

Virginity as a Choice: Expression of Gen Z about Sexual Agency in a Complex World

Masitah Effendi¹, Nur Faizatur Rohma & Jamalia Putri Prastiti
UIN Sunan Ampel, Surabaya, Indonesia

Abstract

In a complicated and evolving environment, this research delves deeply into the ways that men and women of Generation Z express their sexual agency about virginity. Social pressures, cultural conventions, and the fast advancement of technology are all present in today's environment. The authors discovered through extensive qualitative research techniques and explored the perspectives of Generation Z (Gen Z) individuals in Surabaya City, Indonesia, that Generation Z handles their decisions about virginity in very personal and distinctive ways, frequently questioning and opposing conventional standards and expectations. The research aims to understand how Gen Z navigates their sexual choices in a complex socio-cultural environment. This article also assesses the effects of Generation Z's choices about virginity on their mental, emotional, and physical well-being. The findings demonstrate that, depending on the person and social situation, these decisions can have important and diverse outcomes. However, the authors stress that further study is required to completely comprehend the ramifications of this decision. The study employs in-depth interviews and focus group discussions as primary data collection methods. Participants include Gen Z individuals aged between 18 and 24 years, residing in Surabaya city. All things considered, this article offers significant new perspectives on how Generation Z perceives and uses their sexual agency when they are virgins. By offering a greater understanding of how young people navigate and comprehend their sexuality in a complicated world.

Keywords: Virginity; Gender; Generation Z; Sexual Right (Agency)

Abstrak

Dalam lingkungan yang rumit dan terus berkembang, penelitian ini menggali secara mendalam cara pria dan wanita Generasi Z mengekspresikan hak seksual mereka mengenai keperawanan. Tekanan sosial, konvensi budaya, dan kemajuan teknologi yang pesat semuanya hadir dalam lingkungan saat ini. Para penulis menemukan melalui teknik penelitian kualitatif yang ekstensif dan mengeksplorasi perspektif individu Generasi Z (Gen Z) di Kota Surabaya, Indonesia, bahwa Generasi Z menangani keputusan mereka tentang keperawanan dengan cara yang sangat pribadi dan berbeda, sering kali mempertanyakan dan menentang standar dan ekspektasi konvensional. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana Gen Z menavigasi pilihan seksual mereka dalam lingkungan sosial budaya yang kompleks. Artikel ini juga mengkaji dampak pilihan Generasi Z tentang keperawanan terhadap kesejahteraan mental, emosional, dan fisik mereka. Temuan-temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa, tergantung pada orang dan situasi sosialnya, keputusan-keputusan ini dapat mempunyai hasil yang penting dan beragam. Namun, penulis menekankan bahwa penelitian lebih lanjut diperlukan untuk memahami sepenuhnya konsekuensi dari keputusan ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan wawancara mendalam dan diskusi kelompok terfokus sebagai metode pengumpulan data utama. Pesertanya adalah individu Gen Z berusia antara 18 hingga 24 tahun yang berdomisili di kota Surabaya. Secara keseluruhan, artikel ini menawarkan perspektif baru yang signifikan tentang bagaimana Generasi Z memandang dan menggunakan hak seksual mereka ketika mereka masih perawan. Dengan menawarkan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang bagaimana kaum muda menavigasi dan memahami seksualitas mereka di dunia yang rumit dan kompleks ini.

Keywords: Keperawanan/Keperjakaan; Jenis Kelamin; Generasi Z; Hak Seksual

¹ masitaheffendi.me@gmail.com

Introduction

In recent years, the concept of virginity and sexual agency has garnered significant attention in academic research and public discourse. The evolving social, cultural, and technological landscapes have created a complex and changing world, particularly for the Generation Z (Gen Z) cohort, born between the mid-1990s and the early 2010s. As members of Gen Z navigate their coming-of-age experiences, including decisions related to sexual activity and the expression of their sexual agency, it is crucial to understand the multifaceted factors that influence their perspectives and choices. Gen Z is often known as ‘digital natives’ because they were born after the advent of the World Wide Web and the widespread and ubiquitous emergence of portable electronic communication devices. In the contemporary landscape, societal norms and attitudes towards sexuality have undergone significant transformations. Traditional views on virginity, often associated with purity and morality, have intersected with modern perspectives that emphasize individual autonomy and empowerment. The proliferation of digital media, social networking platforms, and online dating apps has further reshaped the ways in which young individuals perceive and engage with their sexuality. Additionally, the growing awareness of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities has contributed to a more inclusive and expansive understanding of sexual agency (Bradley, 2022).

