

VIRGINITY IN VARIOUS COMMUNITIES AND STIGMA OF BEING A VIRGIN

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Abstract

Virgin is a person who has never had sexual intercourse. Virginity can be studied from various aspects; although this issue arises from a biological feature, but by looking at history, we find it in various forms and manifestations. Virginity is part of a woman's genitals; But the conceptual meaning of virginity is not limited to female physiology and has penetrated into the cultural and gender relations of societies and in many cases, has determined the customary, moral and legal criteria. This research seeks to answer the following questionis, what is the various communities' definition from virginity and their attitude about. Additionally, what is stigma of virginity in the society? Moreover, in this review virginity has been extracted and studied in examples of myths, religions, attitude and examples from primitive and modern societies.

Keywords: Virginity, Religion, Communities, Stigma of virginity

Introduction

The term virgin initially only focused on sexually inexperienced women, however has evolved to include a range of definitions, as found in traditional, modern and ethical concepts. But the concept of virginity is not limited to female physiology and has penetrated the cultural and gender relations of

societies and in many cases, has determined the customary, moral and legal criteria. This research seeks to answer the question: From what sources and roots has virginity and its meaning been nourished and rooted in human societies? In this regard, virginity has been extracted and studied in examples of myths, religions and examples from primitive and modern societies. The research method, descriptive-analytical and the obtained result indicate that the concepts of virginity in different societies are a function of mythological, historical, economic and cultural backgrounds and characteristics and these components are generally throughout the history of most societies in affirming virginity as virtue have acted.

From primitive societies, man recognized the distinction between femininity and virginity, and since every concept related to sex and gender was directly related to generation, survival, and the cycle of existence, he also placed virginity at the center of conceptualization, symbolism, and mythology. What is worth pondering in the meantime is the continuation of controversies and conceptualizations from virginity, through history to the present day; Despite the expansion of the frontiers of medical knowledge and sometimes the fading of a definite and definite meaning for a member called the veil of virginity in the female organism, still in the world, the subject matter of this meaning remains strong. In addition to the cultural presence of this issue in societies and the influence of its customary principles in the laws of many countries, the reflections of various branches of science in this regard have continued. On the other hand, feminist theories have considered the historical roots of the importance of virginity in cultures as a consequence of patriarchy, male monopoly on the preservation of bloodline and patriarchal capitalism, and female thinking as an asset. In-depth psychologists and historians explain the sexual nature of virginity in relation to ancient and subconscious schemas. Anthropological studies, on the other hand, have achieved customs that do not necessarily reflect virginity in relation to marriage, and ethics related to family structure; Rituals such as sacred prostitution, vows and sacrifices of virgin girls, and beyond, the issue of virginity for men. However, there is a fascination and need for research on the subject of virginity from different perspectives. (1). The historical concepts of virginity and virginity have been developed. Areas of study in this article are myths, archetypes, religions and some real and lived aspects of the subject of virginity; Among some common customs in different parts of the world with themes related to virginity and virginity, as well as a theory of the place and meaning of virginity in today's world. Due to the dispersion and non-disclosure of information in this field, the geographical scope of this research is not limited and, as necessary, examples from all over the world have been considered. On the other hand, in almost all sources and researches, the issue of virginity is directly related to women's issues and does not have a precise and clear demarcation of the sociology of gender and gender functions. Nevertheless, in the present article - in order to prevent the repetition of material that has been much discussed about the social and historical status of women - an attempt has been made to collect, compare specific material on the subject of virginity as well as stigma of being virgin in the modern society (2).

Considering the various aspects and thematic interventions with other fields, the main focus of this research is to search for roots of virginity, the values of this issue and the stigma about it. The issue of chastity in intellectual systems and at the theoretical level is not specific to women, but in practice, virginity is defined in the context of women's issues, and in the cultural subconscious of most societies, women's virginity is a criterion for their decency and chastity.

