

Effects of Exposure to Pornography in Junior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

The development of technology and information makes it easier to access pornographic content. Teenagers are the most frequent internet users, which puts them at higher risk of exposure to pornographic content and the development of deviant sexual behavior. This research aimed to identify of pornography exposure in junior high school students. This research was descriptive research with quantitative methods using a cross sectional approach. This study was conducted on students at SMPN 1 Capkala, Bengkayang Regency, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. The population were all students who had been exposed to pornography at SMPN 1 Capkala, Bengkayang Regency, namely 79 people. Total sampling was used in this research. Univariate analysis was used. This research found that the majority reasons respondents accessed pornography were mostly influenced by peer invitations (50.6%), and 49.4% curiosity. The effects of pornography exposure on respondents included addiction (32.9%), escalation (13.9%), desensitization and acting out (26.6%). It is recommended that health and educational services be provided in order to enhance the efficacy of programs such as PKPR, GenRe, peer counseling, and healthy school-based pornographic addiction screening.

Keywords: Pornography, Junior High School Students, Exposure

INTRODUCTION

The widespread availability of online pornography—which is defined as viewing online pornography or accessing sexually explicit information on the internet—has been brought about by the significant increase in internet usage. Adolescents are more likely to be exposed to pornography due to hormonal, social, and cognitive changes (Habesha, Aderaw, & Lakew, 2015; Kar, Choudhury, & Singh, 2015). Sexual curiosity, an increasing need for sexual information, and the typical growth of sexuality, which peaks during adolescence, all have a part in the rising exposure of teenagers to pornography (Boniel-Nissim, Efrati, & Dolev-Cohen, 2020; Peter & Valkenburg, 2016). Because of sociocultural norms, a lack of sex education may be particularly pertinent in some countries, including in Indonesia (Ramdinar, Suwarni, Selviana, Vidyastuti, & Lestari, 2022).

Concerns have been expressed about the exposure of adolescents to pornography because of the possible harm that could occur to their development. Pornography's effects on teenagers' cognitive, behavioral, and emotional reactions, in particular, have been well studied and examined (Dwulit & Rzymiski, 2019; Owens, Behun, Manning, & Reid, 2012; Suwarni, Abrori, & Widyanto, 2019). Exposure to pornography can affect young people's sexual attitudes, which can then affect their sexual behavior and socioemotional development, according to behavioral science research (Camilleri, Perry, & Sammut, 2021; Dwulit & Rzymiski, 2019; Kohut, Landripet, & Štulhofer, 2021; Okabe, Takahashi, & Ito, 2021; Wright, Paul, & Herbenick, 2021).

Pornography is defined as any form of material that creates or enhances sexual emotions or sexual thoughts. Representation of sexual behavior in the form of books, pictures, statues, films and other media intended to cause sexual arousal (Harkness, Mullan, & Blaszczyński, 2015). The high current of globalization makes it easier to access the internet from various corners of the world which has become an intermediary for increasing the degree of exposure to pornographic content in Indonesia (Mahdalena, Abdullah, & Haris, 2021). As many as 5.03 billion people worldwide use the internet currently, equivalent to 63.1% of the world's total population. Internet users also continue to grow with the latest data showing that the world's connected population grew by almost 180 million in the 12 months to July 2022. Moreover, the ongoing coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on internet user research, resulting in actual user figures and growth rates. Social media users also continue to grow with total global users reaching 4.70 billion in July 2022. This is equivalent to 59.0% of all people in the world, and shows that almost 94% of internet users now use social media every month (United Nation, 2022).

Exposure to pornographic content has a serious impact on human resources in Indonesia, especially if it causes addiction. Of course, this will be an obstacle for Indonesia to achieve a demographic bonus in 2045 due to the decline in the quality of human resources due to high exposure to pornographic content. Moreover, West Kalimantan is

among the top 5 provinces with the lowest HDI (Community Development Index) scores (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022). This research aims to identify images of pornography exposure in junior high school students (study of junior high school students in Bengkayang Regency). Based on this phenomenon, researchers feel the need to conduct further research regarding the description of exposure to pornographic content among junior high school students in order to create quality human resources so that they can reduce the incidence of risky sexual behavior and achieve the demographic bonus in 2045.

METHODS

This research was descriptive research with quantitative methods using a cross sectional approach. This study was conducted on students at SMPN 1 Capkala, Bengkayang Regency. The population in this study were all students who had been exposed to pornography at SMPN 1 Capkala, Bengkayang Regency, namely 79 people. Total sampling was used in this research.