Virginity is a social construct that has different meanings and implications for different groups of people. Historically, virginity has been associated with gender norms and expectations, especially for women, who were expected to preserve their virginity until marriage or face social stigma and discrimination. However, in recent decades, social changes such as the feminist, youth counterculture, and gay rights movements, as well as the sexualization of the public realm, have challenged and transformed the traditional views and practices of virginity. Young people today, especially those belonging to Generation Z (born 1995-2012), have more diverse and fluid understandings of gender and sexuality, and express their sexual agency in various ways, including choosing to remain virgins or to lose their virginity in different contexts and with different partners (Tejada, 2020).

However, despite the apparent shift in attitudes and behaviors regarding virginity, there is still a lack of empirical research on how Generation Z men and women perceive and experience virginity loss in a complex and changing world. Most of the existing studies on virginity loss focus on older generations, such as Millennials or Gen X, or on specific populations, such as heterosexuals or religious groups. Moreover, most of the literature on virginity loss tends to emphasize the negative aspects, such as health risks, emotional distress, or social pressure, rather than the positive aspects, such as pleasure, empowerment, or intimacy (Springer, 2021). Therefore, there is a gap in the knowledge and understanding of how Generation Z men and women make sense of and enact their virginity choices, and how they negotiate the challenges and opportunities that arise from their sexual decisions.

A thorough review of previous research provides a foundation for identifying the existing body of knowledge, theoretical frameworks, and empirical findings related to virginity, sexual agency, and generational dynamics. Studies conducted in the fields of sociology, psychology, gender studies, and youth culture have offered valuable insights into the factors influencing young individuals' attitudes toward virginity, the impact of societal expectations, and the negotiation of sexual autonomy. Additionally, research on the digital landscape's influence on sexual behaviors and relationships, as well as the intersections of technology and intimacy,

contributes to understanding the contextual backdrop against which Gen Z forms their perspectives on virginity and sexual agency.

Despite the wealth of existing literature, there remains a discernible gap in the understanding of how Gen Z, encompassing both men and women, navigate the complexities of expressing their sexual agency in a rapidly evolving world. While some studies have explored virginity and sexual decision-making among specific demographic groups, such as college students or adolescents from particular cultural backgrounds, there is a paucity of research that holistically captures the diverse experiences and narratives of Gen Z individuals across different social, cultural, and technological contexts. Furthermore, the existing literature may not fully encapsulate the nuanced ways in which Gen Z individuals conceptualize and enact their sexual agency, considering the multifaceted influences of digital media, changing social norms, and evolving gender dynamics. Therefore, this research seeks to address the research gap by providing a comprehensive examination of how Gen Z, inclusive of both genders, navigate the complexities of expressing their sexual agency and making choices related to virginity in the contemporary landscape. As recent research has provided insight into how Gen Z approaches or expresses their sexual agency, in a study in the realm of risky sexual behavior, for example, Gen Z individuals have higher partner rates than millennials (Dhana et al., 2020).

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the intersection of virginity, sexual agency, and generational dynamics, specifically within the Gen Z cohort. By centering the investigation on the experiences of both men and women, the research aims to capture a holistic understanding of how diverse individuals within this generation navigate their sexual autonomy and decision-making processes. Moreover, the study endeavors to incorporate the influence of digital media and technology, recognizing their pervasive role in shaping contemporary experiences of intimacy, relationships, and sexual expression. Through this approach, the research seeks to offer fresh insights into the ways in which Gen Z individuals negotiate their choices surrounding virginity and assert their sexual agency amidst the complexities of the modern world.

