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Department or Program The Biobehavioral Health Program Year manuscript completed 2020
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The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

**COLLEGE WOMEN'S CONDOM USE: A COMPREHENSIVE RELATIONSHIP
SCIENCE APPROACH**

A Dissertation in

Biobehavioral Health

by

Jessica Salas-Brooks

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

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Abstract

The current study sought to examine the association between indicators of relationship quality, relational factors, demographic factors, and condom use at last penile-vaginal intercourse among heterosexual female college students (ages 18-22) using logistic regression analyses. Psychometric properties of the following scales were examined using exploratory factor analysis, correlation analyses, and Cronbach's alpha: the modified Perceived Relationship Quality Components Inventory (PRQC) (Fletcher, Simpson, & Thomas, 2000), the revised Sexual Decision-Making Dominance Subscale (Harvey, Bird, Galavotti, Duncan, & Greenberg, 2002), and the Global Measure of Sexual Satisfaction (Lawrance, Byers, & Cohen, 1998). The study utilized a cross-sectional design to administer an anonymous online survey (via Qualtrics) of 799 heterosexual female college students with an average age of 19.87 who were majority Caucasian/White (78.1%). About half of the study participants ($N=404$) reported not using a male latex condom at last penile-vaginal intercourse. Study findings revealed that as global perceived relationship quality increased, the odds of using condoms at last penile-vaginal intercourse decreased. Additionally, young women who independently (or with their sexual partners) decided when to engage in sexual intercourse were less likely to use a male latex condom at last penile-vaginal intercourse (compared to young women whose partner solely made the decision). Such findings highlight the importance of considering the relational context in which risky sexual behavior (i.e., unprotected sex) occurs.