

**EXPERIENCE OF MARRIED WOMEN ABOUT  
PERCEPTION OF FOREPLAY.**



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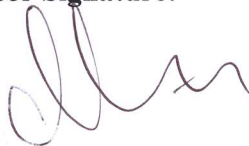
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## **Abstract**

This qualitative study explores married women private experiences and perception of foreplay, underlining its significance in shaping their level of sexual satisfaction. The research revealed the emotional, psychological, and physical aspects of foreplay. Sexual satisfaction is a key element in maintaining balance in marital relationships. This study explores both emotional and physical connection in intimacy, cultural and societal norms that shape sexual expectations, communication gaps regarding sexual needs, and foreplay role in sexual satisfaction. It helps us to identify barriers in sexual fulfillments. While much of public and clinical research has focused on orgasm and sexual satisfaction but foreplay remains unexplored in many cultures. There is growing need to explore women's sexual experiences, especially in Pakistan, and there is a limit literature in this country that's why I chose this research. In-depth semi structured interviews with a sample of currently married females of at least three years of marriage with the age range 25-35 years old that lives with their husbands. Purposive sampling technique is used to select participants that can provide relevant information. In-depth semi structured interviews are conducted with an approximate time duration of 30-40 minutes, in a comfortable private environment ensuring trust and confidentiality. The interviews are transcribed and then analyzed. IPA (interpretative phenomenological analysis) used to explore and understand their live experiences in detail. The results show Foreplay meets relational needs and contribute to marital well-being when women's sexual knowledge, preparedness and expectations align with reality. Sexual connection and intimacy between partners grow through touch and affection, while open communication and emotional sharing help partners adapt to each

other; this adaptation is also influenced by the context in which they live (e.g., culture, stressful experiences). This study fills a gap in literature related to role of foreplay in women sexual satisfaction and provide gender sensitive insight into intimacy and sexual satisfaction that is underexplored. It can help with clinical and counseling settings, sexual health education, community service, and women empowerment in Pakistan. While keeping in mind Ethical considerations as the topic is already sensitive. Informed consent, voluntary participation, emotional safety, confidentiality, and ethical approval.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Sexual satisfaction is a key component of marriage. It influences emotional, psychological and overall life satisfaction (Champiri & Dehghani, 2020). Sexual satisfaction is not just about physical pleasure. It also includes emotional connection, psychological satisfaction, understanding between partners, open communication, intimacy and most important foreplay that include almost most of the factors like emotions, sensations, and physical activities that leads to good intercourse and plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of sexual satisfaction in females.

Being healthy and happy sexually is a key part of being healthy overall, covering how you feel physically, emotionally, mentally, and socially about sex (World Health Organization, 2020). Having good sexual experiences, like enjoyable intimate moments such as foreplay, greatly affects how happy you are and how good your relationships are (Smith et al., 2023). New research shows that feeling good about sex is not just about having intercourse, but also about what happens beforehand to make you feel closer and more physically good (Lopez & Martins, 2022; Zhao et al., 2021). Knowing what married women say about foreplay provides valuable insight into the impact these experiences have on their ability to sexually satisfy and enhance the quality of their relationships; therefore, the study fills in a gap regarding women's emotional requirements and desires in sexual relationships (Ahmed & Johnson, 2023; Kaur, 2020). A view of human sexuality that encompasses Body + Mind + Society indicates that physical factors (hormones and brain chemicals) interact with psychological factors (thoughts and feelings) and are regulated by social factors (traditions and relationships [Laan et al.,

2021; Perelman, 2024; Nimbi et al., 2021]) to determine an individual's sexual feelings and preferences. This essentially means that sexual feelings arise from many interconnected facets of life, including an individual's identity, their preference for or desire for certain behaviors in the sexual realm, and how they identify or express their sexuality independent of reproduction (Andreoli et al., 2024). Overall, the experience of sexual wellness not only is related to physical and mental wellness during sexual activity, but it is very closely related to emotional wellness; therefore, healthy sexual experiences can help reduce anxiety and improve mental health (Vasconcelos et al., 2024; Roth et al., 2024). Additionally, the experience of sexual wellness can enhance the quality of relationships; studies that follow individuals throughout their lives have demonstrated a reciprocal relationship between sexual well-being and the quality of romantic relationships (Vigl et al., 2024; Andreoli et al., 2024). Couples who report higher levels of sexual enjoyment and emotional connection report better endurance as couples, lower conflict rates, and an overall longer duration of their relationship, supporting the idea that sexuality aids in the longevity of relationships (Roth et al., 2024). Sexual satisfaction is one of the best predictors of satisfaction in a marriage, and over time, research indicates that individuals who are sexually satisfied are also more likely to report a higher quality of their marriage, are less likely to want to separate emotionally from their spouse, and experience more positive feelings towards each other as a couple (Yousefi & Ali, 2023; Zarei & Rakhshani, 2025). Sexual satisfaction can also provide many psychological benefits, including reduced levels of stress, increased positive thinking, and improved overall mental health, thus being a foundational piece of living a healthy lifestyle (Roth et al., 2024; Rakhshani et al., 2024). Closeness and open communication can further enhance the benefits of being sexually satisfied, as they enhance the physiological

benefits of being sexually satisfied, contributing to improved health and relationship quality (Andreoli et al., 2024; Park et al., 2023). Sexual satisfaction in marriage is closely correlated with the quality of the relationship globally; however, the customs, expectations of gender roles between men and women, and types of marriages often vary greatly between cultures, which can result in variances in the relationship between marital sexual satisfaction and the quality of the marriage (Grau, 2025; Zengin & Yıldız, 2023). According to the findings from multiple studies on various cultures, couples that take an equal approach (both individuals enjoying sexual intimacy) create a stronger bond and resolve conflict more effectively, regardless of their country of residence (Zhou, 2025). Programming that helps couples become more intimate sexually in different places, including poorer areas, leads to clear improvements in how stable marriage is and how happy people feel with their lives, which shows how important it is for everyone (Zhang & Wei, 2025).

Foreplay (physical and emotional connection before and during the sexual intercourse)

It includes touching, kissing, verbal and physical affection, and can be other acts that can facilitate sexual arousal, strengthen emotional connection, and build anticipation. It enhances physical pleasure and overall sexual satisfaction. (Arch Sex Behav. 2024) For many women, foreplay is not a part of sex but more than a sex because it gives deeper pleasure and joy, and it's more important for females than males. Foreplay is misunderstood and unprioritized and it gives a negative impact to their sexual relationships when not performed peacefully, especially for females. It mostly happens because of communication gap between partners or in a long-term relationship were the

routine get same, and they just perform sex as a job with no spark, and it reduces sexual satisfaction over time

Foreplay is a very important part of sex because it helps people get turned on through touching, feeling close, and getting mentally ready, which makes them wet, gets the blood flowing, and builds excitement, all of which are needed for good sex (Factually, 2025; MyHixel, 2025). Unlike sex, where the focus is on going inside someone, foreplay includes many things you can do without going inside, like kissing, touching, and rubbing the clitoris, which is especially important for women because they often need more time to get turned on enough to have an orgasm, and most women need to have their clitoris touched directly instead of just having sex (MyHixel, 2025; Fernandez et al., 2020). The comparison of body preparation through foreplay and intimate closeness has allowed many of us to have an increased experience of sexual pleasure regardless of if we engage in intercourse or not. Historically, global cultural differences (past-present) for foreplay came from their desire to take their time through the builds of anticipation and excitement by incorporating traditional spiritual and emotional customs versus the modern-day emphasis on individualism of a relationship in Western cultures, thereby affecting how many people within those respective societies view what is normal with respect to gender, love and enjoyment (Better in Bed, 2025a; Better in Bed, 2025b). Cultural differences still exist, for example, native and some of the Asian groups use story and dance to help stimulate the senses and create an intimate connection while the Latino cultures demonstrate strong displays of affection to exemplify how they prefer to engage in foreplay based on how they value a close relationship (Better in Bed, 2025a; Better in Bed, 2025b). New evidence has confirmed that much of this experience is driven by the

desire to create enjoyment by placing a greater emphasis on the female experience and matching foreplay with biological, psychological and social components of arousal (Factually, 2025).

Research indicates that being married can create unique aspects of sexual happiness among women, because women may feel pressure to make other people happy, and may not communicate what they want sexually to their husbands, due to the need for approval by their husbands (Saleh, 2023; Awan, 2023). Historically, women have been viewed in many cultures as caregivers of relationships, making it difficult for women to express their sexual wants to their husbands and also leading women to believe that their husband's happiness was of the utmost importance. Recent studies indicate that married women desire longer periods of foreplay that include intimacy and connection between partners, to achieve true sexual satisfaction (Güler et al., 2023; Awan, 2023). Cultural perspectives will also influence sexual intimacy and connection; some societies place greater emphasis on traditional male-female relationships, resulting in women not taking the initiative in sexual intimacy due to the belief that men are to be considered primarily in sexual encounters; as women gain increased access to the workplace, the roles of men and women will gradually converge in sexual relationships (Asim, 2024; Awan, 2023).