The overarching objective of this research is to comprehensively explore and understand how Gen Z individuals, encompassing both men and women, express their sexual agency and make choices concerning virginity in the contemporary landscape. To achieve this objective, the study aims to address the following specific research questions : How does Gen Z (men and women) express their sexual agency about virginity in a complex and changing world that involves social pressure, cultural norms, and technological changes? And What are the impacts of virginity choices on the physical, mental, and emotional health of Gen Z (men and women) in a complex and changing world?

Research Method

This research uses a type of qualitative research, namely research that aims to describe and explain the phenomenon being studied in depth and detail. Qualitative research is a method of inquiry that relies on non-numerical data, such as words, images, or observations, to understand the meaning and interpretation of human behavior and social phenomena. This research uses a case study research design, namely research that focuses on one particular case or unit of analysis to understand the phenomenon holistically and comprehensively. A case

study is a detailed and intensive analysis of a specific instance or example of a phenomenon, such as a person, group, organization, event, or situation.

The case studied is generation Z, namely the generation born between 1997-2012, which has different views and behavior regarding virginity and sexual agency compared to previous generations. Generation Z is the youngest and most diverse generation in history, growing up in a digital and globalized world, and facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities. Virginity is a social construct that refers to the state of never having had sexual intercourse, which can have different meanings and implications depending on the cultural, religious, and personal contexts. Sexual agency is the ability to make autonomous and informed decisions about one's sexual life, including when, how, and with whom to have sex, as well as the ability to communicate and negotiate one's sexual needs and desires.

We draw on qualitative data from online forums, interviews, and surveys to examine how Gen Z men and women define, value, and negotiate virginity in relation to their personal, interpersonal, and societal contexts. Online forums are platforms where people can interact and exchange information, opinions, and experiences on various topics, such as sex and relationships. For the informant determination technique, we use a method of combining surveys/forms with qualitative interviews. This approach allows us to capture individual data and narratives (with interviews), which can provide a comprehensive understanding of sexual agency among Gen Zs. The interviews are face-to-face or online conversations where the researcher asks open-ended questions to the participants to elicit their views and experiences on the topic of interest. Surveys are questionnaires that collect standardized data from a large number of participants, using closed-ended or multiple-choice questions to measure their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors on the topic of interest. By using these three sources of data, we aim to capture the diversity and complexity of Gen Z's perspectives and practices regarding virginity and sexual agency. To ensure that the research is impartial or biased towards one particular gender, the informants involved included both men and women. That this research involves the participation of both genders, namely men and women. This gender diversity is important to gain a holistic perspective on how Generation Z in Surabaya manages their sexual identity. The researcher used a purposive sampling approach to select informants who represent variations in their sexuality experiences. The presence and participation of men and women in the research certainly provides different insights and enriches the understanding of the topic under study.

We focus our research on the regional area of the city of Surabaya, which is the second-largest city in Indonesia and has a population of about 3 million people. Surabaya is a city that has a rich and diverse history, culture, and economy, and is also undergoing rapid social and urban changes. We chose this city as our research site because it represents a unique and interesting case of how Gen Z in Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim and conservative country, navigate their sexuality in the context of modernization and globalization. In this case, the researcher focuses on how Generation Z in Surabaya, Indonesia, which is a Muslim-majority and conservative country, navigate their sexuality in the context of modernization and globalization. Despite the focus on Islam and its conservative values, it is important to remember that this approach can provide a deep understanding of how religion, culture and globalization interact in shaping the sexual experiences of young people in Surabaya. Nonetheless, if the research is to be more inclusive, it is important to consider that there is also

a diversity of religions and beliefs in Indonesia, and some of these may have different views on sexuality.

Findings And Discussion

Gen Z (Men And Women) Expressing their sexual agency about virginity in a complex world that involves social pressure, cultural norms, and technological changes

Virginity is a concept that has long been debated in society. Some people consider it a sacred thing and must be guarded until marriage, while others consider it unimportant or even taboo. Gen Z, the generation born between 1997 and 2012, has a unique view of virginity. They grow up in a complex world, characterized by social pressures, cultural norms, and technological changes. This has shaped the way they view their virginity and express their sexual agency.

