

American women

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Human sexuality can be seen as the way human beings experience their sexuality and express it. This results from their individual awareness as indicated by their biological sex and how they respond to erotic experiences. Human sexuality has however appeared as a thorny issue with many societies either ignoring to talk about it or shying away of the whole topic of sexuality. Due to the negative impacts that have resulted from this behavior, governments have come up with policies that are aimed at addressing human sexuality related problems.

The increase in the number of HIV/AIDS victims in the world has triggered the discussion about human sexuality. Research indicates that women are more vulnerable to contracting venereal diseases including HIV/AIDS. Efforts to minimize the spread of the diseases have not actually succeeded as expected. The most neglected groups of people in matters of human sexuality in America includes single women and women in cohabiting relationships. The fear to contract to avoid unexpected pregnancies has led to masturbation with others engaging in homosexuality.

This paper examines single motherhood, cohabitation, STD's, masturbation and sexual preferences among American women. According to a research carried out by Lindberg L. D and Singh S, single American women exceed eighteen million in number. Statistics further reveal that in the age bracket of women between 19 and 45 are single. Ninety percent of these single ladies “ are sexually experienced”. Shockingly, 22 percent of the single women and 2 percent of the married engage in sex with more than one partners.

Over 50% of single American women get pregnant unintentionally. For those single women, getting health insurance is more difficult for them as compared to the married. This indicates that single American women greatly indulge in sex. Despite all these findings “reproductive health care needs” of American women has not been upgraded to cater for the increased needs. Furthermore, the American society lacks appropriate counseling services. The government effort to discourage single women to abstain and wait until the time they get married has proved to be futile.

It has therefore been realized that proper policies to address the issue are yet to be put in place. Single women have been ignored in matters of sexual behaviors and the needs for quality reproductive health care. As a result these single women are at risk of contracting STD's and AIDS, having unplanned pregnancies and births (Knox & Schacht 2009, pg. 279). Impermanence of marriage has made cohabiting to be one of the marriage alternatives. Research indicates that over nine percent of those women cohabiting have more than one sex partners.

This is very shocking because the same women who are cohabiting rarely get health insurance in America. They are however better off as compared to the single women since in terms of accessibility to important services. This is however a short term alternative since soon or later, the cohabiting couples will separate and once again lead a single life. It is therefore important to note that cohabiting American women become single at different periods of their life.

Increase in the number of single women has led to rise in cohabitation. This has been triggered by impermanence of unions that include marriage and

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cohabitation. Kail and Cavanaugh 2008, pg. 408 argue out that cohabitation has increased over ten times over the last 30 years. Statistics show that in 1970, only 523, 000 people cohabited as compared to the year 2000 when a whopping five and a half million American were reported to cohabit. Most of them cohabited to facilitate sexual convenience and at the same time sharing expenses.

Such couples have no intention of establishing a long lasting relationship and their goal is not marrying. The others engage in cohabitation to try whether marriage can work for them. The other group of cohabitators purely uses cohabitation as a substitute to marriage. This has been highly reported in older women and men as compared to the other two previously mentioned which are highly practiced by young adults (Kail and Cavanaugh 2008, pg. 408). One of the major problems affecting women in America is the issue of STD's including HIV.

Women reproductive health has been given adequate attention in America however single women have been side looked. The danger of ignoring reproductive health services to single women has been reflected by the increase in the number of unplanned births and sexually transmitted diseases that include HIV. This is because their sexual relationships are unstable. According to O'Leary and Jemmott 1995, pg. 14, most of the women who live to the south of United States contract HIV through heterosexual transmission. This has been high among minority groups.

In a report printed in the Jet magazine April 2008, pg, 53 indicated that over 50% of African American teenage women were suffering from a sexually transmitted disease as compared to the white and teenage girls

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of Mexican origin with less than 20% of them who have at least one STD. The report indicated that there was poor communication between the teenage girls and the other members of the society on sexuality issues. Education on STDs was identified as one of the best methods of reversing the trend of STD infection.