We can see that different perceptions regarding foreplay between men and women demonstrate that the gap between adequate foreplay for married men and married women's perceptions regarding non-penetrative intimacy. For example, married women state they do not receive adequate non-penetrative intimacy for long periods. Their reasons for not seeking out the prolonged period are that the male partner usually places

more emphasis on penetrative sexual contact and sees foreplay as a precursor to penetration, not an independent or standalone act (Saleh et al 2023; Güler et al, 2023). Research conducted in Pakistan and the Middle East also illustrates how feeling shame and feeling as though they have less power than their male partner makes it difficult for women to communicate what type of foreplay they want. However, the research states that, when both partners work together to explore what the other person wants, they can develop a better quality of life (Asim et al 2024). The importance of the research illustrates how foreplay creates a means for women to express themselves sexually in the marriage context, even when their culture creates barriers and tacit rules that suppress their sexual expression.

Studies have found that the quality of foreplay, how engaged both partners are and the duration of foreplay have an impact on consistent orgasms and overall sexual satisfaction; therefore, foreplay should not be considered simply a "warm-up" to a sexual experience, but rather an integral part of the pleasurable sexual experience (Muisse et al., 2021; Starc et al., 2022). Sexual satisfaction is a multidimensional concept, and it is impacted by not only frequency of sexual intercourse, but also the degree of kindness exhibited by their partner, emotional connection and the comfort level in expressing one's preferences during foreplay (Starc et al., 2022)

How individuals interpret and practice the art of foreplay varies widely between genders, according to current studies on the topic (Laan et al., 2021; Saleh, 2023). Most women feel that their happiness in this area of sexuality is based on their partner's willingness to touch them without having intercourse; communicate with them what consistency they enjoy and whether or not they are receiving the same level of attention from them is

critical to their sexual satisfaction. There are numerous cultural barriers women face related to the perceived lack of importance associated with the woman experiencing pleasure and limitations placed on discussions of foreplay just to name a couple that cause women to feel that there is not a congruency between what they want and what they actually get (Saleh, 2023; Starc et al., 2022). The personal experiences shared by women regarding foreplay demonstrate the importance of these experiences as contributing to the formation of an equitable dynamic between partners and their ability to care for each other within a relationship. Based on the perspective shared by married women regarding their partner's actions in relation to them, this appears to be a major aspect of how satisfied they feel about their current relationship. (Laan et al., 2021; Saleh, 2023)

## **1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Attachment theory**

The attachment theory explains how the emotional attachments formed during childhood impact adult intimate relationships, specifically in terms of sexual intimacy and closeness in marriage. A safe emotional bond creates positive communication and sexual experiences, which enhances relationships, promotes foreplay, and generally leads to improved sexual satisfaction for both partners. On the other hand, an insecure attachment can lead to feelings of anxiety or avoidance, and, therefore, reduce satisfaction with foreplay and sexual intimacy (Hurlbert et al. 2011). Therefore, feeling emotionally safe is an important component in being able to enjoy easy and good foreplay together.

## **Sexual script theory**

Sexual script theory helps explain the societal rules built into our culture through various factors (e.g., gender, culture, and association with different types of relationships) that dictate how people are supposed to behave sexually. Old sexual scripts created within traditional marriage structures have often primarily focused on male-entitlement and have viewed foreplay as something that men must do as a means of satisfying themselves. These old sexual scripts can negatively affect a woman's overall sexual satisfaction and happiness (Awoleye, 2022). Sexual scripts help illustrate the ways women feel they must be passive in sexual situations and have difficulty explicitly asking for what they would like during foreplay, thereby contributing to the ongoing nature of the sexual inequality that women experience in their sexual satisfaction.

## **Feminist theory**

By placing emphasis on females' authority and ability to break male oriented constraints on sexual activity, Feminist Theory challenges those socio-political environments controlled by males, which regulate females' sexual behaviors. Feminism advocates for incorporating the concepts of foreplay into the sexual experience as an interactive and enjoyable phase of the sexual event rather than merely viewed as an activity female or male centric. Thus, using this framework will change married females' erotic experiences by providing them with options and choices as to whether they like to engage in foreplay or not (Saleh, 2023). Within the context of this framework, power will influence gendered

expectations and cultural perspectives regarding foreplay and marital satisfaction.

### **human sexual response model**

The Human Sexual Response Model illustrates both the physiological and psychological experience of sexual arousal, satisfaction, and calmness through four levels of sexual excitement: plateau, orgasm, and feeling calm. Foreplay is very important in the excitement stage by making physical feelings and emotional closeness stronger, especially for women who might need more time or different touches to reach orgasm and sexual happiness (Dr. Mozhgan Sayyad, 2024). This model highlights how important foreplay is as both a mental and body beginning to sexual happiness in married women.

### **1.3 REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL RESERCH**

Research consistently indicates that starting sexual activity with non-penetrative touching greatly improves women's sexual happiness by increasing excitement, wetness, and emotional closeness, with research indicating that more time spent on non-penetrative touching is linked to higher rates of orgasm and overall enjoyment in relationships (Muisse et al., 2021; Saleh, 2023).

For women who are married, sexual experiences are often influenced by relationship factors, where non-penetrative touching becomes a very important element that separates good experiences from regular ones, although many describe differences because of lack of time or partner attention on intercourse (Saleh, 2023; Starc et al., 2022).

Cultural differences affect how pleasure from sexual touching may be experienced. While Westerners focus on how a woman's pleasure comes from a man's attention primarily to her clitoris and on how the man's attention and emotional connection during sexual touching prior to penetration, in contrast; non-Western cultures emphasize the effects of shame and gender expectations on women which therefore detract from them before having sex (Laan et al, 2021; Janssen, 2025). Despite these findings, there remains a gap in the literature on what married women are feeling specifically about their experiences with non-penetrative sexual touching in cultural contexts. The research tools used have been primarily quantitative and do not adequately represent this topic; for example, there is little long-term information that would allow researchers to examine the relationship between continued high levels of sexual satisfaction throughout a marriage with regard to the practice of using non-penetrative sexual touch (Starck et al, 2022; Janssen, 2025). Many cross-cultural studies evaluating non-penetrative sexual touching do not take into consideration certain socioeconomic or religious factors that can influence how women experience and perceive non-penetrative sexual touch (Muisse et al, 2021). Filling these gaps is needed to create focused efforts that increase the importance of non-penetrative touching in women's sexual health.

foreplay remains unexplored in many cultures, especially in Asian countries. Previous studies have focused on sexual satisfaction and arousal but lack going in depth of the problem of not getting satisfied sexually. There is growing need to explore women's sexual experiences and perception regarding intimacy to better understand the factors behind sexual fulfilment or unfulfillment. By exploring married women's perception of

foreplay, we can get critical insight into their sexual fantasies, autonomy, emotional connection and overall satisfaction in their sexual relation (Sex Med. 2025).

Cultural norms, religious teaching, gender differences and expectations, societal taboos and lack of sex education limit females to communicate about their desires. They can't express their needs and especially if the topic is Foreplay. Females' sexuality is shaped by the typical society that focused on only males' sexual satisfaction and health and sidelining the females emotional and sexual needs. (Sex Med. 2025)

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION:**

How do married women perceive and experience the role of foreplay in their sexual satisfaction?

#### **1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:**

It's a taboo topic and stigmatized if discussed in Pakistani culture. There is a need to explore women's sexual needs but unfortunately it is unprioritized. There is research conducted in western countries but there is a limited literature specifically on the role of foreplay in women's sexual satisfaction in eastern countries, especially in Pakistan. It helps us to identify barriers in sexual fulfillments. While much of public and clinical

research has focused on orgasm and sexual satisfaction but foreplay remains unexplored in many cultures. There is growing need to explore women's sexual experiences, especially in Pakistan, and there is a limit literature in this country that's why I chose this research

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

### **Academic Significance**

This research expands the conversation among academics because it examines a lesser known but important aspect of women's sexuality—foreplay. Furthermore, the results give strong support to existing theories about the role of intimacy on marriage by providing concrete examples of how foreplay contributes to a woman's sexual wellbeing.

### **Practical Significance**

Results from this study can assist clinicians, educators, and sexual health counselors in developing strategies and methods to create more intimate marriages. Understanding how women perceive and conceive of intimacy will assist in developing curriculum for relationship education, pre-marital counseling programs, and marriage counseling programs.

## **Cultural and Social Significance**

This research generates a discussion about women's sexual needs and desires, thus breaking down societal barriers, improving the quality of marriage, and making marriages more pleasurable to both partners. Additionally, the research may empower women to better articulate their sexual preferences and advocate for their sexual health and wellness.

### **1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The current study aims to determine how women view and respond to sexual experiences prior to having sex with their spouses and how their reaction may impact their overall sexual satisfaction in the marriage. The study focuses specifically on women who are currently married and were attracted to men before marriage, and who have been married for a minimum period, e.g., 3 years (or greater), as this will provide a broader perspective of how women view their sexual lives based on prior history with their spouse. Often times research in this area is conducted by means of collecting data in the form of opinion and personal stories (i.e., interviews, focus groups, etc.) from a select sample of people who have been chosen to be representative of a certain population, thereby, enabling the researcher to explore in-depth the experience of individuals, rather than attempting to generalize the findings through statistical analysis. In addition, the geographic and

cultural boundary of the research will also limit the generalizability of findings since the research will focus on a limited region or culture and not encompass all married women globally.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

How The relationship between married women and their perception of what occurs before sexual activity is indicative of how satisfied they are with their sexual relationship. Research has shown that the emotional connection created by foreplay is a strong indicator of how satisfied women are with their sexual experiences. While men are typically able to become aroused more quickly than women are, the same amount of time must be spent with a woman to establish a strong emotional connection before they become fully aroused and ready for sexual activity. In addition to the emotional connection created through long, deliberate fore playing, women will feel safe, valued, a greater sense of connectedness, and therefore will be more satisfied with their sexual relationships if they have had an extended time of foreplay. Research has also found that when couples take the time to establish an emotional connection through foreplay, they experience a deeper emotional connection to each other, which leads to increased intimacy for their relationship. Finally, during foreplay, women become more aware of their own body, which encourages them to explore areas of their bodies that cause them excitement, as well as to feel even closer to their partner than they would have initially. Over time, this leads women to desiring sex with their partner more frequently than they thought possible.