In today's complicated environment, Gen Z expresses sexual agency in a variety of ways, including with regard to virginity. Many members of Generation Z contest the conventional notion of virginity, highlighting the variety of ways in which sexuality may be experienced and expressed. Sexual practices have been redefined by this age. While choosing to abstain from sex altogether, while others explore non-penetrative sexual activities and prioritize individual pleasure, such as through masturbation. The discussion around virginity is also influenced by factors such as gender, sexual orientation, and the impact of societal and cultural norms.

There is a view that a woman is said to be a virgin if on the first night the woman experiences bleeding or tears in her virgin membranes. So a man was very disappointed when the first night there was no bleeding. This has become a stigma in marriage that if there is no bleeding during sexual intercourse on the first night, a man will divorce or send the woman home to her parents and that is where the marriage is annulled (Rohana & Mustafid, 2021). Gen z themselves have varying perspectives on this taboo topic, which is virginity. While some of them still consider it important or even a social pressure for themselves, others challenge it.

Social pressure is one of the many variables influencing Gen Z's expression of sexual agency and their conception of virginity in a complicated society. Peers, the media, and cultural expectations which frequently emphasize sexual activity can all be sources of social pressure. For example, a research discovered that young individuals have diverse, frequently gendered perceptions of losing their virginity. Additionally, the study implies that delaying sex until marriage may have some benefits related to cultural sensitivities, such as increased marital sexual pleasure and trust (Olamijuwon & Odimegwu, 2022).

The concept of virginity in Indonesia in general is that the woman's blood membranes are still intact and have not been torn during sexual activity on the first night, but in other concepts it is said that a woman is still a virgin when she does not have a marriage certificate and has never been married. Apart from that, there are those who say that if a woman is married, has had sexual intercourse, but has not yet become pregnant or given birth, then she is still said to be a virgin. The various concepts of virginity above are references for annulling a marriage.

A research looked at the disclosure of virginity status (DVS), which is the degree to which a person has disclosed or kept private to particular people or groups whether they genuinely identify as virgins or not. Lying about one's virginity status to family, friends, and religious authorities emerged as different components in DVS, which seems to follow a framework of disclosure to these groups of people. Variations in DVS according to gender and

virginity status imply that DVS can rely on the gendered sexual norms of the group to which the target of disclosure belongs (Barnett, Maciel, & Moore, 2021).

Numerous research indicate that societal pressure plays a role in how Gen Z expresses their sexual autonomy in respect to virginity. How people handle their sexual encounters and decide whether to come out as virgins might be influenced by pressure to live up to gendered sexual scripts and cultural expectations. It's critical to remember that each person's experience is distinct and shaped by their own set of circumstances, which may include their support networks, personal convictions, and cultural background. It is imperative that everyone, not only members of Generation Z, make educated decisions regarding their own sexual health and wellbeing.

Never forget that it's OK to ask for guidance from reliable people, including medical experts, educators, and devoted family members and friends. Respecting one another's decisions and experiences is also crucial.

Cultural norms might differ greatly; certain cultures may not place much significance on virginity, while others may. These standards may have an impact on how people view and feel about their own sexual agency. According to a Vietnamese research, young women must negotiate conflicting and oftentimes-changing expectations on dating and sex as social standards change. Additionally, the survey discovered that some women were redefining standards to better represent their sexual autonomy and embracing greater sexual freedom (Bergenfeld et al., 2022). A complex interplay of elements is reflected in the way that Gen Z expresses sexual autonomy and how the idea of virginity is developing within the framework of societal standards. This generation is challenging traditional ideas of virginity and sex since they were raised in the internet age.