Biological Virginity

The hymen is a membrane that covers all or part of the vaginal opening. Hyman is a Greek word meaning skin or veil, borrowed from the Greek goddess of marriage. The hymen, or hymen, is a thin membrane of mucus that is located in the distal part of the vaginal entrance and attaches to the vaginal wall in its environment. "This membrane is usually damaged when a penis or foreign body enters." In

medical terms, virginity refers to a variety of veils; Like a curtain or membrane that surrounds the heart. Medical science has succeeded in proving that the genitals of the fetus are completely closed in the early stages of development, and over time the skin layers separate incompletely and form the hymen. Virginity does not have a fixed shape and in many women it does not exist from the beginning and is formed over time. In addition to the definition of virginity, virginity is generally a reason for not having sex. Medical science, on the other hand, has proven that the hymen is not unique to humans. Many mammals, such as horses, whales, etc., also benefit from the presence of such veils, while in animals the issue of virginity makes no sense (1).

Virginity in Different Religions

Judaism and Virginity

In Judaism, marriage has been compulsory. Women who did not have children and refused to marry were treated with contempt and guilt. Priests were also required to choose a spouse. They valued virginity. The girl had to prove her virginity on the day of marriage, otherwise, if her virginity was not proven, the sentence of stoning her would be approved (3).

In Israeli culture, polygamy was a common practice. Especially among wealthy men, there were many formal wives, as well as many maids and informal wives. In addition to the unrestricted sexual freedom that existed for men, women were severely restricted. Virginity was the first condition for girls to marry. And if a woman was suspected of not being a virgin, the man would divorce her immediately.

If an abusive husband accused his wife of not being a virgin before marriage, the girl's parents could present their daughter's virginity sign on a piece of cloth to the elders of the city, in which case the elders would pay the husband 100 silver to compensate the girl's father. Condemned for tarnishing the status of an "Israeli virgin"; "Second, if the girl was a virgin and a man had sex with her before marriage, the man was obliged to pay fifty silvers to the girl's father, marry the woman and not divorce her for the rest of her life (3).

Christianity and Virginity

Undoubtedly, among the divine religions, Christianity was the most important place of revival and manifestation of the sacred concept of virginity. Mary Azra, a member of the Christian trinity, is a woman who has been fertilized by the Holy Spirit and has given birth to Jesus. This myth is made about the birth of many saints and messengers, but it seems to have found a deeper philosophical-mystical flavor in the early Christian era. Christianity emerged as a reformer of Judaism, but went to extremes during the first four centuries by merging with Roman mythology and later the relationship of the power-hungry church. "Christianity in the field of ideas and values related to women and gender made more efforts to melt and break the iron chains of prejudice and petrification. Christianity created its prophet Jesus Christ as a holy being, and with the prohibition of women and the experience of sexual intercourse, an aura of innocence overwhelmed him. In addition, he took her from the womb of the Virgin Mary, who did not know the embrace of any man, to the realm of life. Among the various religions, Christianity dealt most severely with sexual immorality and the virginity not only of Jesus Christ and his mother Mary. Which also imposed on all men who became priests, monks, and servants of God (1).

Islam and Virginity

"For Arab men, sexual power was directly related to their masculinity and social status; To the extent that impotence was considered a disgrace for a man. But who but a woman could know about a man's sexual weakness? The superior value of marrying a virgin girl, which is mentioned in the Arab and

Islamic traditions, stems from this fact. A virgin girl, because of her lack of sexual experience, does not know anything about men and gender, but a non-virgin woman, because of the opposite, may find out the strengths and weaknesses of a man; "And this is why marrying a divorced woman or a widow is considered abominable (4).

As it appears from the book of Al-Saadawi, considering that of the wives of Prophet Muhammad , only Aisha was a virgin and the other eleven were widows and divorced women; The Prophet did not adhere to this tradition. Perhaps for this reason, in Islam, despite the repeated emphasis on categories such as modesty, modesty and self-control, and the condemnation of adultery and adulterers, we see fewer references to the customary, social, and strict aspects of virginity; Most of the Quranic meanings of the concept of virginity are in the description of the women of Paradise; Among these verses:

Sura Rahman, verse 56:

There are beautiful women in those paradises, and no one has touched them before.