### **2.1 SEXUAL SATISFACTION**

Experts in love, mind, and body all agree that how good you feel about your sexual life is an emotional combination of many things. Feeling good, as far as your sexual life is

concerned, means you are happy with your own personal sexual experience(s). Having a fulfilling sex life is a combination of feelings, the body, and how well you and your partner get along (Malewska et al., as cited in poradnia-harmonia.pl, n.d.). The way individuals feel about their sexual lives is defined by multiple aspects, within various fields, to be a joyfully complex emotion. In terms of the mental aspect of sex, it refers to the pleasure felt by people regarding their personal experiences as well as the mix of feelings, body parts, and how they relate to their partners. Sexual health includes the importance of sexual safety for individuals and its association with health by promoting fun and safe experiences without coercion (World Health Organization [WHO], 2006). The studies done by marriage research discuss how sexual satisfaction impacts couples' overall happiness and builds positive and lasting relationships (Blondeel et al., 2024).

This highlights the three aspects of sex. Doing it can refer to multiple components like arousal, lubrication, or peaks (Herbenick et al., 2017). Although these may have sex easier, they don't guarantee sexual satisfaction (Herbenick et al., 2017) and are just part of sexual pleasure (Global Advisory Board on Sexual Health and Wellness, 2020). In comparison, satisfaction involves how you rated your experience as a whole and looked at factors such as Genres of communication, while at the same time, how happy you were with your intimate partner(s) (Psychotricks, 2025). When looking at how married women view and perceive foreplay, they think of it in terms of helping with physical preparation for having intercourse and increasing intimacy between partners, which leads to greater overall satisfaction with their intimate lives (and who they are having sexual intercourse with). As a result, married women report being more

satisfied with their overall sexual relationships because they develop feelings of connectedness, safety and happiness with their partner(s). Foreplay serves as an important factor in connecting the body and mind aspects of a woman's sexual experience, which is an important factor in many married women feeling fulfilled and satisfied with their sexual relationships and their overall relationship with their spouse.

There are many different factors that affect how satisfied people feel about sex within a marriage. These include emotional closeness, communication, frequency of sex, and their individual expectations. When both partners feel a sense of emotional closeness and can openly discuss their desires for sexual intimacy, it tends to lead to a higher level of satisfaction for both partners, but especially for wives. Typically, wives place more emphasis on emotional intimacy during sexual activity than men do. On the other hand, men typically place a greater importance on how frequently they engage in sexual activity than do women. Overall, women prioritize how pleasurable sex is and how emotionally connected they are to their spouse (Yeh et al., 2008). Factors such as physical health, hormonal functioning, stress, and significant life events (e.g., childbirth, aging) also play a role in how satisfied individuals are with their sexual relationships.

In the comparison of women and men, studies have illustrated some minor differences between the two sexes. It has been shown that women tend to enjoy sexual intimacy based on closeness and communication of needs, whereas men tend to enjoy having numerous sexual experiences (Yeh et al., 2008). Women may start off with many different expectations regarding intimacy but often become happier as they grow older

(Heiman, 2025). Most studies show little difference between the two sexes in terms of contentment with their marriages. Women report being slightly less satisfied with their marriages compared to men, as reflected in the responses provided by couples in therapeutic settings (Jackson et al., 2014; VanLaningham et al., 2001).

## **2.2 UNDERSTANDING OF FOREPLAY**

Foreplay is to sex as a warmup that's used prior to workout/athletic activities; foreplay allows one to connect through almost any type of activity (i.e. "Kissing," "Touching," etc.), as well as allow an increase in arousal/desire through the act of doing so (Joyful Couple, 2025). The "foreplay experience" has many benefits; warming up our bodies before we become sexually intimate, allowing for deeper emotional connection, enhancing our sexual pleasure, and allowing for increased communication between husbands and wives (Dr. Mozhgan Sayyad, 2024). Foreplay is very significant in our lives, both for the couple to connect, be comfortable with one another, and enjoy their sexual life (Joyful Couple, 2025).

Studies shows the difference of what we do and want in foreplay that often don't match; most want more foreplay than they get, and often don't understand their partners requirement, which messes with fun and it impact negatively on their sexual satisfaction (Miller & Byers, Year).

Some don't get foreplay, thinking it's just related to physical activities, missing out the emotional and psychological aspects, but it's really a full package deal for getting the most kicks (Dr. Mozghan Sayyad, 2024).

The gap between expectations and reality of foreplay hits wives harder than husbands; as they value foreplay not just for the arousal but also for being loved and improving emotional bond between them; but lack of communication and vibe change, making things not as great as they hoped (Dr. Mozghan Sayyad, 2024). Married females often say that foreplay plays an important role in their sexual satisfaction and emotional bond that link in life partnership (Joyful Couple, 2025).

Strange pieces of evidence reveal that how men perceive and experience foreplay (length of job) has an impact on how women feel about their sexual experience; therefore, it is essential for both partners to communicate openly with one another, so that they can provide each other with what they desire in order to improve sexual intimacy in marriage (Miller & Byers, Year; Dr. Mozghan Sayyad, 2024; Joyful Couple, 2025).

### **2.3 MARRIED WOMEN EXPERIENCES OF FOREPLAY**

Research indicates that most married women believe that the use of foreplay before intercourse creates intimacy, fosters trust in their partner, and prepares their bodies for engaging sexual activity. Also, it appears that most married women also perceive that foreplay is not merely an introduction to sexual intercourse; but rather, a crucial means

to create intimacy, and allow them to feel comfortable, relaxed, and emotionally close to their partners (Wisdom Within Counseling 2024). In general, many women require more time than men to achieve the highest level of arousal; therefore, most women will achieve the best level of arousal during intercourse after at least 45-90 minutes of foreplay, which generally includes physical contact, mental connection, and emotional support (Wisdom Within Counseling 2024). The additional time that they spend engaging in foreplay serves to reduce the physical and emotional stress created from their day-to-day lives, which enables women to be open to their partners and thus increases their sexual interests and pleasure (Wisdom Within Counseling 2024)

Pleasure from foreplay and orgasms may differ for everyone. However, foreplay can help many married women enjoy having orgasms and experiencing sexual satisfaction. For instance, when women experience foreplay, it provides them with physical preparation through increased moisture and sensitivity, which enhances comfort and pleasure during sexual activity (Levin and van Berlo, 2004). Furthermore, when oxytocin is released as a result of sexual activity, it forms stronger emotional bonds and feelings of connection between partners, making them feel much closer to each other than through physical feelings alone (Levin and van Berlo, 2004). The amount of foreplay needed varies from one woman to another; whereas some women may achieve orgasm with very minimal foreplay, others may require extensive foreplay to experience full sexual satisfaction (Therapevo, 2025)

According to Wisdom Within Counseling in 11/2024, when married women feel loved, they often find it easier to relax and lose track of their worries; therefore, when they

experience good foreplay prior to sexual activity, they are generally more sexually connected with their partner, and the experience will help create mutual pleasure for both partners. In contrast, if a woman feels that her partner's touch during foreplay is rushed, there may be little emotional intimacy between them and no emotional value in the experience; therefore, she will likely not enjoy her partner and might develop frustration or loss of interest in sex. In addition, if married couples do not discuss their needs and wants for sexual activity, both partners may feel disappointed in their sexual relationship, demonstrating again the importance of open communication for fulfilling sexual experiences in marriage. In summary, for married women, the value of foreplay goes beyond the physical aspect of the act itself. Good foreplay experiences enhance the overall sexual experience and subsequently enhance the emotional experience between partners. Conversely, most couples have negative foreplay experiences because of poor communication; thus, the importance of concentrating on the foreplay aspect of married sexual relationships to achieve a much deeper level of emotional and sexual satisfaction between the two partners is essential.

## **2.4 SOCIO-CULTURE CONTEXT**

A woman's experience and feelings about sexual activity prior to intercourse, as well as their satisfaction with sex, are greatly affected by how society views female sexuality. In many societies, women are expected to be sexually modest, be loyal to their husbands and support their husbands sexually before themselves. This expectation has been shown to greatly impact married women's ability to be in control of their sexuality as well as their overall sexual happiness (Saleh et al., 2023). In Iranian

culture, the traditions and the religious beliefs have been in place for many years which encourage respect and dedication in the marriage relationship. While these things encourage intimacy and closeness, they also place a significant burden on a married woman's ability to balance her work and family lives, sometimes resulting in sexual dysfunction (Saleh et al., 2022). In many African-based and Nigerian cultures, where males hold a dominant role, there are many religious laws which dictate that women must submit to their husbands sexually. This frequently limits a woman's ability to discuss sexual activity prior to intercourse or communicate their sexual likes and dislikes with their husbands, ultimately resulting in decreased sexual satisfaction (Awolaye, 2022).

