

SOME ASPECTS OF SEXUAL KNOWLEDGE AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR OF LOCAL WOMEN RESULTS OF A SURVEY VII OROGENITAL SEX

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SYNOPSIS

This paper discusses all aspects of orogenital sex. 42.9 percent of the 1012 women (43.7 percent of the married and 35.8 percent of the unmarried) admitted to having indulged in or were still indulging in this practice.

The background and attitudes to this practice and its dangers and the precautions necessary are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of a master plan and of rigid roles and acceptable types of sexual activity pervades our cultures.

A common problem and yet another area of conflict occurs when one partner objects to a specific type of sexual activity, while the other voices a strong desire for that activity. Orogenital sex (oral sex) is one field of activity which presents with differing views (1).

One way to enhance sexual relationships is to explore orogenital sex and oral stimulation is increasingly acceptable to many males and females, though not to all segments of the population.

Oral practices have gained wider acceptance in recent years, shifting from use in foreplay to the status of a coital substitute (2).

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MATERIALS AND METHOD

1012 women, who were patients of the Obstetric and Gynaecology Unit of Toa Payoh Hospital were personally interviewed by the author with respect to their sexual knowledge, sexual attitudes and sexual practices.

RESULTS

Table I shows the response of the study population as regards their practice of orogenital sex.

TABLE I
PRACTICE OF OROGENITAL SEX

Experience	Number of Persons	Percentage
Practising or Had Practised	434	42.9
Never Practised	578	57.1
Total	1012	100

42.9 percent of the women admitted to ever having indulged in orogenital sex while 57.1 percent had no such practice. Some of the women in this group did not know such practices existed or were possible and acceptable. Taking the total population of 1012 women of the 42.9 percent who indulged in orogenital sex, 39.1 percent was contributed by married women and 3.8 percent by the unmarried.

Table II shows the practice of orogenital sex by the married and unmarried groups.

TABLE II
PRACTICE OF OROGENITAL SEX BY
MARITAL STATUS

Marital Status	Number of Persons	Percentage
Unmarried	38	35.8
Married	396	43.7

38 (35.8 percent) of the 106 unmarried women had indulged in orogenital sex while 396 (43.7 percent) of the 906 married women had indulged in it.

DISCUSSION

The lips, tongue and the whole of the interior of the mouth is one of the erogenous zones for most individuals and is of comparable importance to the genitalia. There is usually some oral response with sexual arousal. Most uninhibited individuals become conscious of their oral responses when they accept deep kissing, mouth breast contacts and mouth genital contacts during sexual play.

Humans are exceptional among the mammals in that they abstain from oral activities because of social conditioning, moral restrictions or exaggerated ideas of sanitation (3).

Therefore, it is not surprising that the two areas of the body which are most sensitive erotically (the

mouth and genitalia) should be brought into direct contact. 42.9 percent of the study population comprising 3.8 percent of unmarried women and 39.1 percent of married women had indulged in orogenital practices. The percentage of males who had indulged in similar practice with their female partners must be equivalent or definitely higher.

During sexual arousal the senses of smell and taste are reduced or abolished completely and contacts which would to an uninitiated individual be offensive is no longer offending.

Fellatio is the purposeful apposition of the mouth to the male genital organ and its orolingual stimulation. Usually brief mouthing or nuzzling during erotic foreplay is not included under this definition. Intense initial sensation is produced by suction and slow lingual friction of the penile shaft and its wet manipulation.

According to Kahn (4), what most women derive from fellatio is that it is totally pleasing to the male and women derive pleasure from giving men this experience. Further in itself it becomes a source of sexual stimulation to the female and fulfills their primal instinct to suck.

In one study (5) men under 40 years of age considered orogenital sex the most pleasurable part of foreplay.

The reason why men enjoy or indulge in orogenital contacts is because it reflects a willingness or expectancy on their part for their partners to be more active in sex. Further it satisfies their desire to be primarily stimulated at times instead of being the perpetually active partner(5).

Women object to fellatio on moral or aesthetic grounds. Most view the penis as "dirty" and an excretory organ. Many do not realise that the penis can be scrubbed clean and the foreskin retracted and cleansed as well.

Fear of the penis is common in young girls and even adult women who have indulged in sexual intercourse may be threatened by an eye level contact with the penis (5).

Many males and females do not like the idea of ejaculating into the woman's mouth. Some women do not find the taste or smell of semen unpleasant and usually do swallow it. Folk belief is that this (the semen) benefits a woman's vigor and complexion. A few women in this study did admit to swallowing semen, at urging of their partners, though some felt the smell and taste of semen to be repulsive. However, swallowing of semen is a common but not the usual practice (2). However, no harm comes from this practice and further there is no danger of pregnancy (6).