Sura Rahman, verse 72:

Horani in his veils (hidden from the eyes of strangers).

Sura Rahman, verse 74:

Before, no one has reached those women.

Sura Al-Waqi'ah, verse 36:

We have always made those women virgins ...

The Virgin Mary in the Quran:

Maryam Azra has a special place in the Qur'an and one of the chapters of the Qur'an is named after her. The Qur'an also seals the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ from a virgin mother

Sure Maryam, verse 12:

Where can I have a child when I have not seen the maidens and my human hand has not reached my pure skirt and I have not been evil?

<https://www.quora.com/What-does-the-Quran-say-about-virginity>

Virginity in Different Communities

As mentioned before, the issue of virginity has never been separated from social, economic and cultural relations, and any research approach to it is necessarily tied to the issue of gender in society, the share of women and men in the livelihood and economic system and cultural origins of different societies. She eats. In the process of gender socialization, people learn how to behave as men or women according to society's expectations. In fact, gender is an important part of every human self-image and is evident in social interactions. Admittedly, human history has been fraught with discrimination, violence, and gender exploitation due to its feminine physiological characteristics, and virginity is no exception. "Virginity refers to the lack of premarital sex in men and women, but in some societies, not only is virginity attributed only to a woman having premarital sex, but men are encouraged in these societies and even expected to have premarital sex. If they are married, otherwise they will often be ridiculed and harassed by their fellow human beings (4).

It is obvious that with the intellectual changes of societies, it is expected that the human approach to gender will also change. But despite the dramatic developments of the last century, issues such as honor killings, sexual torture, female genital mutilation and rape, and all kinds of assault and rape

against women can still be seen around the world. Since the 1960s and the rise of women's rights movements, laws have been enacted to defend women's rights in Western countries, and many gender-discriminatory laws have been amended in Western countries. And to this day, the process of sexual freedom for women in these countries continues. Overall, due to the scale of twentieth-century feminist movements, the status of virginity in Western and Eastern countries today seems very different, and in a general category, the issue of virginity is more prominent in traditional societies.

Virginity in primitive societies

In some primitive societies, there is a significant disregard for the issue of virginity. Among Hawaii natives, for example, virginity is meaningless. There is a monarchy among the primitive tribes of Central Africa, and women do not have that closeness; In some tribes, women suffer a lot and are monopolized by men, and because they are not kidnapped, they split girls' lips from a young age, put beads in them, and over time, enlarge those beads, which are made of wood or ivory, resulting in a hole. The lips get bigger, which comes in the shape of a saucer, and it is very painful to bear, and their appearance is ugly, and no one should touch them. In the Saras tribe, women must have as many children as they can and increase the number of workers. If a baby girl is born, she can be exchanged for one or more cows; At the same time, the virginity of girls does not make sense to them.

"A girl who is not a virgin is more valuable because it has been practically proven that she is not infertile. "In the primitive tribes of South Africa, especially South Africa, marriage does not have a strong origin and unprotected sex does not have severe punishments."

Pre-marital sex is forbidden among the Hutun Tuts, and Bushmen, on the other hand, have complete freedom in relationships. Apparently, the closer these primitive societies are to the centers of civilization and population, the more sexual restrictions they have. In Ethiopia, among the Shinasha, virginity is important; If the girl is not a virgin at the time of marriage, the marriage will be broken and the girl's social status will be tarnished. It is a custom among the Hindus that a clergyman destroys the virginity of a Russian in exchange for money, because virginity is considered evil and the groom refuses to have intercourse with a virgin girl.