The perceptions and ideals associated with marital relationships and gender role expectations for both men and women tend to be male-centred, meaning that sexual activity between husband and wife typically focuses on male sexual gratification with little emphasis placed on mutual enjoyment of sex. The male-centric sexual paradigms that exist create an environment where men's desires are valued above those of their wives, thus making it easier for men to hold their wives in a subordinate position and making it difficult for women to achieve sexual satisfaction or to feel comfortable discussing their sexual activity prior to sexual intercourse. Previous research has indicated that male-focused sexual paradigms constrain women's ability to express sexual self-confidence and sexual identity, resulting in fewer opportunities for women to experience sexual pleasure or to have open discussions about sexual activity before engaging in sexual intercourse. Additionally, it has been noted that the traditional definitions of gender roles reinforce the notion of female obedience, particularly in

religious contexts where adherence to the teachings of the faith community regarding a woman's role as a wife is to be sexually available to her husband and to support him in the execution of his duties as a husband and a leader. Women's sexual expression within the parameters defined by many religious traditions is so limited that most of the teaching and beliefs about sexuality are primarily focused on the concept of childbirth and fulfilling one's duty as a wife, leaving little to no encouragement for women to pursue how they can experience sexual enjoyment themselves. Given this limited view of women's sexual lives, there are many topics regarding women's sexual satisfaction that are not openly discussed, including pre-intercourse discussions regarding sexual activity and a woman's sexual fulfilment, thereby further restricting a woman's ability to understand and clearly define her sexual desires, and inhibiting open dialogue regarding sexual activity within the marriage.

One of the biggest problems facing married women when it comes to showing interest in or discussing sexual activity before intercourse is the cultural disapproval of discussing sexually oriented topics openly among married couples (Awoleye, 2022). This leads to misunderstandings and unaddressed sexual needs, as well as the false idea that sexual activity before intercourse is not required or is only required to bring pleasure to men. The difficulty that many women have in having discussions regarding sexual activity before intercourse, due to the social stigma associated with this topic, creates a power imbalance that puts men in charge of sexual decisions and limits the sexual satisfaction and freedom of married women (Saleh et al., 2023). The ways that married women mentally prepare for sex and the levels of satisfaction they experience during sexual intercourse are shaped greatly by the media, education, and the current

state of the world. Women are frequently portrayed in unrealistic, digitally enhanced images and various sexual actions and attitudes in print advertisements and television commercials. Through the media, women feel compelled to meet a certain standard of beauty; therefore, many women who look at the media are not happy with their bodies and are not satisfied with their sex drive and ultimately, sexual satisfaction due to these unrealistic expectations (Forever Families, 2021). Although social media and the Internet provide women with training and an opportunity to voice their sexual preferences, it can create unrealistic expectations and lead to jealousy in married life if these resources are used excessively and without adult supervision (Zhou, 2023).

Sexual education is essential because women with comprehensive knowledge of sex tend to advocate for their interests and communicate their desires clearly, leading to greater sexual satisfaction through positive foreplay (Saleh, 2023). As gender roles continue to change in today's society, there is a move towards more equitable and pleasurable sexual experiences for both genders (Saleh, 2023). However, this movement could create issues within more traditional cultures.

There is increasing research today than ever before; however, we still have a limited understanding of what the experience of foreplay is like for married women and how modern social changes (e.g., media) and changes in society have caused their experience of sexual happiness. Much of the current research is focused on (1) what men want sexually or (2) how frequently couples are having sex, rather than emphasizing the quality of foreplay, and (3) the level of emotional intimacy of women. (Saleh, 2023) Additionally, there is a gap in our knowledge concerning the long-term

study of the changing use of media and the impact on long-term sexual happiness and experience with foreplay in a marriage. For example, Zhou's (2023) study on the effects of media on sexual experience and long-term sexual happiness in marriage found that: Therefore, there has not been enough emphasis placed on the combined effects of culture, religion, media, and marriage on women during the process of adjustment from traditional (old) beliefs and practices surrounding foreplay and discussing sex, and their adaptation to newly developing beliefs and practices regarding the same. (Saleh, 2023) Additionally, much more research is required to understand the attitudes and perceptions of women and their partners regarding the role of foreplay in producing sexual satisfaction in marriage.

## **2.5 PSYCHOLOGICAL AND HEALTH RELATED FACTORS**

How women see and feel about their bodies greatly influences how they view themselves, as well as how they prepare for and enjoy sex. Married women who see their bodies and feel good about them typically have higher levels of self-esteem, which makes them feel sexier and more confident, and therefore, more interested in engaging in sexual activity; thus, a woman's level of self-esteem can greatly enhance her marriage (Meltzer & McNulty, 2010). Conversely, married women who have concerns about their bodies as a result of the media's and society's definition of a "perfect" body may become anxious, embarrassed, and reluctant to participate in sexual activity and, as a result, are less likely to engage in sexual activity (Meltzer & McNulty, 2010). The relationship between a woman's body image and her sexual enjoyment and satisfaction has been identified as an important factor (Meltzer & McNulty, 2010).

Changes in how a married woman experiences sexual intimacy once she has a child and as she ages due to a changing hormone environment can greatly affect her sexual health and how she feels about herself when engaging in sexual intimacy with her husband. Once a woman has had a child, her body goes through dramatic changes, and this will affect how she views her own body and how comfortable she feels interacting intimately with her husband; on the other hand, as women reach menopause and undergo other hormonal changes associated with aging, their sex drives can decrease, their ability to become aroused can be affected, and they may experience different sensations during the experience of orgasm (Hurlbert, 2011). The combination of these factors can cause women to desire sexual intimacy less often or feel less comfortable with it, which may mean that they need to change their approach to preparing for sex or communicate more frequently to continue having a satisfying sexual experience (Saleh, 2023). A married woman's psychological state and the presence of stress in her life have a significant impact on her sexual health. Stress, worry, and sadness can lead to decreased sexual desire and lowered levels of responsiveness, therefore making preparing for sex less pleasurable and making initiating sexual intimacy more challenging. Additionally, a woman's mental health can contribute to feelings of isolation and fatigue, which can negatively impact on her sexual experience and diminish the emotional connection created when preparing for intimacy (Forever Families, 2021). A married woman's ability to enjoy sexual relations may also be affected by events that took place early in her life. For example, having a prior negative sexual experience may result in her feeling nervous about engaging in sex or being hurt emotionally from the experience. A woman who has such a history may require assistance from a therapist or counselor to come to terms with those feelings before she has an opportunity to develop

a healthier sexual connection with her husband (Saleh, 2023). In addition, cultural beliefs and values may instill feelings of guilt and shame when a woman expresses her sexual preferences to her husband. If a woman has not been accustomed to openly discussing sexual intimacy because of her upbringing, she may be less likely to communicate with her partner what she truly desires, thereby hampering her ability to establish a mutually satisfying sexual relationship with her husband (Saleh, 2023).

## **2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Theoretical frameworks demonstrate that foreplay plays a role in a marriage's sexual happiness for married women.

### **Attachment theory**

Attachment theory indicates that feelings about relationships at early stages of life can have an impact on sexual and emotional connections in adulthood. Individuals will communicate better and feel more satisfied with their sex lives if they feel secure about their relationship but if someone does not feel safe, they may be anxious or try to avoid intimacy, which could lead to unsatisfactory sexual experiences or a lack of intimacy altogether (Hurlbert et al., 2011). It follows that for someone to have pleasurable and fulfilling foreplay, they must feel emotionally secure with their partner.

## **Sexual script theory**

Sexual script theory identifies norms that have been formed through societal influence on sexual behavior according to culture, gender and relationship type. Many of the old sexual scripts that influence married men's sexual behavior prioritized men's sexual pleasure over marital satisfaction; in contrast, foreplay was seen as a necessity rather than a moment where partners engage with one another emotionally (Awoleye, 2022). Understanding sexual scripts will help married women understand the pressures that are placed on them to conform to women's passive roles in sexual expression and why they have difficulty articulating their needs and desires when it comes to foreplay. This contributes to continued gender inequality in sexual satisfaction.

## **Feminist theory**

The feminist approach to study sexuality challenges the male-dominated systems that create the sexual experiences for women. Feminism emphasizes the "power" of women, the "strength" of women, and the breaking down of the rules surrounding sexuality as defined by men. Feminists advocate for the recognition of foreplay as a mutual pleasure activity rather than something only done by men or women, therefore the experience of married women may be changed due to this recognition of what is pleasing to them and with whom they agree to have sexual relations with (Saleh, 2023). Through this lens of power, gender role, and culture shaping how married couples experience foreplay and marital satisfaction.

## **human sexual response model**

The Model of the Human Sexual Response is a series of phases that include excitement, plateau, orgasm, and relaxation; think of these phases as the body's reaction, mind to body, produced from stimulation, to create stimulation of sexual excitement and happiness. Important to note that foreplay is crucial in generating excitement in the body and the emotional stimulation it generates, specifically for women, who sometimes require more stimulation, time, or different stimulation for them to reach orgasm and sexual happiness (Dr. Mozghan Sayyad, 2024). The model stresses that foreplay is an important factor for women who are married to achieve sexual happiness and that the knowledge of foreplay greatly influences the amount of sexual happiness a woman will have within a marriage. The amount of sexual happiness a person experiences in a marriage is related to their knowledge of foreplay, which has been shaped by society and the beliefs that have informed their understanding of foreplay and the importance of foreplay. Foreplay should not be treated as something to do (or not to do) prior to sex; rather, it should be viewed as a way to build trust, intimacy, and openness, the essential elements of a woman's enjoyment of sexual intercourse. Society, through its many accepted beliefs about sexual intercourse, has consistently dictated that sexual intercourse should always involve the male agenda; therefore, it is the male that sets the speed and type of foreplay, not the female, and thus, the female is not afforded the opportunity to express the type of foreplay she prefers.

