



ISSM Webinar Series

Joint ISSM-JSM Webinar on “SEX & COVID-19: THE STATE OF THE SCIENCE”



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Hypersexuality, Sexual Violence, & Pornography Utilization

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Evidence from previous epidemics and humanitarian crisis (Ebola, Zika)

- Increased sexual violence within intimate relationships (Mazza, et al., 2020; Roesch, et al., 2020; Zero & Geary, 2020)
- Intensification of rape, female genital cutting, adult/child marriages (...) (Emezue, in press)
- Less post-rape care (Zero & Geary, 2020)
- Sexualized behaviour toward children (Cluver et al., 2020; Fegert et al., 2020)
- Increased sexual abuse of children during school lockdown (Cluver et al., 2020)



Effects lasted until 2 years after epidemics



COVID-19 and mental health



Increased distress

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Anger
- Boredom
- Frustration
- PTSD

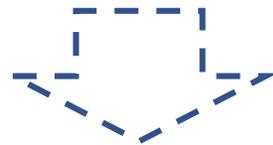
Decreased coping opportunities

- Less access to healthcare
- Less social and family support
- Less leisure resources



Professionals' expectations during COVID-19

Mental health **boosting effects** on hypersexuality, sexual violence and pornography use



Intimate Partner Violence - Gender-based violence - Violence against children



Theoretical assumption

Hypersexuality, Sexual Violence, Pornography

Lack of emotional regulation



Sexualized coping behavior



Evidence from COVID-19

- Increase in pornography consumption (Pornhub, 2020)
- Increase in child pornography; online offending (Europol, 2020, National Crime Agency, 2020)
- Expected exponential rise in sex crimes and sexual abuse of children during lockdown (Council of Europe Portal, 2020)

German survey (Jung et al., 2020):

5% (n = 3.545) reported Intimate Partner Violence; 30.2% reported Sexual Violence



1 month prevalence \approx 1 year prevalence



Evidence from COVID-19 (unpublished data)

- Portuguese clinical sexologists' perceptions on the impact of COVID-19 in Sexual Health:
 - Clinical themes
 - Relationships themes
 - Sex & Tech themes -> pornography consumption as coping



Take home messages

- To consider specific stressors emerging from COVID-19 (e.g., unemployment, work/domestic overload, new family roles)
- To consider the interplay between mental health, dysfunctional emotional regulation and hypersexuality-like conditions or violence
- Promote e-Health to increase the monitoring of emotional symptomatology and risk of violence
- To consider sexual violence in intimate relationships (referral may be needed)



I-SHARE

International Sexual Health And REproductive Health Survey in the time of COVID-19

<https://ishare.web.unc.edu/>

- Couple and family relationships
- Sexual behavior
- Access to contraceptives
- Access to Reproductive Health services
- Sexual and gender-based violence
- Partner violence
- Female genital mutilation/cutting and early/forced marriage
- Mental health
- (...)



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