As a result of rejecting society standards, young people now feel less pressure to adhere to conventional views on sex and are able to express themselves sexually more freely (Villar, 2023). Furthermore, it's clear that Gen Z values closeness above quantity of sex since they're redefining what it means to lose one's virginity and questioning the idea of virginity itself. (Gerstein & Erb, 2023). There is a reevaluation of long-standing cultural norms and a greater focus on individual liberty and personal wants in the complicated environment in which Gen Z is exercising their sexual agency. The way that this generation views sex and virginity is a result of how society is evolving, which emphasizes the need for a more thorough and inclusive conversation about sexual identity and health. These offered a thorough grasp of how Gen Z is exercising their sexual autonomy in a complicated society and redefining what it means to be a virgin. The articles and studies emphasized how the rejection of conventional standards and the preference for closeness over conventional measurements of sexual experience are only two of the many elements impacting Gen Z's attitudes about sex and virginity. These resources provide insightful information about how Gen Z's sexual agency and cultural standards are changing.

Technological developments have also had a big influence, especially with the emergence of social media and dating applications. These forums can encourage sexual engagement while simultaneously offering a forum for candid conversation and instruction around consent and sexual health. A complex interaction of social, cultural, and technical variables shapes Gen Z's changing views on sexual agency and virginity. Gen Z is redefining

virginity; many are questioning conventional wisdom and the idea that penetrating intercourse is the only factor in determining virginity.

This change is taking place in a world where social media, easy access to internet material, and technological improvements all affect how people see intimacy and sex. The emergence of "situationships" and "sneaky links" among Gen Z is indicative of a new sexual relationship paradigm influenced by social media and digital communication. Experts and young people alike are concerned about how pornography shapes teenage conceptions of intimacy, power, and sexual behaviors (Gecker, 2023).

Furthermore, a larger cultural background also affects Gen Z's views on sex. They are apparently having less sex, emphasizing closeness and quality over number, even if they are more forthcoming about it (Rudra, 2023). They prioritize sex differently than earlier generations, and they have reevaluated the importance of sex in relationships, which is indicative of this tendency. In summary, Gen Z's reinterpretation of sexual agency and virginity is closely related to cultural upheavals, technology advancements, and changing societal standards. Their views reveal a more sophisticated view of intimacy and sex that has been influenced by a variety of intricate interactions in the contemporary world.

Gen Z's expression of sexual agency regarding virginity is shaped by a complex interplay of factors, including redefined sexual behaviors, gender and cultural influences, and changing societal norms. The discussions and trends surrounding virginity within this generation reflect a diverse and evolving approach to sexuality in the modern world.

Impacts of virginity choices on the physical, mental, and emotional health of Gen Z (men and women) in a complex and changing world

Virginity is a concept related to moral, religious, cultural and social values in society. Virginity is often considered a symbol of purity, honor and self-worth for a person, especially women. However, virginity can also be a source of pressure, conflict and stigma for those who have different choices about when and with whom they want to have sexual relations (Andani, 2023). Generation Z are those born between 1997-2012, who grew up in the digital era and experienced various social, political, economic and environmental changes. Generation Z has easy access to information and communication via social media, but is also vulnerable to mental health disorders due to excessive exposure to information, lack of direct interaction, and uncertainty about the future (Ambarwati, 2023).

The choice of virginity is a personal thing and varies for each individual. Virginity choice refers to the decisions individuals make regarding when, how, and with whom they initiate sexual activity. The choice of virginity can be influenced by various factors, such as the individual's values, beliefs, hopes, motivation, approval, pleasure, security, and communication with his partner (Kurnianto, 2017). These factors may vary depending on a person's personal, social, cultural, and religious background, as well as the context and circumstances of his or her sexual debut. The choice of virginity can have a positive or negative impact on the mental and physical health of Generation Z, depending on how they face and manage this choice. For mental health, some of the positive impacts that may occur are:

1. Feelings of confidence, pride, satisfaction and calm. Generation Z who choose to keep their virginity can feel more confident with themselves, proud of their choices, satisfied

with their relationships, and at ease with their beliefs. They can feel that they have respected themselves, their partner, and their values.

