60	60.0
Overall, how satisfactory do you think your sexual relationship is to your partner?				
Extremely unsatisfactory	1	1.0	0	0.0
Moderately unsatisfactory	2	2.0	0	0.0
Slightly unsatisfactory	3	3.0	4	4.0
Slightly satisfactory	8	8.0	10	10.0
Moderately satisfactory	30	30.0	33	33.0
Extremely satisfactory	56	56.0	53	53.0
When your partner makes sexual advances, how do you usually respond?				
Usually accept with pleasure	69	69.0	98	98.0
Accept reluctantly	21	21.0	2	2.0
Often refuse	7	7.0	0	0.0
Usually refuse	3	3.0	0	0.0
When you have sex with your partner, do you feel sexually aroused (i.e. feeling "turned on," pleasure, excitement)?				
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	41	41.0	76	76.0
Usually, about 75% of the time	28	28.0	14	14.0
Sometimes, about 50% of the time	23	23.0	8	8.0
Seldom, about 25% of the time	8	8.0	2	2.0
Never	0	0.0	0	0.0
When you have sex with your partner, do you have negative emotional reactions, such as fear, disgust, shame or guilt?				
Never	52	52.0	86	86.0
Rarely, less than 10% of the time	29	29.0	9	9.0
Seldom, less than 25% of the time	8	8.0	2	2.0
Sometimes, 50% of the time	9	9.0	3	3.0
Usually, 75% of the time	2	2.0	0	0.0
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	0	0.0	0	0.0
If you try, is it possible for you to reach orgasm through masturbation?				
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	10	10.0	52	52.0
Usually, about 75% of the time	5	5.0	12	12.0
Sometimes, about 50% of the time	7	7.0	8	8.0
Seldom, about 25% of the time	7	7.0	20	20.0
Never	71	71.0	8	8.0
If you try, is it possible for you to reach orgasm through having your genitals caressed by your partner?				
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	14	14.0	27	27.0
Usually, about 75% of the time	16	16.0	17	17.0
Sometimes, about 50% of the time	16	16.0	15	15.0
Seldom, about 25% of the time	19	19.0	20	20.0
Never	8	8.0	3	3.0
Have never tried to	27	27.0	18	18.0

Table 4. The frequencies and percentages of Sexual History Form (continued)

	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
If you try, is it possible for you reach orgasm through sexual intercourse?				
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	39	39.0	88	88.0
Usually, about 75% of the time	37	37.0	6	6.0
Sometimes, about 50% of the time	15	15.0	3	3.0
Seldom, about 25% of the time	6	6.0	2	2.0
Never	1	1.0	0	0.0
Have never tried to	2	2.0	1	1.0
What is your reaction to erotic or pornographic materials (photographs, movies, books)?				
Greatly aroused	11	11.0	33	33.0
Somewhat aroused	45	45.0	52	52.0
Not aroused	12	12.0	5	5.0
Negative-disgusted, repulsed, etc.	32	32.0	10	10.0
Does the male have any trouble in getting an erection, before intercourse begins?				
Never	68	68.0	69	69.0
Rarely, less than 10% of the time	27	27.0	24	24.0
Seldom, less than 25% of the time	3	3.0	5	5.0
Sometimes, 50% of the time	2	2.0	2	2.0
Usually, 75% of the time	0	0.0	0	0.0
Does the male have any trouble keeping an erection, once intercourse has begun?				
Never	62	62.0	57	57.0
Rarely, less than 10% of the time	29	29.0	35	35.0
Seldom, less than 25% of the time	7	7.0	6	6.0
Sometimes, 50% of the time	1	1.0	1	1.0
Usually, 75% of the time	1	1.0	1	1.0
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	0	0.0	0	0.0
Does the male ejaculate (climax) without having a full, hard erection?				
Never	69	69.0	66	66.0
Rarely, less than 10% of the time	20	20.0	26	26.0
Seldom, less than 25% of the time	5	5.0	6	6.0
Sometimes, 50% of the time	6	6.0	1	1.0
Usually, 75% of the time	0	0.0	1	1.0
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	0	0.0	0	0.0
Is the female's vagina so "dry" or "tight" that intercourse cannot occur?				
Never	31	31.0	33	33.0
Rarely, less than 10% of the time	36	36.0	37	37.0
Seldom, less than 25% of the time	18	18.0	17	17.0
Sometimes, 50% of the time	12	12.0	8	8.0
Usually, 75% of the time	2	2.0	4	4.0
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	1	1.0	1	1.0
Do you feel pain in your genitals during sexual intercourse?				
Never	29	29.0	74	74.0
Rarely, less than 10% of the time	32	32.0	22	22.0
Seldom, less than 25% of the time	22	22.0	2	2.0
Sometimes, 50% of the time	12	12.0	1	1.0
Usually, 75% of the time	3	3.0	1	1.0
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	2	2.0	0	0.0

