Exploring the Connection between Problematic Pornography, Personality and Emotional Adjustment

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ABSTRACT

Background: The topic of Sexually explicit materials and the discussion of sex is always a limitation to most of the developing country such as India. The study aims to understand the relationship between pornography viewing, personality and Emotional adjustment among young and unmarried Indian adults.

Method: Data was collected from 96 young adults (33 males and 63 females) considering the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study. Snowball sampling design was used to recruit the participants for the study. Statistical Analysis was done using SPSS.

Result: The study found the gender difference in the use of pornography among males and females. And there exists a relationship between problematic pornography, four dimensions of personality and Emotional adjustment.

Conclusion: There exists a positive and significant relationship between problematic pornography consumption and Emotional adjustment, Openness to Experience and Extraversion (significant at 0.05 level). A highly significant and positive relationship was found between problematic pornography consumption and Neuroticism (significant at 0.01 level). Also, the study found that there exists a negative correlation between problematic pornography consumption and Conscientiousness (significant at 0.01 level). There have been insignificant relationship found between pornography consumption and agreeableness.

Key Words: Adjustment, Consumption, Emotional, Pornography, Watching

INTRODUCTION

The term 'Pornography' is subjective. Obscene, Erotica and Pornography are the terms which are used interchangeably. Pornography is defined as the activity which is done by the prostitutes whereas Erotica is defined as the sexual quality work done by the artists and obscene refers to the things which are offensive to the moral values.¹ So, basically pornography is the content which creates sexual arousal from the various form of mediums such as Internet videos, texts, magazines and nooks. A various psychologist has termed the "Personality" in various forms. Cattell (1950) defined personality as "the way how will a person react in a particular situation whether its social or environmental situation. Our personality considers both our overt and covert behaviours". The personality also refers to the concept of organization and adjustment of an individual to the environment (Eysenck, 1953). It is the amalgamation of characteristics of an individual that helps them to modify themselves and able to

adapt themselves in the changing environment (Kretch and Crutchfield, 1969).²

Adjustment is a process that involves fulfilling or balancing between the needs of the individual and the necessity of the surroundings. Adjustment starts with the need of the individual and is over as soon as the need of the individual gets fulfilled. Adjustment is the demands of the environment imposed on us that are been reacted by individuals as internal or external reactions. While learning or knowing about adjustments, it is important to understand the two perspectives of adjustments, which is process and achievement. Achievement deals with the quality i.e. how efficiently and productively an individual is performing his or her roles or duties. And process deals with the way's individual has dealt with the external environment.³

Various researches have studied the association between personality and pornography/sexual addiction. Males were found to be highly addictive as compared to females. Males

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were found to be high on openness to experience and low on the neuroticism. There exists a positive correlation between sexual addiction and the openness to experience and neuroticism and negative correlation with the conscientiousness (Shimoni et al, 2018).⁴ A study done by Egan and Parmar in 2013 also found that the higher the consumption of the cyber pornography, higher will be the neuroticism (experiencing the negative emotions such as sadness, anxiety) and lower will be agreeableness (manipulative and highly competitive) and conscientiousness (decrease the state of managing and goal directing behaviours). This indicates the consumption of pornography has a significant relationship with personality factors.⁵

The extensive researches have been done which reveals that the consumption of pornography has both positive and negative impact on the individual's life. Hence this study is examined to explore whether there exists any connection between the consumption of problematic pornography, personality and adjustment at four domains (Home, Health, Social and Emotional) among Indian adults. Existing literature has been done specifically on the problematic pornography and its impact on the personality of the individual but there is a dearth of the researches on the impact of problematic pornography on personality and adjustment of the individual in the Indian scenario.

So, the objective of the study was to understand if there exists any relationship between problematic pornography, personality factors and the adjustment at home, social, health and emotional aspects. Also, to understand if there exists any difference in the consumption of pornography in the Indian scenario.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study aims to explore the relationship between problematic pornography, personality and adjustment among young adults. For this purpose, data were collected from 96 young adults (63 females and 33 males) residing in Delhi NCR, ages 18 to 28 years old. Other demographic details such as age, education qualification (Figure 1), occupation, how often do you watch pornographic content in a week were taken from the participants. Snowball sampling technique was used to select the participants. The tools used to measure the variables were:

Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale (PPCS) was developed by Bthe et al (2017). The scale has 18 items and is used to measure addiction towards pornography. The scale has 7 dimensions: salience, mood modification, relapse, conflict, tolerance and withdrawal. It is rated on 7-point Likert scale ranging from Never to All the time. For scoring, add all the scores of the items. If the subject has scored more than 76, then this indicates the problematic consumption of

pornography.⁶ Big Five Inventory was developed by John and Srivastava (1999). The scale has 44 items and is used to measure personality factors. The scale has 5 dimensions: Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. It is rated on 5-point Likert scale ranging from Disagree strongly to Agree Strongly.⁷ Bell adjustment Inventory was developed by Ojha in 1994 (Indian Adaptation). The scale has 140 items in totality that measures the adjustment level of the individual at 4 areas: Home, social, Emotional and Health. The subjects have to respond in Yes or No. Higher the scores, poorer will be the adjustment and vice versa. For this study, data has been collected from subjects only on Emotional Adjustment.⁸

Inclusion Criteria:

- The subjects who access Pornography or Sexually Explicit Materials for at least 6 months would be the sample of the study.
- The participant had to be unmarried.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Participants with any history of psychopathology would be excluded.
- The married participants would be excluded.