2. Feeling safe, healthy and happy. Generation Z who choose to maintain their virginity can feel safer from the risks of sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies and sexual harassment. They can also feel healthier physically and mentally, because they are not exposed to the stress, guilt or shame that may arise as a result of sexual relations that do not conform to their expectations or norms. They can also feel happier, because they can enjoy a deeper, more romantic and harmonious relationship with their partner.

Some of the negative impacts that may occur are:

1. Guilt, shame, fear, stress and depression. Generation Z who choose not to maintain their virginity may feel guilty about themselves, ashamed of their choice, afraid of other people's reactions, stressed about the possible consequences, and depressed about feeling worthless or unloved. They can feel that they have violated themselves, their partner, and their values.
2. Feeling isolated, depressed and unhappy. Generation Z who choose not to maintain their virginity may feel isolated from their social environment, which may not accept or respect their choice. They may also feel pressured by social pressures, which may demand or judge their choices. They can also feel unhappy, because they can experience a relationship that lacks meaning, is not romantic, and is not harmonious with their partner.

Some physical impacts that may occur are:

1. Risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Generation Z who choose not to maintain their virginity can be exposed to various types of STDs, such as HIV/AIDS, syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes, and others. STDs can cause serious complications, such as infertility, cancer, and death.
2. Unwanted pregnancy. Generation Z who choose not to maintain their virginity may face the risk of unwanted pregnancy, which could disrupt their future plans, such as education, career and marriage. Unwanted pregnancies can also cause social problems, such as family rejection, societal discrimination, and illegal abortion.
3. Injuries and pain. Generation Z who choose not to maintain their virginity can experience injury and pain due to sexual relations that are unsafe, unhealthy, or not suitable for their physical condition. Injuries and pain can include wounds, tears, bleeding, infections and inflammation of the reproductive organs.

To determine the impact of virginity choices on the mental, emotional and physical health of Gen Z in men and women. In the research carried out this time, several information were provided by informants as follows:

"Virginity really affects my emotional health as a woman because women are creatures who find it difficult to control their emotions and are easy to get distracted by other things." Statement from a Woman, 20 Years Old (12/11/23)

"The doctrine of maintaining virginity since childhood is one of the reasons why I really take care of this and it is not a hard thing for me to do because maintaining virginity can also prevent bad things." Statement from a Woman, 21 Years Old (12/11/23)

"There is no influence, because for me virginity exists. "That's just a term of norms and culture that develops in our society." Information from Male, 21 Years Old (13/11/23)

Based on the information above, some Gen Zers feel that the choice of virginity has an impact on mental, emotional and physical health. However, there are also some who feel that the choice of virginity has no influence on mental, emotional and physical health.

The statements provided by our informants offer valuable insights into their experiences and beliefs. The first informant, a 20-year-old woman, emphasizes the emotional toll of virginity. She suggests that women, as emotional beings, may struggle with the weight of societal expectations and the pressure to maintain their virginity. Her sentiment reflects the idea that emotional well-being can be influenced by cultural norms and personal choices. The second informant, a 21-year-old woman, views virginity as a protective measure. She associates it with preventing negative outcomes. For her, maintaining virginity is not burdensome; rather, it serves as a safeguard against potential harm. The male informant, aged 21, takes a different approach. He dismisses any direct influence of virginity on health. His perspective aligns with the notion that virginity is merely a cultural construct, devoid of inherent health implications.

Women often bear the brunt of societal expectations related to virginity. The emotional impact they experience may stem from cultural norms, family pressures, and fear of judgment. The belief that virginity protects against negative consequences reflects a desire for safety and control. It suggests that women perceive their well-being as intertwined with their sexual choices. Men, on the other hand, seem less invested in the concept of virginity. Their neutral stance implies that they view it as a norm rather than a personal milestone. This detachment may be rooted in societal privilege, where men face fewer consequences for their sexual behavior. It's essential to recognize that virginity is not exclusive to women. Men, too, grapple with societal expectations and personal beliefs. By broadening the discourse, we acknowledge that both genders navigate the complexities of sexual identity and its impact on well-being. While empirical evidence linking virginity directly to mental or physical health remains scarce, the emotional burden associated with it cannot be dismissed. Mental health encompasses feelings of self-worth, anxiety, and societal acceptance, all of which intersect with sexual experiences.

