

## Thai Youth's First Masturbation: 23-Year Study of Medical Students.

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**Abstract** Masturbation is the most favorite sexual outlet of young people. This study aimed to explore the first practice of masturbation as well as the difference between both sexes on first clinical year medical students. More than ninety per cent of both males and females participated. Majority are Buddhist, almost all are not married (N = 2735; 1552 males, & 1173 females) aged 18-37 (with a mean of 21.14 years in males and 20.70 in females) at Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University during the academic year 1982-2004. Data were collected through an anonymous questionnaire. Results reveal that 96 % of males and 40% females did masturbation ( $p < 0.001$ ). Average first starting age is 13.57 yrs old for males and 15.09 for females. First masturbation accounted for 59.25% of male first ejaculation and 77.52% for first female orgasm. The intrinsic as well as especially extrinsic backgrounds of the phenomena are discussed.

Key words: Thai, youth, masturbation

**Abstrak.** Masturbasi merupakan penyaluran seksual paling favorit di antara remaja. Studi ini mengeksplorasi awal praktik masturbasi mahasiswa kedokteran tingkat klinis awal. Lebih dari 90 % jumlah mahasiswa berperan serta, umumnya beragama Buddha dan hampir semuanya tidak menikah (N = 2735; 1552 pria, & 1173 perempuan) dari Fakultas Kedokteran Universitas Mahidol dari tahun akademik 1982-2004, dengan rentang usia 18-37 tahun (rerata 21.14 pada pria dan 20.70 pada perempuan). Data diperoleh melalui kuesioner anonim. Hasil-hasil menunjukkan 96 % pria dan 40% perempuan melakukan masturbasi ( $p < 0.001$ ). Rata-rata usia pertama kali masturbasi adalah 13.57 tahun pada pria dan 15.09 tahun pada perempuan. Pengalaman pertama kali menemukan sendiri oleh sejumlah 54.39% pria dan 73.42 % perempuan. Sisanya memperoleh pengetahuan tersebut dari sumber lain. Masturbasi pertama kali dengan ejakulasi dialami oleh 59.25% pria dan orgasme oleh 77.52% perempuan. Didiskusikan latar belakang intrinsik dan terutama ekstrinsik terjadinya fenomena tersebut.

Kata kunci: Thai, remaja, masturbasi

Masturbation refers to sexual stimulation, especially of one's own genitals and often to the point of orgasm, which is performed manually, by other types of bodily contact (except for sexual intercourse), by use of objects or tools, or by some combination of these methods. Masturbation is the most common form of autoeroticism and the most favorite sexual outlet of young people (Atwood, & Gagnon, 1987) at the same incidence between males and females in many societies where sexual liberal exists especially in the Western but not in some Oriental society where double standard of sexual practice is still strong

(Clement, Schmidt, & Kruse, 1984; Chan, 1990). This study aimed to explore the first practice of masturbation of a group of youths in Thailand as well as the difference between males and females' practice.

### Method

First clinical year medical students at Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University of academic year 1982-2004 were asked to voluntarily answer the anonymous questionnaires with the meaning of masturbation (Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebbard, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebbard, 1953) as self stimulation manually or by use of objects or tools resulting in orgasm (with or without ejaculation for males). This research was approved by the Human

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Table 1  
*Discovery of First Masturbation*

Male	Female
Self discovered (54.39%)	Self discovered (73.42%)
Being told by friend (22.86%)	Reading adult book (17.21%)
Reading adult book (14.20%)	Seeing someone masturbating (2.83%)
Seeing someone masturbating (3.45%)	Previous heterosexual mutual masturbation (2.39%)
Previous homosexual mutual masturbation (1.69%)	Cinema/VDO/Internet (2.01%)
Cinema/VDO/Internet (1.69%)	Being told by friend (1.08%)
Reading and being told by friend (0.74%)	Previous homosexual mutual masturbation (0.87%)
Previous heterosexual mutual masturbation (0.67%)	
Elder brother taught (0.06%)	
Previous heterosexual mutual masturbation + reading adult book (0.06%)	
Adult book + VDO (0.06%)	

Research Ethical committee, Faculty of Medicine Ramathbodi Hospital and consent is agreed by all participants.

## Results

More than ninety per cent of both males ( $n=1552$ ) and females ( $n=1173$ ) participated. Most (90%) are Buddhist, almost all are not married (only few are). Mean age is  $21.14 \pm 1.45$  (18-37) yrs old for males and  $20.70 \pm 1.17$  (18-29) for females. Ninety six per cent of males practised masturbation while 40.06% females did,  $p < 0.001$ . Mean age at first masturbation was  $13.57 \pm 2.20$  (4-22) yrs old for males and  $15.09 \pm 3.28$  (7-22) for females ( $p < 0.001$ ). First masturbation was self discovered by 54.17% of males, 72% of females ( $p < 0.001$ ). The rest was being informed via other sources e.g. being told by someone, learning from adult books/VCD/DVD, seeing someone masturbating or else (see Table 1). Genital rubbing by hand without or with other aids were used as first masturbation technique by 78.56% males and 50.95% females respectively ( $p < 0.001$ ); other techniques were genital pressing against sleep objects/floor/chair/table edge, water jetting to genitalia, and breast carressing (Table 2). First masturbation accounted for 58.27% of male first ejaculation and 77.52% for first female orgasm.