RESULTS

Data were analysed using SPSS 20. Table 1 describes the demographic details of the sample and the sample have been categorised based on the education qualification of the participants.

Table 2 describes the mean, standard deviation and standard error mean of the sample.

Table 3 describes the difference in the consumption of pornography among males and females. There exists a significant difference in the consumption of pornography among males and females. The value is significant at both the levels 0.01 and 0.05 level.

Table 4 describes the relationship between Problematic pornography consumption, Emotional Adjustment and Big five Inventory. There exists a positive and significant relationship between problematic pornography consumption and Emotional adjustment, Openness to Experience and Extraversion (significant at 0.05 level). A highly significant and positive relationship was found between problematic pornography consumption and Neuroticism (significant at 0.01 level). Also, the study found that there exists a negative correlation between problematic pornography consumption and Conscientiousness (significant at 0.01 level). There have been insignificant relationship found between pornography consumption and agreeableness.

DISCUSSION

The present study was done to bridge the gap in the stigma related to the topics of sexuality. Hence, the study was carried out to understand how young adults are more influenced by the concepts of sexuality and towards the media such as pornography. Also, to understand the impact of the consumption of problematic pornography on the Emotional Adjustments and Personality factors (Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism). The study found that there exists a significant difference in the consumption of pornography among young and unmarried males and females. A study by Hald who has investigated the gender difference in the consumption of pornography among young adults (18 years to 30 years old). The study also reveals that there exists a difference in the approach and consumption of pornography among males and females. Males consume more sexually explicit materials as compared to female.⁹

There exists a positive and significant relationship between problematic pornography consumption and Emotional adjustment. Due to the dearth of the literature in the context of pornography and its impact on the adjustment. The existing researches in context to emotions; Bargogna et al in their study has shown that Men's prohibitive emotionality and heterosexist belief systems anticipated control troubles with consumption of pornography and using erotic content to get away from negative feelings and emotions.¹⁰ Significant and positive relationship was found between problematic pornography consumption and Neuroticism (significant at 0.01 level), Extraversion and Openness to Experience (significant at 0.05 level). Also, the study found that there exists a negative correlation between problematic pornography consumption and Conscientiousness (significant at 0.01 level). There has been an insignificant relationship found between pornography consumption and agreeableness. This is supported by the study Borgogna & Aitawho have examined the relationship between various personality traits and four dimensions of viewing problematic pornography. 821 participants participated in an online survey of US. Out of which 769 participants were fit to data for analysis, out of which 253 males and 516 females participated. Results indicated that there exists a significant positive correlation between four dimensions of problematic pornography watching such as excessive use, control difficulties functional problems and avoidance of negative emotions and neuroticism among males. Besides, males showed a negative association between openness to experience and functional problems. Whereas for women, openness to experience and excessive use, avoidance of negative emotions is significantly positively correlated. In addition to this, neuroticism is positively associated with the avoidance of negative emotions and conscientiousness is negatively correlated with control difficulties.¹¹

Above mentioned literature is the evidence that has strongly supported this study. This study in Indian perspective will provide the researchers, psychologist about the problems faced by the young adults due to the pornography viewing and will help them to prepare the intervention plans for the young adults who are facing difficulties in their inter-personal and intra-personal relationships.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the current study reveal that there is a difference in the viewing of pornography among Indian males and females. And indicates that there is a positive association between PPCU and four dimensions of Personality (Openness to experience, conscientiousness, Extraversion, Neuroticism) and Emotional Adjustment.

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Table 1: Demographic Details (Education qualification)

	10+2	Undergraduates	Postgraduates	Total
Males	4	23	06	33
Females	11	45	07	63
Total	15	68	13	96

Table 2: Description of Mean, Standard Deviation and Standard Error Mean

		Group Statistics			
Sex		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PPCS	Male	33	55.85	20.439	3.558
	Female	63	36.63	16.523	2.082

Table 3: Difference in the consumption of problematic Pornography among male and female(t-test)

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
PPCS	Equal variances assumed	1.764	.187	4.981	94	.000	19.214	3.858	11.554	26.873
	Equal variances not assumed			4.661	54.370	.000	19.214	4.122	10.950	27.477

Table 4: Correlation between Problematic Pornography consumption Scale, Emotional Adjustment, Big-5 Personality factors

	PPCS	Emotional Adjustment	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Neuroticism	OE	Conscientiousness
PPCS		.241*	.242*	-.118	.337**	.217*	-.229*
Emotional Adjustment	.241*		-.118	-.191	-.008	-.205*	-.296**
Extraversion	.242*	-.118		.108	-.146	.409**	.207*
Agreeableness	-.118	-.191	.108		.096	.283**	.241*
Neuroticism	.337**	-.008	-.146	.096		.041	-.315**
OE	.217*	-.205*	.409**	.283**	.041		.125
Conscientiousness	-.229*	-.296**	.207*	.241*	-.315**	.125	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).