The Impacts of COVID-19 on Sex Life
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INTRODUCTION
The COVID-19 pandemic and related prevention measures have disrupted our lives, including our sex lives.

Early prognosis regarding the effects of COVID-19 on sex life predicted “coronavirus baby boom,” while later predictions point to an expected baby bust (Choi, 2020).

Scarce existing research on the matter offers equivocal evidence regarding the scope and nature of the coronavirus' influences on sex life.

Although the trend is mixed, several studies point to a decrease in the frequency of sexual activity during the pandemic (Hensel et al., 2020; Li et al., 2020).

Stress, depression, and couple conflicts over coronavirus-related issues are significant predictors of the frequency of solo and partnered sex (Ibarra et al., 2020; Luetke et al., 2020).

Risk perceptions regarding COVID-19 are also related to the likelihood of sexual activity, especially in casual relationships (Hensel et al., 2020; Ko et al., 2020).

Regarding casual sex, the recommendations have been to pursue abstinence or masturbation (Lopes et al., 2020), which might be unfeasible and detrimental to some people (Klein, 2020).

Additional research is urgently needed to clarify the impacts of COVID-19 on the various aspects of sex life.

AIM
To examine the COVID-19’s impacts on sex life by comparing the pre-pandemic and current:
• quantity of sexual expression
• levels of sexual desire
• perceptions of sex as leisure
• satisfaction with sex life

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection
Online survey methodology.

Participants
Sample (N = 565 participants)
• Gender: 377 women, 166 men, 17 other
• Age range: 18-76 years old.
• Race/ethnicity: 402 white, 91 Asian, 23 Hispanic, 20 Black participants.
• Marital status: 285 never married, 170 married, 21 divorced.
• Relationship status: 345 in relationship, 181 not in relationship.

Measurement
• Frequency of sexual activity: asking about pre- and peri-pandemic levels
  Response options: 1 = “More than once a day,” through 8 = “Not at all.”
• Desire, leisure, and satisfaction: asking about pre- and peri-pandemic levels
  Response options: 1 = High, 5 = Low.

Data Analysis
Descriptive statistics. Paired sample t-tests.

RESULTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Pre-pandemic</th>
<th>Peri-pandemic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kissing and hugging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-pandemic</td>
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<td>Sexual touching and caressing</td>
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<td>Oral sex</td>
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<td>Sexual intercourse</td>
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<td>Masturbation/self-stimulation</td>
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<td>Sex toys/aids use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual desire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viewing sex as leisure</td>
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<td>Satisfaction with sex life</td>
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CONCLUSIONS
All the areas of partnered sex, sexual desire, and satisfaction with sex life have deteriorated. Nevertheless, solo sex and sex toys/aids use remained the same.

This study highlights the detrimental impacts of COVID-19 on sex life and calls for sexual health education programs addressing these issues.

While the pandemic will eventually go away and the need for social distancing will be lifted, the damage inflicted on sex lives and relationships might be irreversible if not negotiated properly (Klein, 2020).

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