Cunnilingus is the orolingual contact with the vulva, especially the clitoral and labia minora regions. A large percentage of women appear to welcome this practice greatly as part of erotic foreplay and an increasing number of husbands feel pleased by so obliging. This practice was looked on with disgust in the past mainly because of inadequate female hygiene, but today kitchen flavoured vaginal deodorants are freely available (2).

Oral contact with the female genitals is usually one of the last of the petting techniques accepted by the male or female as some consider such activity to be perverse or abnormal.

Kinsey stated that with more petting experience, more women accepted this practice. A similar trend is seen in this study, by rating the marked increase of this practice in the married compared with the unmarried women.

Oral stimulation of the clitoral area can produce orgasm for different women (6). Many who are unable

to achieve orgasm by intercourse and masturbation are able to reach orgasm by this means. The same was true for many women in this study.

In Hite's (7) report 42 percent of the women said they orgasmed regularly during oral stimulation (compared to 44 percent manually). Those who did not get orgasm said they held back because of embarrassment. Many felt oral stimulation to be superior to manual stimulation.

The women in this study who indulged in oral genital practices said they enjoyed receiving oral stimulation of this genitalia and one even said she preferred this means of activity as a substitute for sexual intercourse. It eliminated her dyspareunia and her fear of pregnancy.

In Hite's study too, many women maintained again and again how much they liked cunnilingus and described it as one of their most exciting activities.

One reason they enjoyed this practice was they felt a sort of meaningful acceptance to have a person who wanted to put his mouth to their genitals.

In Kahn's (4) study of sexual preferences both sexes acknowledged that orogenital contact with the opposite sex in the active role was their most preferred sexual activity. Normal heterosexual intercourse ranked far down in their list of preferences.

The higher educated are more inclined to indulge in orogenital practices (3). This was true of this study too.

For the male orogenital contact confirms his belief of women as his accessory for his needs and pleasure. The male can be the passive recipient and can relax and enjoy himself. Further visual stimulation is provided to the male to see the opposite sex in an active role.

For the female, she receives pleasure and her response to it is further self stimulating to the male. Also the male is in a position to give the woman pleasure and satisfaction.

Men usually hesitate to tell their partners what they want because they (their partner) may think them to be perverse but find it easier to give oral stimulation to their women.

However though women enjoy cunnilingus, there is always a doubt in their minds of their partners' true feelings. Whether men really do enjoy cunnilingus or indulge in it with a view to receiving fellatio in turn (5).

Single men indulge in orogenital practices more than older and married men. Older men get less enjoyment from orogenital activities not because they do not like it but because their partners (older and more inhibited) are less willing to accede to their requests.

Mutual and genital stimulation, ie fellatio and cunnilingus simultaneously is engaged in by many couples though it is more difficult to give and receive oral pleasure at the same time. A little experimentation and adjustment of positions is necessary (6).

Oral genital stimulation can be used as a means to enhance the ultimate satisfaction of the sex act via foreplay and need not be used as a substitute for sexual intercourse. It does not always have to end in orgasm and can be used as foreplay to please each other. It can also be done for a while before or after sexual intercourse or can be carried on for as long as

one wants it (6). Even those who have difficulty to reach orgasm at sexual intercourse achieve it with cunnilingus because of its direct but gentle and intense clitoral stimulation.

A frequent concern is cleanliness. Most people grow up with the idea that the genital area is dirty. Even if this view is not accepted, many feel uncomfortable about genital contact with the mouth. One way to overcome this is to shower and clean each other up.

Another concern for both the partners is that the male may ejaculate into the woman's mouth. Many women are afraid this may happen. According to Kinsey (3), when the relationship is not sufficiently stimulating, fellatio and cunnilingus is accepted with some offence and considerable consciousness. However consciousness is reduced as regards both the contact and taste when sexual relationship is had between two persons who are erotically aroused.

A third concern is how to provide good oral stimulation to the partner and this can only be learnt by experimentation.

Precautions and Dangers (2)

Sudden deaths have been reported as a result of air embolism, especially during pregnancy. So cunnilingus is not advisable or recommended during pregnancy.

Further air should never be blown into the vagina.

Mouth lesions (syphilis, herpes) are highly contagious via oral and orogenital contacts.

Gonococcal pharyngitis, tonsillitis and stomatitis have been reported.

However, only a few of those with orogenital practices seem to have these symptoms or problems.

The wide acceptance of orogenital activity is remarkable as only a generation ago, it was considered to be a perversion. As one report aptly puts it orogenital contact seems to be on its way, if not already there, to becoming the new standard of intimacy. It is an act which is truly satisfying to both the receiver and the giver.

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