Virginity in Europe and America

An overview of the history of the West does not show the high status of women. If we go back to the ancient origins of Western culture, to ancient Greece and Rome, women were not considered first class citizens in these societies, and in principle, these two lands were constantly in war and turmoil, much more than women in the male force that fought and defended borders and countries. They appreciated; After the domination of Christianity over the West, we see the 2,000-year history of the Christian Church's domination of women and their status. The Christian church basically considered sex to be a sinful act, and it was the same for men and women. (5).

The religious system considered the relationship to be specific to generational production. It is obvious that such an idea, throughout the Middle Ages, led to a secret flow of illegitimate relations between the elders and the nobility. Premarital sex restrictions were still in place in the West before the twentieth century. In the nineteenth century, along with the development of science, especially biology, the emergence of theories such as Sigmund Freud's theory of personality was one of the factors that greatly influenced the evolution of attitudes toward sex. Because Freud identified the source of many mental disorders and crises as the suppression of sexual instinct. In addition, the skinning of European societies after the world wars, the collapse of previous value and normative systems, the entry of women into society, and the development of feminist movements all contributed to the evolution of traditional ideas about sex and women's freedoms.

"The stage of sexual emancipation began relatively early in the 1920s; At a time when many young people felt free from the strict moral laws that governed previous generations ... The more liberal era of the 1960s brought explicitly stated attitudes closer to the realities of sexual behavior. An exponential increase in pre-sexual experience Marriage has been particularly prevalent among women in the United States and most European countries. "It seems that most Western societies will sooner or later reach the point that Sweden reached in the early 1970s, when about 95% of men and women in that country had had premarital sex (5).

Despite this trend, there are still people in Europe and the United States who are interested in and committed to premarital chastity; Including programs such as: "Virginity Commitment", "Silver Ring" and "Self-control training" which is done with the presence of girls and boys and in cooperation with high school and church with the aim of preventing social crises and sexual vulnerabilities. In the 1980s in the United States, a tradition called "purity dance" began, in which teenage girls went to church with their parents and signed a covenant of chastity. Obviously, these group and minority religions in Europe and America cannot be considered as an example of the thought of these societies on the subject of virginity. Because during the last century and due to the great intellectual-philosophical changes in the West, changes in marriage and family laws, cohabitation without marriage, recognition of homosexuality, etc., mainly these societies do not have a significant conflict with the issue of virginity and are influenced by feminist movements. The use of the words virgin and maiden in these countries is considered somewhat derogatory. As the title "Miss" has been removed from the administrative forms of many Western countries (6).

Virginity in Iranian and Arab societies

The Arab society still unconditionally values the virginity of the girl more than any other virtue. The loss of a girl's virginity, outside of marriage, is an irreparable tragedy and deserves the most severe punishment. In the law of some Arab countries, the court will decide to dissolve the marriage if it proves that the girl is not a virgin. According to the cultural context of this view, there are ancient and deep-rooted traditions in order to maintain the decency of girls, one of which is female circumcision. Circumcision of young girls is still common in some Arab countries, such as Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, and some Gulf Emirates. It is believed that with this practice, girls' sexual desire will be minimized and girls will maintain their virginity and chastity at puberty.

From the jurisprudential point of view, virginity is one of the virtues of a girl during marriage and the virginity of a girl is the reason for a higher dowry than a divorced or widowed woman. Collectively, in the traditional and traditional thought of Iranian society, like other traditional societies, virginity is still the basis of chastity and decency of the girl and one of the criteria for marriage, and this issue has sometimes been the cause of serious damage to the social image of the girl and her family. Although today, many customary and moral prejudices about virginity have diminished in many parts, especially in urban areas, but the general principle of virginity for girls to marry in Iran and Arab societies remains strong.

Virginity stigma in the societies

Stigma is considered as a disgrace associated with a particular circumstance. In virginity term, stigma can be defined as an interpretation and understanding of a society regarding being virgin.

There is no scientifically and officially reports indicate the stigma of virginity in traditional societies therefore in this text we only focus on the virginity in modern societies.