The research instrument uses a questionnaire consisting of respondent characteristics, reasons for accessing pornography, duration of access, length and time of access, type of pornographic media accessed, peer influence, and effects of exposure to pornography. The instruments used have been validated in previous research (Mahdalena et al., 2021). Univariate analysis is used to describe research results in percentage. This research has passed ethical review by the Ethics Commission of the Health Sciences Faculty, Universitas Muhammadiyah Pontianak No: 005/KEPK-FIKES/ UM PONTIANAK/ 2022.

RESULT

The respondents in this research were 79 respondents. Based on the results of research on 79 respondents, through distributing questionnaires, a description of the characteristics of respondents based on gender, age, and dating status was obtained as follows.

Table 1. Univariate Analysis

Variable	n	Percentage
Gender		
Male	39	49.4
Female	40	50.6
Age		
Early teens (11-13)	72	91.1
Middle Teens (14-17)	7	8.9
Dating status		
Yes	14	17.7
No	65	82.3
Total	70	100.0
Reasons for accessing pornography		
Curiosity	39	49.4
Influence of friends	40	50.6
Duration/Length of Access (Hours)		
More than 1 hours	52	65.8
Less than 1 hour	27	34.2
Time to Access Pornography		
Morning	14	17.7
Afternoon-Evening	65	82.3
Pornographic Material		
Photo/ Picture	26	32.9
Video	53	67.1
Media Used		
Mobile Phone	58	73.4
Television	21	26.6
Effects of Exposure to Pornography		
Addiction	26	32.9
Escalation	11	13.9
Desensitization	21	26.6
Act Out	21	26.6
Total	79	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

This research found that the majority of respondents were female (50.6%), and were in their early teens (91.1%), and 17.7% were dating. The reasons respondents accessed pornography were mostly influenced by peer invitations (50.6%), and 49.4% curiosity. As many as 65.8% of respondents accessed pornography for more than 1 hour, mostly time to accessed in the afternoon and evening (82.3%). Mobile phones are the most widely used means of accessing pornography (73.4%), and in the form of videos/films

(67.1%). The effects of pornography exposure on respondents included addiction (32.9%), escalation (13.9%), desensitization and acting out (26.6%).

DISCUSSION

Pornography for adolescence is very interesting attention. The more interesting the information pornographic media is increasing repetition of sexual information happen, and most of them addicted (Andrie, Sakou, Tzavela, Richardson, & Tsitsika, 2021; Hammond, Mayes, & Potenza, 2014). Pornography exposure was related to sexual behavior. As previous research findings show, adolescences who are exposed to pornography are more at risk of engaging in premarital sexual behavior (Aryati, Suwarni, & Ridha, 2019; Bukenya et al., 2020; Peter & Valkenburg, 2016; Suwarni & Selviana, 2015; Vandenbosch & Eggermont, 2013). Pornography is defined as material that is considered sexual, which has the main intention of arousing sexual desire, can contain images or descriptions of sexual organs or sexual acts such as vaginal sex, oral sex, anal sex, masturbation and rape. Pornography can be defined as any material that creates or enhances sexual emotions or sexual thoughts (Ashton, McDonald, & Kirkman, 2019; Harkness et al., 2015).

This research found that early adolescents access pornography the most compared to middle adolescents. In line with previous research, many young teenagers are exposed to pornography (Adarsh & Sahoo, 2023; Fujiana, Triyana Harlia Putri, Tamara Septia Chairunisa, Ridha Sri Rezeki, & Dialika Putri Miftazah, 2023; Juditha, 2020; Pathmendra, Raggatt, Lim, Marino, & Skinner, 2023). Experimentation and curiosity are typical in the context of teenage psychosexual development (Ott & Pfeiffer, 2009). There have been concerns raised regarding the exposure of teenagers to pornography due to possible developmental risks. The effects of pornography on teenagers' emotional, behavioral, and cognitive responses have been studied by researchers (Dwulit & Rzymiski, 2019). The sexual maturation process that occurs in adolescents usually involves changes in the body, sex hormones, fantasies, sexual interest, and experimentation with masturbation. Before engaging in partnered sexual activity, teenagers typically view pornography, and this use is frequently accompanied by masturbation. Watching and masturbating to porn could be one of the first externally stimulated sexual experiences for many teenagers. There is a correlation between early sexual initiation and poor adult outcomes (Heywood, Patrick, Smith, & Pitts, 2015). Evidence also indicates the acceleration of sexual development caused by exposure to pornography (Pirrone, Zondervan-Zwijnenburg, Reitz, van den Eijnden, & ter Bogt, 2022).