Theory seeks to challenge these rules and provide alternatives that are fair and equitable, based upon shared interests and consensual pleasure. The Human Sexual

Response Model is another example of a way in which we can see that foreplay provides stimulation to the female body, enabling her to achieve orgasm, thereby supporting the importance of foreplay in providing sexual happiness for the female partner in married relationships. Ultimately, the above theories demonstrate that discussing and establishing boundaries and mutual respect are necessary for achieving mutual sexual happiness in marriage. Additionally, addressing societal issues and promoting equal opportunities for shared pleasure and sexual experiences for married couples will promote greater sexual satisfaction and happiness for women everywhere (Wisdom Within Counseling, 2024; Awolaye, 2022; Hurlbert et al., 2011; Saleh, 2023).

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN:**

This research uses a qualitative, phenomenological method to investigate the experiences of married women with foreplay and how these experiences connect to their feelings of sexual fulfillment. Phenomenology centers on "real-life experiences" and tries to find the meanings people give to foreplay in their marital relationships. This method works well to capture detailed personal stories, physical feelings, emotions, and relationship interactions that cannot be easily measured. The goal of the research is to create detailed descriptive understandings that can help improve sexual health and communication in marriages, both in theory and in practice. The decision to use a single location or multiple locations will depend on how easily we can reach participants and how diverse their backgrounds are.

### **3.2 ANALYSIS:**

IPA (interpretative phenomenological analysis)

It is used to explore detailed understanding of live experiences of individuals.

### 3.3 PARTICIPANTS:

#### SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

Purposive sampling technique is used to select participants that can provide relevant information.

#### INCLUSION CRITERIA

Married women of Pakistan who are currently married of at least three years of marriage with the age range 20-35 years old that lives with their husbands and are willing to provide details of their experiences and perception regarding foreplay in their sexual satisfaction.

#### EXCLUSION CRITERIA

- Married women who have long distance relationship with their husbands.
- Females who are not currently sexually active due to any reason
- Physical complication in one spouse
- Disability in one spouse (either physical or mental)
- Uneducated females

#### SAMPLE SIZE

6 married females

### 3.4 MESURES:

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE:

A versatile interview guide with some structure is created to gather detailed stories regarding foreplay, how people understand these actions, feelings and body reactions, talking with a partner, traditions or individual ideas, and how these actions affect satisfaction in sex.

*Consent form* is used to inform the participants about the procedure, allowing them to understand and decide whether to participate or not.

Then *Demographic sheet* is filled by the participants for our better understanding about the participant. It includes (age, duration of marriage, number of children, type of marriage, family type, education, employment, family income, residential area, and any mental or physical illness)

Then from *Interview questions* the interview get started.

### 3.5 PROCEDURE:

Purposive sampling technique is used to select a sample from a required population. Interview guide is related to the topic. Consent form is used to inform the participants about the procedure. After that, interviews will be conducted and then transcribed and analyzed by IPA and then we will report conclusions

### **3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION:**

Informed consent

Confidentiality and privacy

Protecting participant from harm

Professional boundaries

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## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### ANALYSIS TABLE

Superordinate themes	Subordinate themes	codes	quotes
Marital Well-Being and Relationship Fulfillment	Marital satisfaction and overall relationship quality.	Marital life satisfaction.	<p>بس نار مل جارہی ہے، کوئی خاص نہیں</p> <p>بہت اچھی الحمد للہ</p> <p>الحمد للہ بڑی اچھی جارہی ہے شکر ہے اللہ کا</p> <p>اچھی جارہی ہے</p> <p>کافی اچھی</p> <p>میری شادی اب تو اچھی جارہی ہے</p>
		Healthy relationship with spouse	<p>ہمارا ریلیشن شپ بہت اچھا ہے</p> <p>بہت انڈر سٹینڈنگ ہے کوئی زور زبردستی نہیں ہے ایک دوسرے کی فیئنگ کو ہم سمجھتے ہیں ایک دوسرے کے موڈ کو سمجھتے ہیں کہ کون کب کیا چاہ</p>

			<p>رہا ہے اور کیا نہیں جا رہا۔ سب یہ ہے</p>
		<p>Feeling relaxed and satisfy</p>	<p>جب حگ کرتے ہیں (1)  جب وہ مجھے سچ کرتے ہیں</p>
	<p>Understanding and Adjustment Between Spouses</p>	<p>Time required to understand each other</p>	<p>دو سے تین سال کم از کم لگ گئے تھے دوسرے کو سمجھنے کے لیے</p> <p>شادی کے پہلے دو سال تو بہت مشکل تھے اس کے بعد زندگی تھوڑی سی دی ہوئی شروع ہو گئی تھی اور اب الحمد للہ بہت اچھی جا رہی ہے</p> <p>گیارہ سال ہو گئے ہیں اب جا کر ایک دوسرے کو صحیح سمجھا</p> <p>میرا نکاح پہلے ہو گیا تھا جس کی وجہ سے میرے پاس تین چار مہینے تھے تو مجھے تھوڑا اپنے</p>

			<p>شوہر کے بارے میں پتہ چل گیا تھا تو شادی کے بعد میرے لیے اسان تھا</p> <p>مجھے لگتا ہے کہ دو سال کے بعد</p>
	Time Investment in the Relationship	Time devoted to each other is not sufficient	<p>کیونکہ ہم اپس میں ٹائم بہت کم سینڈ کرتے ہیں جیسے 15 دن کے بعد ہو گیا اب جواج کل زندگی جیسے چل رہی ہے نا لیکن اگر شادی کے شروع کی بات کی جائے تب زیادہ ٹائم گزرتا تھا لیکن اب اتنا نہیں گزرتا</p>
Knowledge, Awareness, and Sexual Preparedness.	Pre-Marital Knowledge and Preparation	Experiences of difficulty to build understanding	<p>مشکلات کا سامنا کرنا پڑا</p> <p>شادی کے پہلے دو سال تو بہت مشکل تھے</p>

		Difficulty communicating at the start of marriage	<p>شروع شروع میں زیادہ بات نہیں ہوتی تھی مشکل ہوتی تھی شرم اتی تھی</p> <p>شروع شروع میں ذرا شرم کا فیکٹر تھا</p>
		Self-involvement in sex education	<p>پڑھائی مکمل ہونے کے بعد میں نے اس میں خود زیادہ انوالومنٹ کی تو مجھے زیادہ پتہ چلا</p>
		Lack of sex education from family	<p>ہمارا ایک گراؤنڈ اتنا اچھا نہیں ہے پرانے وقتوں کے حساب سے اگر بات کی جائے تو ایسی باتیں ہمیں نہیں بتائی جاتی اور پیرنٹس کو بچوں کے ساتھ ایسی باتیں کرنے میں شرم آتی ہے</p>
	Foreplay Knowledge and Experience	Importance of foreplay	<p>یہ ضروری اور یہ ہونا چاہیے</p> <p>ایک کپل کے لیے ضروری ہے</p> <p>اس کی بہت زیادہ اہمیت ہوتی ہے</p>

			<p>بہت ضروری ہے وہ ہو تو ہی مزہ لاتا ہے</p>
		<p>Knowledge of foreplay</p>	<p>ہر کام شروع کرنے سے پہلے اس کا ایک پر اپر طریقہ ہوتا ہے جیسے ہم کھانا بھی بناتے ہیں اس کا بھی ایک صحیح طریقہ ہوتا ہے جیسے پیاز کا نانا ہے تو ہر چیز سٹیپ بائی سٹیپ ہوتی ہے تو ایک طرح سے یہ سٹیپ بائی سٹیپ بھی ہے اگر آپ کی سٹارٹنگ اچھی ہوگی تو اینڈ بھی اچھا ہوگا تو سٹارٹنگ آپ کی فور پلی ہی ہوگی</p> <p>ہم لوگ جو ایک دوسرے کے ساتھ ٹائم سپینڈ کرتے ہیں جیسے کسیں وغیرہ کرنا ہے جو ہم فنریکل میسکلی ہوتے ہیں وہ فورپلے اور جو بھی ہمارا سارا سٹارٹ لے ٹوزی جو ہم پورا جو ہمارا پروسیجر ہوتا ہے نا اس میں سے کیونکہ اس میں سب سے زیادہ انٹیمیسی لیول ہائی ہوتا ہے</p>

		Lack of knowledge of foreplay	فورپلے کے بارے میں علم نہیں
		Positive experience during foreplay	<p>اچھا ایسے ہو سکتا ہے کہ اگر وہ آپ کا خیال کریں سکس کے دوران اور اگر وہ آپ کے ساتھ کپور و مائز کرے آپ کا احساس کر رہا ہے آپ کا خیال کر رہا ہے تو یہ تو اچھی بات ہے</p> <p>فورپلے میں سارے ایکسپیرینس ہی اچھے ہوتے ہیں بہت مزے کے ہوتے ہیں ان میں مزہ اتنا ہے وہ سارا ایکسپیرینس ہی اچھا ہوتا ہے</p> <p>میں اگر کفر ٹیبل ہوں نا تو میں اپنے آپ کو مینٹلی ریلیکس کہوں گی اور اچھا ایکسپیرینس ہے</p> <p>کفر ٹیبل ہونا بہت ضروری ہے</p> <p>اچھا یہ ہو سکتا ہے کہ جس طرح کے آپ چاہ رہے</p>