Table 4. The frequencies and percentages of Sexual History Form (continued)

	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
(Women Only). Can you reach orgasm through stimulation of your genitals by an electric vibrator or any other means such as running water, rubbing with some object, etc.?				
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	2	2.0		
Usually, about 75% of the time	5	5.0		
Sometimes, about 50% of the time	3	3.0		
Seldom, about 25% of the time	9	9.0		
Never	81	81.0		
(Women Only). Can you reach orgasm during sexual intercourse if at the same time your genitals are being caressed (by yourself or your partner or with a vibrator, etc.)?				
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	26	26.0		
Usually, about 75% of the time	13	13.0		
Sometimes, about 50% of the time	10	10.0		
Seldom, about 25% of the time	19	19.0		
Never	7	7.0		
Have never tried to	25	25.0		
(Women Only). When you have sex with your partner, including foreplay and intercourse, do you notice some of these things happening: your breathing and pulse speeding up, wetness in your vagina, pleasurable sensations in your breasts and genitals?				
Nearly always, over 90% of the time	46	46.0		
Usually, about 75% of the time	34	34.0		
Sometimes, about 50% of the time	14	14.0		
Seldom, about 25% of the time	5	5.0		
Never	1	1.0		
(Men Only). Do you ever ejaculate (climax) without any pleasurable sensation in your penis?				
Never			80	80.0
Rarely, less than 10% of the time			14	14.0
Seldom, less than 25% of the time			2	2.0
Sometimes, 50% of the time			2	2.0
Usually, 75% of the time			2	2.0
Nearly always, over 90% of the time			0	0.0

DISCUSSION

Sexual development features

The first source of sexual information is friend for both genders. This finding is in compliance with the findings of recently performed studies in Turkey.^{19,13} According to results of this study, women and men were observed to have their first sexual intercourse between 18-24 ages. In the study of the Cinsel Eğitim, Tedavi ve Araştırma Derneği (CETAD),²⁰ the age of first sexual intercourse was found to be 19.5 for women and 19 for men. In the studies performed in Canada and England, on the other hand, the beginning age of sexual intercourse was observed to be lower both for women and for men.^{21,22} It is seen that women had their first sexual intercourse with their husbands but men had their first sexual intercourse in a brothel. In the study made by Yılmaz et al.,¹³ 28% of men reported that they had their first sexual intercourse in a brothel.

Sexual behavior

The values obtained on the frequency of sexual intercourse are seen to be compatible with literature. Kinsey et al.^{4,5} found the frequency of sexual intercourse in marriage to be 1.95. Schover and Jensen¹⁸ collected normative data of SHF from 92 couples in 1980. Accordingly, women (40%) and men (36%) were seen to report their sexual intercourse frequency as 3 or 4 times in a week. Aslan et al.²³ found the sexual intercourse frequency to be 1 or 2 times a week for women. Considering the literature, one can encounter many different frequencies of sexual intercourse both because of the sampling and because of the difference in the used scale device.^{24,16,17}

In the performed studies, men were found to initiate sexuality more.²⁵ While women are observed to say that "my spouse initiates the sexuality", men are observed to give a more average response and to say that "my spouse and I initiate the sexuality together". The findings of Schover and Jensen¹⁸ are the same as those of this study. For this study, it can be said that men generally comply with the wide-spread sexual scenario with the initiator role for the couple.