Historically, the significant worth positioned on chastity until marriage set the tone for romantic and sexual affairs, with virginity valued and negative connotations connected with premarital sex (7). Nonetheless, in the modern United States, socio-sexual norms have modified considerably over the past century, with most people now engaging in premarital sex. nowadays premarital sex is normative (8). Some studies done regarding this issue illustrated the finding below: Crossways three research, two primary results appeared. First, sexually inexperienced ones reported higher perceptions of sexual-experience-related stigmatization than did participants who had engaged in sexual behaviors, even higher than those with relatively greater numbers of prior sex partners. This is particularly striking when considering that in general individuals who are relatively more sexually permissive are socially stigmatized (9).

In these studies, it is evidenced that sexual inexpert can influence perceived attractiveness and future relationship opportunities, nevertheless this pattern is influenced by the age, gender, and sexual experience level of the perceiver. Also, the study displayed a large nationally representative U.S. sample of single grownups on the possibility of selecting a virgin as a loyal relationship partner. People who were participated in the research were usually improbable to consider a relationship with a virgin, however some participants were less possible to consider starting a relationship with a virgin than others. Specially, men, younger participants, and those who themselves were sexually inexpert expressed less willing to get in to a relationship with a virgin.

The willing for sexually experienced partners indicated by younger participants shows that late adolescence and young adulthood the age at which forming relationships and exploring sexuality are hallmarks is the same age at which sexual inexperience is most harmful to one's relationship chances. It is similarly possible this age influence indicts cultural modifications in the value of sexuality, where young individuals today put larger emphasis on sexual activities in the partners than did those in past generations. Younger participants were more biased about sexually inexperienced partners, in spite of age increment being associated with increasing acquisition of sexual experience. This might similarly show a possible cohort effect where thinking toward virginity is altering with new generations. If that is really the case, then sexual scripts encouraging sexual activities and ability may have hidden scripts for chastity for a review of modifications and nuances in modern-day sexual scripts (10). The result that men were more biased than women in sexually inexperienced partners needs extra assessments. Men's lack of interest in sexually inexpert partners denies historical sexual scripts that has pressure on feminine chastity and premarital virginity (11). Moreover, women's lack of discernment is curious, paying attention to the effect of sexual scripts that support hegemonic masculinity and beside those expectations for U.S. men's heterosexuality, together with the assumption that sexually experienced men are better (12).

It still is not clear if this is because individual who is sexually inexpert remark himself as more stigmatized than sexually experienced one and do not want it increased in a dyadic relationship, or if this is because a partner is looked for who donates extra experience to the partnership. This result likewise demonstrates relationship opportunities for sexually inexpert individuals may be even more limited, because even one in the same situation of relative inexperience is engaging in biased judgement toward them.

These studies demonstrated a key influence of romantic relationship experience on appeal of the target, nonetheless there is no evidence regarding an interaction between the target's romantic experience and sexual experience. Therefore, although romantic relationship experience did not offer a buffer for sexual inexperience, it is a significant criterion in assessing partners. One who had more romantic relationship experience were rated as the most attractive one, irrespective of the age, gender, or sexual experience.

Result

Nonparticipation in sex for moral or religious causes can enhance one's attractiveness to religious others. In contrast, nonparticipation because of negative thinking about sex can reduce one's ability to enter into relationships. The findings indicated that sexually inexperienced individuals may notice themselves as stigmatized and that they may not be attractive as a romantic partner, even by individuals who themselves are sexually inexperienced. Such results support a new social sexual script that has mostly abandoned virginity as a virtue and in its place demonstrate that one must have some sexual experience to be preferred partners. Findings also illustrate having no sexual experience can be considered negative evaluations. Because intimate relationships are crucial to well-being, particularly across the adult life course, it seems that being a late bloomer with sexual activities could be related to negative social and interpersonal results.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is obvious that virginity had and still has the great value in some specific societies in the world, however now a days most of values are changing drastically and virginity also follows same trend. In most of modern societies it is considered as a stigma as it never was before.

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