		<p>ہو جتنا آپ نام رکھو اکر کر رہے ہو یا جتنی دیر آپ فور پلے چاہ رہے ہو یا جتنی دیر آپ ایکٹیویٹیز پر فارم کرنا چاہ رہے ہو وہ اتنی دیر ہو رہی ہے اور آپ کا سینڈ سفیکشن لیول ہے تو پھر یہ آپ کے لئے اچھا ایکسپیرینس ہے</p>	
		<p>Negative experience during foreplay</p>	<p>جیسے اگر میں تھکی ہوئی ہوں میرا موڈ نہیں ہے اور میرے ہسپینڈ جا رہے ہیں اور مجھے فورس کر رہے ہیں مجھے سمجھ نہیں رہے ہیں تو یہ میرے لیے ایک برا تجربہ ہو گا</p> <p>فورپلے کی اور ریلیشن شپ کی انڈر سٹینڈنگ نہیں ہو گی تو وہ برا ایکسپیرینس ہو سکتا ہے</p> <p>برا ایکسپیرینس تب آجائے گا کہ اگر پارٹنر خود جلدی میں ہے یا جیسے میں نے بتایا گیا کہ ان کا مین فوکس اس پر ہوتا ہے انٹرکورس پر ہوتا ہے میرا فورپلے پر ہوتا ہے اور کبھی کبھی ایسا ہوتا ہے کہ پارٹنر فورپلے کرتا کرتا</p>

			<p>دیریک انٹرکورس کی طرف چلا جاتا ہے تو ہر دفعہ اپنے آپ کو نہیں دیکھ سکتے تو اس ناظم ضرور برا لگتا ہے کہ میں فورپلے چاہتا ہوں تو پھر وہ چیز نہیں ہوتی تو اب میرے لئے ایک برا ایکسپیرینس اس کو میں کہہ سکتی ہوں</p>
		<p>Negligence of noticing good and bad experiences of foreplay</p>	<p>میں نے کبھی اس بات کو اتنا خاص نوٹ ہی نہیں کیا مجھے ضرورت ہی محسوس نہیں ہوئی میں بس ان کی ضرورت کو پورا کرتی رہی ہوں</p> <p>کبھی نوٹ ہی نہیں کیا</p>
<p>Intimacy and Sexual Connectedness</p>	<p>Importance and Role of Sexual Relationships in Marriage</p>	<p>Importance of sexual relationships between spouses</p>	<p>ہے بس ایک لمٹ تک ہونا چاہیے جتنی آپ کو ضرورت ہے کوئی اس میں زبردستی نہیں ہے کوئی آپ کو فورس نہ کرے اس کام کے لیے جب تک اگے مینٹل ریلیکسیشن نہ ہو آپ کو محسوس نہ ہو</p>

میاں بیوی کے لیے زندگی  
گزارنے کے لیے جنسی تعلق  
بہت ضروری ہے

کافی زیادہ ویلیو ہے یہ ہونا بھی  
ضروری ہے اور اس کو سمجھنا  
بھی ضروری ہے

جنسی تعلق بہت اہمیت ہے  
کی

یہ ایک ہیومن نیڈ ہے اور اس  
کے بارے میں بات کرنا اور  
اپنے شوہر سے سے کھل کے  
بات کرنا اس میں کوئی شرم کی  
بات نہیں ہے یہ لازمی کرنی  
چاہیے

بہت اہمیت ہے ریلیشنشپ  
میں اس کی بہت زیادہ ویلیو  
ہے

Sexual  
relationship

جنسی تعلق کی بہت اہمیت ہے

Effect of sexual  
relationships on  
marital life

یہ نہیں ضروری ہے کہ آپ  
کے صرف جنسی تعلق ہی

		<p>اجتھے ہوں تو وہی آپ کی شادی شده زندگی اچھی چلے گی</p> <p>جنسی تعلق بھی ایک وجہ ہو سکتی ہے اچھی شادی شده زندگی گزارنے کی</p>
	Relationship between emotional connection and sexual satisfaction	<p>ایموشنل کنکشن کا لنک سیکسول سیٹیفیکیشن سے بہت ہوتا ہے (2)</p> <p>جسمانی تعلق رشتے کو جذباتی طور پر بہت زیادہ متاثر کرتا ہے (3)</p> <p>ہمارا ایک ٹینشن والا پیریڈ چلا تھا جس میں میرے شوہر کہتے ہیں کہ جو عورتیں ہوتی ہیں وہ بہت متاثر ہوتی ہیں اس چیز سے مجھے نہیں لگتا لیکن (4)</p>
Physical affection	Use of touch to enhance connection	<p>کیسز ہی کرتے ہیں یا لگ کرتے ہیں بس</p> <p>ہم ڈانس کرتے ہیں پہلے کبھی ہم باتیں کرتے ہیں پہلے کبھی</p>

ایک دوسرے کے بالوں کے  
ساتھ کھیلنا شرارت کرنا  
گڈگری کرنا ایسے شروع  
کرتے ہیں ہم اور پھر کیسز  
وغیرہ کرنا فار ہیڈ پہ نیک پہ  
سافٹ ٹچ کرنا پھر ایک  
دوسرے کے کپڑے اتارنا  
ایک دوسرے کو فیل کرنا ایسے  
ہی ہوتا ہے پھر ہستہ ہستہ فلو  
میں چلا جاتے ہیں (3)

اب اس اتنچ میں دوسرے کے  
ساتھ ہم لوگ تو بس لیٹتے ہی  
ہیں (4)

فزیکل ٹچ بہت امپورٹنٹ ہوتا  
ہے اور کیسز وغیرہ (5)

پہلے فزیکل ٹچ ہوتا ہے اس  
کے بعد ڈپینڈ کرتا ہے کہ کس  
کو کہاں پر کس کو کس باڈی  
پارٹ پہ ٹچ چاہیے وہاں پہ اس  
کے بعد کسی ہوتی ہیں اور اسی  
سے پھر باقی سارا کیسز اور ال  
باڈی پر ہوتی ہیں (6)

		Feeling good during physical closeness	<p>اچھا گزرتا ہے</p> <p>ضروری ہے اگر یہ ٹائم ہو گا تو اب مینٹلی طور پر اپنے آپ کو سیٹھفائی یا فریش سمجھو گے</p> <p>کافی اچھا گزرتا ہے کفر ٹیبل بھی ہوتا ہے اور کافی حد تک سیٹھس فیکٹری بھی ہوتا ہے تو کوالٹی ٹائم ہوتا ہے</p> <p>میرے لیے سب سے زیادہ ضروری ہے</p>
Communication and Emotional Expression	Sexual Communication Between Partners	Lack of sexual communication	<p>پہلی بات ہے میں نے کبھی جنسی خواہش کا اظہار کیا ہی نہیں ہے</p> <p>ایک دوسرے سے جنسی تعلق کے بارے میں کوئی بات نہیں کرتی</p> <p>جنسی تعلق کے بارے میں اسانی سے بات نہیں کر لیتے</p>
		Sexual communication	اب ہم بات کر لیتے ہیں

		Nonverbal cues to communicate	میرا شرارتی موڈ ان ہو جاتا ہے تو وہ خود ہی سمجھ جاتا ہے کہ میں کیا چاہ رہی ہوں تو زیادہ کہنا نہیں پڑتا سمجھانا نہیں پڑتا
Expression of Desires and Needs		Way of expressing desires	اگر ہم لوگ کوئی مووی دیکھ رہے ہوتے ہیں کوئی رومینٹک سین ہوتا ہے اس میں تو میں اپنے شوہر کو بتاتی ہوں کہ مجھے یہ اچھا لگ رہا ہے اور آپ بھی ایسے کیا کریں
		Lack of expressing desires	کبھی بھی نہیں
		Suppression of desires due to shyness	لیکن مجھے شرم آتی ہے لیکن ان کے سامنے میں نے آج تک بات نہیں کی اور آج تک میں کبھی بھی ان کے پاس نہیں گئی مجھے بہت شرم آتی ہے
		Husband reaction on expression of desires	وہ مسکراتے ہیں اور انہیں اچھا لگتا ہے کہ میں انہیں بتاتی ہوں

			<p>کہ مجھے کیا اچھا لگ رہا ہے اور میں ان سے کیا چاہتی ہوں</p>
		Lack of recognition of understanding your partners desires	<p>انہوں نے کبھی کوئی بات ہی نہیں کی تو پھر میں بھی ان سے کوئی بات نہیں کرتی</p>
		Husband also doesn't express	
		Overlooking your partners desires	<p>نہیں میرا نہیں خیال کہ انہوں نے کبھی اتنا غور کیا ہوگا</p>
Contextual and Environmental Influences on Intimacy	Family Structure and Its Impact on Intimacy	Impact of living in a joint family on your sexual relationship	<p>جب انسان کو ٹینشن نہیں ہوتی تو اس کی باڈی بھی فریش ہوتی ہے وہ اپنے میاں کے ساتھ ٹائم بھی اچھا سپینڈ کر سکتا ہے</p>
		Effect of joint family on partners' bond	<p>کیونکہ ہم جو ائن فیملی ہیں تو اسی لیے اب وہ سارا اثر تو ہمارے ریلیشن پہ پڑتا ہی پڑتا ہے</p>

	<p>Psychological and Physical Health Influence</p>	<p>Impact of psychological problems on physical health</p>	<p>جب انسان کو ٹینشن نہیں ہوتی تو اس کی باڈی بھی فریش ہوتی ہے وہ اپنے میاں کے ساتھ ٹائم بھی اچھا سپینڈ کر سکتا ہے</p>
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Participant ID	Name initials	age	Duration of marriage	No. of children	Family type	Type of marriage	education	employment
P-1	F.A	26	3Y	-	Joint	Love	FA	Housewife
P-2	A.H	32	8Y	2	Joint	Arrange	BSC	Housewife
P-3	A.M	28	5Y	-	Joint	Arrange	BS	Housewife
P-4	Z.Z	35	11Y	2	Joint	Arrange	MA	Housewife
P-5	R.W	25	3Y	-	Nuclear	Arrange	BS	Student
P-6	A.A	25	4Y	1	Joint	Arrange	BS	Student

## RESULTS

### **Superordinate Theme 1: Marital Well-Being and Relationship Fulfillment.**

This theme represents overall marital satisfaction, relationship adjustment, emotional connection, underlining understanding and time as a vital component.