Masturbation starts at an early period of life. In this study, it is seen that women and men start masturbation at an early age. Women and men are observed to regard masturbation as usual but 44% of women are observed to say that they consider it negatively. Mert and Erberk Özen¹⁹ found that those who consider masturbation to be usual are 44.8% and those who consider it to be sin-disgrace are 25.9%. Kinsey et al.^{4,5} showed that 62% of women and 92% of men masturbate. It is observed that there appear different results as to the frequencies of masturbation in later years.^{16,26,17} For example; Schover and Jensen¹⁸ stated that 30% are women and 23% are men among those who say that "I never masturbate". Das¹¹ stated that 38% of women and 61% of men say that they masturbate. According to the findings of this study, 85% of women and 45% of men stated that they had never masturbated. With the help of this finding, it is seen that the frequency of masturbating is less in both women and men than other countries. This can be explained with the relationship between being married and masturbation, in other words, with the negative effects of having a continual spouse on masturbating.¹¹ Masturbating creates guilt,¹¹ it is regarded as sinful, and if one masturbates, he/she thinks that he/she will get dirty.²⁶ Masturbating is affected by cultural features and is a less frequent situation in more conventional societies in terms particularly of women.

Kinsey et al.^{4,5} found that the average period for foreplay of women and men is about 12 minutes. In the study performed by Miller and Byers²⁷ with 152 couples, the duration desired for foreplay was found to be 11.25 minutes for women and 13.35 minutes for men. In this study, it was observed that 32% of women and 30% of men replied that the time devoted to foreplay is 7-10 minutes. According to this finding and the findings obtained in the literature, foreplay period can be said to be short.

Corty and Guardiani²⁸ stated that 3-13 minutes is normative in penis-vaginal sexual intercourse duration. In Miller and Byers,²⁷ the time for sexual intercourse is 7.03 minutes for women and 7.86 for men in the average. In this study, the duration of sexual intercourse is 7-10 minutes for women and 4-7 minutes for men. In Schover and Jensen,¹⁸ the duration for both genders is 4-7 minutes. In the study of Serefoglu et al.,²⁹ ejaculation times according to intravaginal ejaculatory latency time (IELT) was found to be over 3 minutes in 49.1% of men who do not have premature ejaculation. Using self-report scales in the studies cause sexual intercourse durations to be assessed non-objectively.

It is seen in this study that women and men are excessively satisfied with their sexual relationships and the sexual relationships satisfy their partners excessively. In the study of Schover and Jensen,¹⁸ women and men replied to these questions as "partly satisfactory". The difference here can be caused by the fact that in Turkey, non-objective and socially wanted replies are given to the questions about sexuality. In this study, men and women are pleased with their sexual lives as mentioned in other recent studies.^{24,30}

Although women and men are partly aroused with erotic or pornographic materials, 32% of women were observed to react in a negative - disgust way. In Schover and Jensen¹⁸ it is observed that a great majority of women and men are partly aroused (58%, 62% respectively), and only 8% of women give reactions in a negative - disgust way.

In this study, a great majority of women and men (41%, 76% respectively) reported that they felt arousal during sexual intercourse. This finding is similar to that of Schover and Jensen.¹⁸

Brody and Weiss³¹ showed the relationship of all aspects of satisfaction with penis-vaginal orgasm consistency for both genders. The frequency of penis-vaginal intercourse and simultaneous orgasm formed by penis-vaginal intercourse were in relation to greater satisfaction with life and sexuality, togetherness, and psychological health. In this study, it was observed that 39% of women and 88% of men said that they have reached orgasm through sexual intercourse. In the findings of Schover and Jensen,¹⁸ 42% of women and 97% of men were seen to achieve orgasm through sexual intercourse.

Consequently, it was observed that the frequency of masturbating is low, the duration of foreplay is short, women have a more negative attitude towards masturbation and pornographic materials. To improve the sexual behaviour of married couples, comprehensive sexual training, sexual counseling, and discussing sexual issues publicly are important. In Turkey where sexuality is discussed very rarely, the existence of such behavior will affect individual's sexual life. Again, the studies on marriage and sexual life are necessary in terms of improving the quality of marriage, family and sexuality of Turkish people on a subject which is regarded as an extensive taboo.

The study has some limitations. The sample is small and selected only from Izmir. Because of this, this study cannot be generalized to whole society. It would be beneficial if future studies were to be conducted with a representative sample of Turkey. The sample was a convenience sample; that is, those who were willing to participate did so. A convenience sample excludes those who were not willing to participate, who may have a more different perception about sexual behavior than those who were willing to volunteer. The study's being a cross-sectional one is another limitation. The usage of self-report scales may cause memory biasness, exaggeration and different reflection. Only the married ones are included in the study, but those living together and those who are lovers are not included. When these limitations are considered in interpreting the data, we believe that this study reveals important data about the sexual behavior of normal married couples.

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