Peer influence had a contribution of exposed to pornography. The findings of this research are in line with several previous studies, the reason for accessing pornography is because of invitations and influence from peers (Sanyoto & Hutagalung, 2021; Suwarni et al., 2019; Widman, Choukas-Bradley, Helms, & Prinstein, 2016; Yunengsih & Setiawan, 2021). Pornographic exposure's impact on the incidence of addiction and deviant sexual

behavior may vary depending on the purpose behind the viewing. In this research, students who initially viewed pornography out of curiosity, even though the reasons for doing so were mostly unintentional. Continuous exposure may cause the motivation for watching pornography to shift from being accidental at first to being deliberate. Furthermore, the internal factors of adolescents, such as curiosity and a desire to watch porn, also played a significant role in influencing their habit of watching porn (Novita, 2018).

This research found that most respondents accessed pornography for more than 1 hour. This is due to the feeling of pleasure. The degree of addiction increased with the frequency of pornographic viewing, which was a sign of riskier deviant sexual behavior (Maisya & Masitoh, 2020). The time to access pornographic content is more during the day and night via their mobile phones with video media. Pornography can lead to an increase in sexually suggestive behavior, according to a number of empirical studies. For instance, over time, Braithwaite et al. looked into the connections between sexual risk behavior, script acquisition, and pornographic viewing (Braithwaite, Coulson, Keddington, & Fincham, 2015).

"Safe sex" is an exception in the pornographic imagination created by using online media (Gorman, Monk-Turner, & Fish, 2010). Pornography videos often mirror the desires of their predominantly male audience, according to numerous researchers (Bridges, Wosnitzer, Scharrer, Sun, & Liberman, 2010). There is a strong correlation between sexual content or sexually explicit media and risky sexual activity (Klaassen & Peter, 2015). Online exposure to sexually explicit media increases the likelihood that adolescents will grow up with promiscuous sexual attitudes, which are closely associated to risky sexual behavior. Teens are thought to be among the most frequent porn consumers because they accept what they see in the media as fact (Pizzol, Bertoldo, & Foresta, 2016).

This research showed that the effects of pornography exposure on respondents included addiction (32.9%), escalation (13.9%), desensitization and acting out (26.6%). There are various stages in the process of becoming addicted to pornography: 1) intentional or unintentional introduction to pornography; 2) the addiction phase, where one becomes dependent on pornographic media; 3) the escalation phase, which is the beginning of a sense of dissatisfaction toward any pornographic materials previously viewed and the consequent search for more explicit content; 4) the desensitization phase, which is characterized by apathy toward pornographic materials, a loss of sensitivity toward any pornographic content, and the observation of sexual violence; 5) the act out phase, which is characterized by the desire to achieve real-world sexual gratification by engaging in behaviors depicted in pornographic materials (Astuti, 2019; Jha & Banerjee, 2022).

Simultaneously, the emergence of new technologies has led to an increase in problematic addictive behavior, primarily related to Internet addiction. An internet application (gaming, shopping, betting, cybersex, etc.) may be the focus of this addiction (Davis, 2001), that carries the risk of developing risk-addictive behavior; in this scenario,

it would serve as a conduit for tangible expressions of that behavior (Chamberlain et al., 2016; Ioannidis et al., 2018). This indicates an unavoidable rise in activity, giving seasoned addicts new outlets while also tempting those who might not have previously engaged in these behaviors owing to greater privacy or opportunity.

CONCLUSION

The findings from this research can be the basis for efforts to primary prevent the dangers of pornography both in the family and school environment. It is recommended that health and educational services be provided in order to enhance the efficacy of programs such as PKPR, GenRe, peer counseling, and healthy school-based pornographic addiction screening. Furthermore, a number of limitations in the study, particularly with regard to sample selection (limited sample and only in one of junior high school), instrumentation, and variables examined, are anticipated to be used as inputs for future research to examine in more detail the relationship between the degree of exposure to pornography and various aspects of adolescent health as well as evidence-based practices that can be used to address the problem of pornographic addiction and risky sexual behavior in adolescence.

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