#### **Subordinate theme 1.1: Marital satisfaction and overall relationship quality**

**Codes:** Marital life satisfaction, Healthy relationship with spouse, and feeling relaxed and satisfied.

#### **Quotes:**

- "بس نارمل جارہی ہے, کوئی خاص نہیں" (It's just normal, nothing special).
- "بہت اچھی الحمد للہ" (Very good, Alhamdulillah).
- "الحمد للہ بڑی اچھی جارہی ہے شکر ہے اللہ کا" (Alhamdulillah, it's going very well, thanks to Allah).
- "ہمارا ریلیشن شپ بہت اچھا ہے بہت انڈرسٹینڈنگ ہے کوئی زور زبردستی نہیں ہے ایک دوسرے کی فیئنگ کو ہم سمجھتے ہیں" (Our relationship is very good, very understanding, no force, we understand each other's feelings).

## Subordinate theme 1.2: Understanding and Adjustment Between Spouses

**Codes:** Time required to understand each other.

### Quotes:

- "دو سے تین سال کم از کم لگ گئے تھے دوسرے کو سمجھنے کے لیے" (It took at least two to three years to understand each other).
- "شادی کے پہلے دو سال تو بہت مشکل تھے" (The first two years of marriage were very difficult).
- "کیونکہ ہم آپس میں ٹائم بہت کم سپینڈ کرتے ہیں" (Because we spend very little time together).

## Subordinate theme 1.3: Time Investment in the Relationship

**Codes:** Time devoted to each other is not sufficient

### Quotes:

کیونکہ ہم آپس میں ٹائم بہت کم سپینڈ کرتے ہیں جیسے 15 دن کے بعد ہو گیا اب جو اچ کل زندگی جیسے چل رہی ہے نا لیکن اگر شادی کے شروع کی بات کی جائے تب زیادہ ٹائم"

"گزرتا تھا لیکن اب اتنا نہیں گزرتا"

## **Superordinate Theme 2: Knowledge, Awareness, and Sexual Preparedness.**

This theme indicates that understanding of marital relationships is important for marital satisfaction.

### **Subordinate theme 2.1: Pre-Marital Knowledge and Preparation**

**Codes:** Experiences of difficulty to build understanding, Difficulty communicating at the start of marriage, Self-involvement in sex education, Lack of sex education from family.

#### **Quotes:**

- "مشکلات کا سامنا کرنا پڑا" (Had to face difficulties).
- "شروع شروع میں زیادہ بات نہیں ہوتی تھی مشکل ہوتی تھی شرم آتی تھی" (In the beginning, we didn't talk much, it was difficult, felt shy).
- "ہمارا بیک گراؤ نڈا اتنا اچھا نہیں ہے... پیرنٹس کو بچوں کے ساتھ ایسی باتیں کرنے میں شرم آتی ہے" (Our background isn't that open... parents feel shy discussing such things).

### **Subordinate theme 2.2: Foreplay Knowledge and Experience**

**Codes:** Importance of foreplay, Knowledge of foreplay, Lack of knowledge of foreplay, Positive and negative experience during foreplay, Negligence of noticing good and bad experiences of foreplay.

## Quotes:

- "یہ ضروری... وہ ہو تو تہی مزہ آتا ہے" (Essential; fun only with it).
- "نورپلے میں سارے ایکسپیرینس اچھے ہوتے ہیں" (All foreplay experiences good).
- "اگر میں تھکی ہوئی ہوں... فورس کر رہے ہیں تو برا تجربہ" (Bad if tired and forced)

## Superordinate Theme 3: Intimacy and Sexual Connectedness.

This theme represents the role of sexual intimacy, physical affection, and its link to emotional connection in marital satisfaction.

### Subordinate theme 3.1: Importance and Role of Sexual Relationships in Marriage

**Codes:** Importance of sexual relationships between spouses, Effect of sexual relationships on marital life, Relationship between emotional connection and sexual satisfaction.

## Quotes:

- "جنسی تعلق بہت ضروری ہے" (Sexual relations are very essential for marital life).

- "ایوشن کنکشن کالنگ سیکشول سٹیفیکیشن سے بہت ہوتا ہے" (Strong link between emotional connection and sexual satisfaction).
- "فزیکل ٹچ بہت اہمورٹنٹ... کیسز وغیرہ" (Physical touch and kisses very important).

### Subordinate theme 3.2: Physical affection

**Codes:** Use of touch to enhance connection, Feeling good during physical closeness.

#### Quotes:

- "حگ کرتے ہیں... کیسز ہی کرتے ہیں" (Hugs and kisses).
- "فزیکل ٹچ... اچھا گزرتا ہے... کفر ٹیبل ہوتا ہے" (Physical touch feels good, comfortable, satisfying).
- "ضروری ہے... مینٹل ریلیکس" (Essential for mental relaxation).

### Superordinate Theme 4: Communication and Emotional Expression.

Open and nonverbal communication are lacking due to shyness, but on the other hand if communicated then it has a positive and strong impact on relationships.

#### Subordinate theme 4.1: Sexual Communication Between Partners

**Codes:** Lack of sexual communication, Sexual communication, Nonverbal cues to communicate.

**Quotes:**

- "میں نے کبھی جنسی خواہش کا اظہار کیا ہی نہیں" (Never expressed sexual desire).
- "اب ہم بات کر لیتے ہیں" (Now we talk about it).
- "میرا شرارتی موڈ... وہ خود سمجھ جاتا ہے" (Naughty mood signals it; he understands).

**Subordinate theme 4.2:** Expression of Desires and Needs

**Codes:** Way of expressing desires, Lack of expressing desires, Suppression of desires due to shyness, Husband reaction on expression of desires, lack of recognition of understanding your partner's desires, Overlooking your partner's desires.

**Quotes:**

- "مووی میں رومینٹک سین... بتاتی ہوں کہ مجھے اچھا لگ رہا" (Tell him during romantic movie scenes).
- "مجھے شرم آتی ہے... کبھی ان کے پاس نہیں گئی" (Feel shy, never approached).
- "وہ مسکراتے ہیں... اچھا لگتا ہے" (He smiles, likes it).

## **Superordinate Theme 5: Contextual and Environmental Influences on Intimacy.**

This theme explores stress while living in a joint family system that results in lacking intimacy.

### **Subordinate theme 5.1: Family Structure and Its Impact on Intimacy**

**Codes:** Impact of living in a joint family on your sexual relationship, Effect of joint family on partners' bond.

#### **Quotes:**

- "جوائن فیملی... سارا اثر ریلیشن پر پڑتا ہے" (Joint family affects our relationship).
- "ٹینشن نہیں ہوتی تو... ٹائم اچھا سینڈ کر سکتا ہے" (No tension allows good time with spouse).

### **Subordinate theme 5.2: Psychological and Physical Health Influence**

**Codes:** Impact of psychological problems on physical health.

#### **Quotes:**

- "جب انسان کو ٹینشن نہیں ہوتی تو اس کی ہاڈی بھی فریش ہوتی ہے" (No tension keeps body fresh for spouse time).
- "ٹینشن والا پیریڈ چلا تھا" (Went through a tense period).

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

It's a taboo topic and stigmatized if discussed in Pakistani culture. There is a need to explore women's sexual needs but unfortunately it is unprioritized. There is research conducted in western countries but there is a limited literature specifically on the role of foreplay in women's sexual satisfaction in eastern countries, especially in Pakistan. It helps us to identify barriers in sexual fulfillments. While much of public and clinical research has focused on orgasm and sexual satisfaction but foreplay remains unexplored in many cultures. There is growing need to explore women's sexual experiences, especially in Pakistan, and there is a limit literature in this country that's why I chose this research. It is qualitative research in which phenomenological research design is used. The research question is "How do married women perceive and experience the role of foreplay in their sexual satisfaction?". The results analysis five superordinate themes; 1) Marital Well-Being and Relationship Fulfillment. 2) Knowledge, Awareness, and Sexual Preparedness. 3) Intimacy and Sexual Connectedness. 4) Communication and Emotional Expression 5) Contextual and Environmental Influences on Intimacy.