In the Gen Z landscape, virginity remains a multifaceted concept. It intertwines cultural norms, personal choices, and emotional well-being. By recognizing the diverse perspectives—whether emotional, preventive, or neutral—we move toward a more inclusive understanding. Ultimately, the impact of virginity on health extends beyond gender, inviting us to explore the intricate tapestry of human experiences.

Some research suggests that delaying sexual debut may have positive impacts on physical health, such as reducing the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unwanted pregnancy. For example, a study in the United States found that teenagers who took a virginity vow, which is a public or private commitment not to have sex until marriage, were less likely to contract STIs and unwanted pregnancies than those who did not. Another study in Uganda found that delaying sexual debut was associated with lower HIV prevalence among young

women. These studies imply that delaying sexual debut can reduce exposure to sexual risks and increase sexual health protection (Lestari et al, 2016).

However, other research suggests that delaying or not having sex may have negative impacts on mental and emotional health, such as lower self-esteem, increased anxiety, depression, and sexual dysfunction. For example, a study in Turkey found that women who made their sexual debut late (after age 25) reported lower sexual satisfaction, lower sexual self-esteem, and higher sexual anxiety than those who made their sexual debut early or normally. (before age 18 or between years). 18 and 25). Another study in Iran found that women who were virgins when they married had higher levels of depression and lower levels of marital satisfaction than those who were not virgins. These studies show that delaying or not having sex can disrupt the development of sexual identity, competence, and intimacy, as well as increase psychological distress and dissatisfaction in sexual life.

On the other hand, having sex may have positive effects on mental and emotional health, such as increasing intimacy, trust, happiness and well-being. For example, a British study found that having sex at least once a week was associated with higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction than having sex less frequently or not at all. Another study in China found that having sex with a romantic partner was associated with higher levels of intimacy, trust, and relationship satisfaction than having sex with a casual partner or not having sex. These studies show that having sex can foster emotional bonds and relationship quality between partners, as well as improve individual psychological well-being and happiness.

Therefore, the impact of virginity choices on health may vary depending on the individual and context, and there is no one right or wrong choice for every person. The most important thing is to make informed, respectful, and responsible decisions that align with one's own needs and desires, and respect the choices of others. To make such decisions, individuals need to have access to accurate and comprehensive information and education about sex and sexuality, as well as supportive and safe environments and services that can help them protect and improve their sexual health and rights.

Conclusion

The conclusion drawn from the discussion provided in the first sub chapter is that Gen Z's perspective on virginity and sexual agency is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including social pressures, cultural norms, and technological changes. This generation challenges traditional ideas of virginity and sex, redefining sexual behaviors and emphasizing individual pleasure and closeness over conventional measurements of sexual experience. The discussion around virginity is also influenced by factors such as gender, sexual orientation, and the impact of societal and cultural norms. Gen Z's views on sex and virginity reveal a more sophisticated understanding of intimacy and sex, shaped by a variety of intricate interactions in the contemporary world. The reevaluation of long-standing cultural norms and a greater focus on individual liberty and personal wants are evident in the way Gen Z exercises their sexual agency. The conclusion emphasizes the need for a more thorough and inclusive conversation about sexual identity and health, taking into account the evolving societal landscape and the impact of technological developments.

And the second conclusion is that the impact of virginity choices on health can vary depending on the individual and the context, and there is no one choice that is right or wrong

for everyone. The choice of virginity can have a positive or negative impact on the mental and physical health of Generation Z, depending on how they face and manage the choice. For mental health, some of the positive impacts that may occur are feelings of self-confidence, pride, security, health, happiness, satisfaction and calm for those who choose to maintain their virginity. And some of the negative impacts that may occur are guilt, shame, fear, feeling isolated, depressed, unhappy, stressed and depressed for those who choose not to maintain their virginity. Apart from that, there are several physical impacts that may occur, namely unwanted pregnancy and the risk of sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes, and others.

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