## Discussion

Almost all males did masturbation while less than half of females did at early teens but male started earlier though males' reproductive maturation is later. Intrinsic factor i.e. reproductive maturation would be responsible for this early teen masturbatory activity but extrinsic factors e.g. social culture as well as sexual liberal factors would play important roles for the earlier male experience. Sexual liberality is more accepted for males than females in the Thai society as evidenced by e.g. self discovery of first masturbation happened less among males than females. Males learnt how to do masturbation from more various sources than females, male first ejaculation was experienced via more means than females first orgasm and genital rubbing by hand was more practiced among males than females. Generally, it is thought that most people begin masturbation when reaching puberty, but it is not uncommon to begin much earlier as shown here: 3 years old for male and 7 years old for female. Masturbation has been observed in both male and female children but without male ejaculation (Leung & Robson, 1993; Yang, Fullwood, Goldstein, & Mink, 2000).

Numerous and various techniques led to orgasm of first masturbating experience, common ways to both sexes included direct stimulating genital area by rubbing or pressing, either with the hand or against an object such as a pillow/ mattress/ clothes/ chair/ edge of

Table 2  
*Techniques Used for First Masturbation*

Male	Female
Genital rubbing by hand only (78.01%)	Genital rubbing by hand only (54.76%)
Lying face down and genital pressing against sleeping objects/ bed/ floor/ armchair/ bath tub (18.42%)	Lying face down and genital pressing against sleeping objects/bed/floor (15.00%)
Genital pressing against pillow (0.54%)	Hugging side-pillow (10.00%)
Genital rubbing by hand + lying face down and genital pressing against sleeping objects (0.41%)	Water jetting (4.28%)
Genital pressing against thighs (0.32%)	Crossing legs and clenching muscles (2.85%)
Pressing against pants (0.26%)	Genital pressing against blanket (2.14%)
Water jetting (0.20%)	Genital rubbing by hand + lying face down and genital pressing against sleeping objects/bed/floor (1.90%)
Crossing legs and clenching muscles (0.20%)	Genital pressing against pillow (1.42%)
Hugging side-pillow (0.20%)	Standing and genital pressing against table edge (0.47%)
Vibrator (0.20%)	Lying face down and genital pressing against table edge (0.47%)
Genital rubbing by hand + genital pressing against mattress (0.13%)	Sitting and genital pressing against chair (0.47%)
Lying on back and genital pressing against pants (0.06%)	Riding bicycle (0.47%)
Lying on back and genital pressing against side-pillow (0.06%)	Caress breasts & nipples (0.24%)
Caressing breasts & nipples (0.06%)	Sitting and genital pressing against underwear (0.24%)
Doll (0.06%)	Genital rubbing by hand + breasts caressing (0.24%)
Sitting and genital pressing against chair (0.06%)	Genital rubbing by hand + pressing against pillow (0.24%)
Sitting and genital pressing against underwear (0.06%)	Genital pressing against pants (0.24%)
Genital pressing against exercise machine (0.06%)	Vaginal insertion of object (0.24%)
Genital pressing against picture (0.06%)	
Genital pressing against book edge (0.06%)	
Genital pressing against bed edge (0.06%)	
Genital pressing against arm (0.06%)	
Genital pressing against shower faucet (0.06%)	
Fish nibbling (0.06%)	
Calves clenching (0.06%)	

furniture items. Water jetting to genitalia/caressing breast and nipple/ sex aids e.g. vibrator, doll, object; were also enjoyed by some. Tight crossing the legs and clenching the muscles can create pressure on female genitals which can lead to orgasm as well. Common positions included lying on back, lying face down, standing, sitting. Some discovered while performing other activities, such as riding a bicycle or doing exercise.

Masters and Johnson as well as Kinsey (Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebbard, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebbard, 1953; Masters & Johnson, 1966). advanced the concept that sexuality is an important aspect of development and sexual behavior should be

an enjoyable feather of human sexual behavior. Besides being an outlet for sexual tension for both male and female adolescents, there are other important considerations to masturbation. One cannot become pregnant from masturbation, nor one can father a child through masturbatory practices. It would be highly unusual to acquire a sexually transmitted infection from masturbation. One does remain virgin if masturbation is substituted for intercourse. Masturbation allow the adolescent to understand his or her body and sexual response; it also enable the teen to understand what practices give rise to his or her sexual gratification. And masturbation may delay the onset of sexual intercourse.

## Conclusion

Youths of Thai society practised masturbation as youths of other society at the early teen age but more Thai males did than Thai females. Most of the first masturbation was self discovery and direct genital rubbing by hand or pressing against object were common among both sexes.

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