Marital Well-Being and Relationship Fulfillment theme represents overall marital satisfaction, relationship adjustment, emotional connection, underlining understanding and time as a vital component. Research has demonstrated that foreplay enhances relationships by forming stronger emotional connections between partners and encouraging both partners to enjoy sexual moments together as well as provide each

other sexual pleasure. Although all women benefit from extended foreplay, Iranian women who live in less liberal societies tend to have more substantially different experiences than women in Western Countries due to cultural standards (Shariati et al., 2025). Midlife women who are adjusting to menopause and personal changes also reported valuing intimacy in their lives rather than simply seeking the result of sexual success (Alotaibi, 2025).

Knowledge, Awareness, and Sexual Preparedness theme indicates that understanding of marital relationships is important for marital satisfaction. Past experiences and awareness of arousal need shape women's sexual preparedness regarding foreplay and contribute to their anticipation of what sexual expectations may occur within the bounds of marriage. According to participants' comments, there was a marked difference between satisfaction with premarital masturbation and dissatisfaction with marital foreplay and the lack of sexual knowledge reduces the women's level of preparedness (Shariati et al., 2025). Recent research has also established that emotional closeness mediates commitment to marriage and increases a woman's satisfaction level, thus equipping her with greater capacity to respond positively to foreplay that is consistent with the preferences she has learned (Author, 2025).

Intimacy and Sexual Connectedness represent the role of sexual intimacy, physical affection, and its link to emotional connection in marital satisfaction. Through touch and responsiveness, foreplay improves sexual connectedness which causes oxytocin release and results in increased trust. The increased arousal, lubrication, and bonding that women experience during their sexual encounters is significantly correlated to the

stimulation of the breasts and nipples. (PsyPost, 2025). Affectionate behaviors (such as cuddling) that are performed immediately prior to the act of intercourse (foreplay) amplify the intimacy factor and lead to an enhanced body image among women and an increased degree of relational happiness within a committed relationship (South Denver Therapy, 2025).

Communication and Emotional Expression theme shows that Open and nonverbal communication are lacking due to shyness, but on the other hand if communicated then it has a positive and strong impact on relationships. Women who openly express their preferences for foreplay are improving both their emotional intimacy and their ability to achieve orgasm within the confines of marriage. Women who disclose their wants/needs through communication have improved coping abilities regarding pain and have greater satisfaction levels when having a committed relationship (Velten et al., 2024). Emotional expression, when combined with foreplay, directly influence the level of intimacy within a marriage (Jesuorobo, 2023).

Contextual and Environmental Influences on Intimacy theme explores stress while living in a joint family system that results in lacking intimacy. Sociocultural norms and partner dynamics shape foreplay perceptions, often constraining women's agency. Gender inequities and body image issues during intimacy reduced foreplay enjoyment, exacerbated by environmental factors like prior relationships (Shariati et al., 2025). Caregiving contexts and personality traits further influenced foreplay's role in older couples' pleasure (Yorgason, 2023)

Foreplay meets relational needs and contributes to marital well-being when women's sexual knowledge, preparedness and expectations align with reality. Sexual connection and intimacy between partners grow through touch and affection, while open communication and emotional sharing help partners adapt to each other; this adaptation is also influenced by the context in which they live (e.g., culture, stressful experiences).

All the themes and related literature mostly have the same results. It helps us to identify barriers in sexual fulfillments.

## **LIMITATIONS**

- It is a Taboo topic and majority hesitate to discuss it.
- Lack of sex education.
- Literature gap
- culturally stigmatized
- sensitive topic

## **IMPLICATIONS:**

- Taboo topic
- Bridging the gap between expectation and reality
- Community based awareness
- Marital counseling

## **SUGGESTIONS:**

Seminars on sex education should be given to Pakistani females to educate them about their sexual health. We must spread awareness together. More research should be done on this topic to find out more factors. Premarital counseling must be provided before getting married.

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BULC/PSY/2025/309



**Bahria University**  
Discovering Knowledge

20<sup>th</sup> October 2025

**Permission Letter**

**Subject: Request for Cooperation for Collecting Research Data**

**To Whom It May Concern**

**Respected Sir/Ma'am,**

Bahria University is a Federally Chartered Public Sector University. Bahria University was established by the Pakistan Navy in 2000. Since then, it has steadily grown into one of Pakistan's leading higher education institutions with campuses in Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore.

The Department of Professional Psychology (DPP) was established in 2018. The Department offers both BS Psychology and MS Clinical Psychology Programs, aims to give quality education, and promotes ethical and competent psychology practice in Pakistan.


*Ms. Aimen Azeem, a student of Bahria University Lahore Campus, currently enrolled in BS Psychology, VIII Semester. She is conducting final year research entitled "Experiences of Married Women about Perception of Foreplay"*

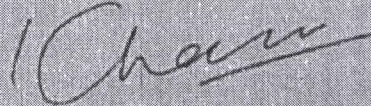
For this purpose, she needs to collect data from your institute/organization. The information provided will remain confidential, and we will ensure the ethical responsibility of all our participants. The results concluded from the collected data will be used only for educational purposes. The identity of any participant will not be disclosed at any time.

We would like to seek your cooperation in conducting this research. Your assistance in our scientific pursuit will be highly appreciated and acknowledged.

Thanking you in anticipation.

**Supervisor**

  
**Ms. Noreen Fatima**  
Sr. Lecturer

  
**Dr. Khawer Bilal Baig**  
Senior Associate Professor/ HOD  
Department of Professional Psychology  
Bahria University Lahore Campus

## INFORMED CONSENT

Bahria University Lahore Campus

I'm a student of BS psychology from Bahria University Lahore Campus. I'm conducting a research project for the purpose of my degree completion and as well as to make it publish, under the supervision of Miss Noreen Ftima. You are being asked to take part in this research. You have been asked to participate in this research. The purpose of this research is to understand the married women's perception and experiences regarding foreplay in their in their sexual satisfaction. You will be asked open-ended questions.

To participate in this research please review carefully the following points. Your review indicates that you agree to participate in this research study.

- 1) The result of this research will be used for research purposes only.
- 2) All personal data will be kept confidential.
- 3) I'm free to ask any questions related to research
- 4) If I wish to withdraw from the research, I may do it at any time without any penalty.

Participant Signature:

Date:

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For any query, contact: Aimen Azeem ([aimrana2502@gmail.com](mailto:aimrana2502@gmail.com))

## DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_

2. Duration of marriage \_\_\_\_\_

3. Number of children \_\_\_\_\_

4. Family type

- Joint
- Nuclear

5. Type of marriage

- Arrange
- Love

6. Education level \_\_\_\_\_

7. Employment status

- Housewife
- Working woman

8. Family income \_\_\_\_\_

9. residential area

- rural
- urban

10. have you ever been treated with any medical or mental illness?

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## تحقیقی سوالات

اپ کی شادی شدہ زندگی کیسی جا رہی ہے

کیا شادی سے پہلے اپ کو میاں بیوی کے ازدواجی تعلق کے بارے میں علم تھا

شادی کے کتنے عرصے تک اپ کو ایک دوسرے کو جاننے کا موقع ملا

اپ کے ایس میں ازدواجی تعلقات کیسے ہیں

اپ کے نزدیک جنسی تعلق کی کیا اہمیت ہے

کہ اپ دونوں میاں بیوی ایک دوسرے سے جنسی تعلق کے بارے میں اپ ثانی سے بات کر لیتے ہیں

اپ اگر اپنی جنسی خواہش کا اظہار کرتی ہیں تو اپ کے شوہر کا کیا رد عمل ہوتا ہے

اپ کے خیال میں شوہر بیوی کے درمیان قربت سے پہلے ہی محبت کا کیا مطلب ہوتا ہے

اپ اور اپ کے شوہر ایک دوسرے سے پیار یا لگاؤ اظہار کرنے کے لیے کیا کرتے ہیں

اپ کے لیے یہ محبت بھرا وقت کتنا ضروری ہے تاکہ اپ کو سکون اور خوشی محسوس ہو

اپ بتا سکتی ہیں کہ عام طور پر یہ وقت (جب اپ جسمانی طور پر ایک دوسرے کے قریب ہوتے ہیں) کیسا گزرتا ہے

اپ کے نزدیک کیا ایسی چیزیں ہیں جو آپ کے لیے آپ کے تعلق کو اچھا یا برا تجربہ بنا سکتی ہیں

آپ کی اور آپ کے شوہر کے درمیان محبت بھر اوقت (جسمانی تعلق) ہوتا ہے تو اس سے آپ کے رشتے کو جذباتی طور پر کس طرح سے متاثر کرتا ہے

کیا آپ اپنے شوہر سے بات کرتی ہیں کہ آپ کو کیا پسند ہے اور کیا نہیں

اگر ہاں تو کیسے

جب آپ اپنے شوہر سے بات کرتی ہیں اپنی پسند اور ناپسند کے بارے میں تب آپ کے شوہر کا کیا رد عمل ہوتا ہے

آپ کو قربت کے وقت زیادہ سکون اور اطمینان کب محسوس ہوتا ہے

کیا آپ سمجھتی ہیں کہ معاشرہ اور مذہب اس بارے میں آپ کے خیالات پر اثر ڈالتا ہے

آپ دوسری شادی شدہ عورتوں کو کیا مشورہ دینا چاہیں گی کہ شوہر کے ساتھ محبت اور سمجھ کیسے بڑھائی جائے

# Experiences of married women about perception of foreplay

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