

ORIGINAL PAPER

The experience of First Sexual Intercourse: an Exploratory Study in Greek Women

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Abstract

Background: A young person's first sexual intercourse is often a remarkable and memorable experience. However, little information exists regarding contextual factors of this first experience and the possible effects on their subsequent sexual life

Objective: This study explored the conditions of and women's emotional reactions to first sexual intercourse (FSI), as well as FSI's impact on their future sexual experiences.

Methodology: Participants were 899 women aged 19 to 40 yrs, registered in 23 arbitrarily selected GPs private practices. They completed a 30-item questionnaire regarding their first sexual intercourse experience.

Results: It was found that information sources for sexual issues (family vs media) significantly influence both the adoption of responsible sexual behaviours and the formation of feelings preceding sexual initiation ($p<0.05$). The study also demonstrated that even when FSI is perceived as voluntary other correlates (e.g. woman's and /or partner's age, contraceptive use etc.) affect women's emotional reaction to first coital experience and their response to future sexual encounters.

Conclusions: The findings of this study provide initial data to suggest that the first sexual intercourse experience significantly impacts women's sexual life. Health professionals should be aware of this information in the development of programs focusing on the promotion of sexual health for adolescents or parents; education.

Key Words: first sexual intercourse, Greek, women, contraception, sexual behaviour