Early testing was also said to reduce the risk of spreading these diseases. Research indicates that most of the American women underestimate the risk for contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. This was confirmed by the research carried out by American medical women's association in 1994 which indicated that 73% of all American women aged between 16 and 60 years strongly believe that they are safe from sexually transmitted diseases. This research further indicated that 67% of American women have no idea of other STDs apart from AIDS.

33% of them have no idea about AIDS. Over 67% of the total engages in unsafe sex and less than 33% of them believe monogamy can reduce the risk of spreading HIV/AIDS (O'Leary & Jemmott 1995, pg. 14). Greenberg, Bruess, and Conklin 2010, pg 475-477 found out that 40% of American women masturbate. This includes 45% of American married women. This was found to be directly proportional to the practice of vaginal sex, oral sex and anal sex among American women implying that those women who widely engage in vaginal sex, oral sex and anal sex are great fans of masturbation.

Wingood and DiClemente 2002, pg. 55 identified two main reasons why women masturbate. In their research, 63% of American women admitted that masturbation was a way of relieving sexual tension while 42% did it to

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acquire physical pleasure (Wingood and DiClemente pg. 55). Researchers have confirmed that masturbation does not cause any disease, infertility or dysfunction and this has encouraged many people to practice it as an alternative to sex. This practice has been influenced by a change in American culture in which sex was believed to be for procreation only, not for pleasure.

Majority of them engage in sex for pleasure and whenever a partner is not readily available, women prefer to masturbate. This has led to a drastic increase in the demand for abortion among American women. It is a clear indication that sex is not only for procreation but largely for pleasure. This practice is mostly common among those people who are not deeply entrenched in religious practices as most of American religions view masturbation as unreligious practice. Though masturbation has not been associated with major physical problems many women have been reported to suffer from Psychological problems as a result of masturbation.

Littleton & Engebretson 2002, pg. 339 pointed out that the media has largely influenced American women on the way they view their sexuality. This has been directly translated to their mode of dressing and their use of grooming products. Sexual preference among American women can be viewed in three perspectives; sexual identity, sexual behaviors and sexual desires. Peplau and Garnets, 2002, pg. 333 are of the opinion that American women have a high erotic plasticity. In their argument, they pointed out that women have diverse forms of attraction with each other.

They also noted that women sexual preference is highly affected by culture and social forces. This is because social identities and social institutions are

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provided and shaped by the society. All newly introduced practices may be accepted or rejected and either way, the women are mostly affected. Homosexuality was not exposed in American society. This has however changed with more women and men coming in the open to declare their sexual orientation as either being lesbians or homosexuals.

Majority of American women are heterosexuals however “ statistics indicate that heterosexual women face greater danger than heterosexual men in casual sex”. Statistics indicate that the number of lesbians in America is on the rise and this has raised many questions in regard to gay and lesbian marriages. Religious groups especially the majority Christian groups in America have expressed their concern about this trend however research indicates that homosexuality is slowly being accepted in American society. With the rise in the number of lesbians, bisexuality is also spreading its roots in America.

Sexual preference has however faced a great challenge due to the increase in sexual dysfunction among American women. It is very important to realize that Sexual dysfunction is posing a great threat to sexuality has been highly reported among American women. The main causes have been cited as; depression, long term stress, negative attitude towards pregnancy especially for single women, increased demand to be a new mother, problems associated with women’s negative body image, culture and religious inclination and emotional distress. Other causes include physical conditions and hormonal causes.

Conclusion Single mothers should be involved in policy formulations and implementation especially on matters that involve human sexuality.

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Neglecting them will create a gap that will impact negatively on their lives and the lives of entire American society. Cohabiting couples should be educated on the dangers of engaging in such relationship. This trend, if not checked may destroy the family which is the basic social institution. Sexual preferences should not be used to justify discrimination especially when it comes to health care services and health care insurance covers.

Masturbation should not only be viewed in terms of how safe it is. The focus should be directed to its negative psychological effects. Since most women issues have been ignored and the issue of human sexuality has been ignored for a long time, a thorough research should be conducted to establish the impact of single motherhood and cohabitation on sexual preferences. Scientific and psychological evidence concerning masturbation should be established in order to establish whether masturbation can be used to fight HIV/AIDS without negatively affecting those who practice it.

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