

Original Article

The relationship between attitudes and porn viewing activities with pre-marital sexual behavior in adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The widespread availability of the internet, coupled with adolescents' natural curiosity about sexuality, has created avenues for accessing pornographic websites. However, this curiosity, when not tempered with self-restraint, can lead adolescents into the habit of watching pornographic films. One significant consequence of engaging in this behavior is its potential to influence pre-marital sexual activity among adolescents. This study aimed to investigate the correlation between attitudes toward and the frequency of watching pornographic movies and pre-marital sexual behavior among adolescents in Sidoarjo.

Methods: The study employed a descriptive analytics approach with a cross-sectional design. A sample of 138 adolescents was selected using probability sampling, specifically the cluster simple random sampling method. Two research instruments were utilized: the Cyber Pornography Use Inventory (CPUI) for gathering data on porn-watching activity and the Adolescent Sexual Activity Index (ASAI) for collecting information on sexual behavior. The data were then analyzed using the Spearman rank correlation method.

Results: The findings indicated that the majority of students in Sidoarjo exhibited a non-supportive attitude category (48.6%, n= 67), with low engagement in watching porn movies (44.2%, n= 61), and most teenagers demonstrated low/less risky sexual behavior (63%, n= 87). Moreover, the results revealed significant relationships between attitudes and sexual behavior (P -value <0.001) as well as between watching porn and sexual behavior (P -value <0.001).

Conclusions: This research suggests the importance of parental and teacher involvement in guiding and supervising adolescents to prevent engagement in risky behaviors such as watching pornography and engaging in pre-marital sexual activity. By actively monitoring their children and providing guidance, parents and teachers can play a crucial role in minimizing such behaviors and promoting adolescent reproductive health through counseling and education.

Keywords: adolescent; attitude; porn-watching activity; pre-marital sex

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood and has basic needs in the form of physiological needs. Teenagers have high curiosity, especially concerning sexuality and porn, so they are vulnerable to environmental influences and the times (Purnama, Sriati and Maulana, 2020). As a form of progress of the times, the internet has expanded and become easily accessed by anyone, including teenagers (Lian et al., 2020). Curiosity that is not balanced with self-restraint causes adolescents to fall prey to the behavior of watching pornographic films. Doing so has the potential to shape pre-marital sexual behavior, such as kissing, holding private organs, and having intercourse (Haidar, 2020). Reasons why teenagers have sex, include the male or female

partner being pushy, thinking that they are ready, wanting to be loved and not wanting to be made fun of because they are still virgins (Appulembang, Fajar and Tarigan, 2019).

Teenagers aged 16-17 years in Australia are exposed to pornographic videos that should only be seen by adults: 40% viewed X-rated videos, 20% visited websites containing sexual content, and 70 were accidentally exposed to online pornography (Flood, 2007). Teenagers' access to the internet tends to lead to negative consequences. Suppose a teenager has engaged in sexual behavior, that tends to potentially increase the risk of unwanted pregnancies and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS. In that case, they will have feelings of guilt, depression, anger, and even abortion (Purwanto et al., 2023). The attitude of watching porn movies and the activity of watching porn movies with sexual behavior requires attention and support from various parties such as parents, peers, schools, and nurses. Children and teenagers are sexual creatures and should be provided with appropriate and interesting material about sex and sexuality.

On the other hand, pornography is a bad sex educator. Minimizing children's exposure to pornography, whether intentional or unintentional, is beneficial in reducing the harmful effects of such exposure. Therefore, researchers are interested in examining the relationship degree between the attitude of watching porn movies and sexual behavior in high school adolescents.

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METHODS

Design

The study uses a descriptive-analytic design with a cross-sectional approach, in which the researcher measures/observes the data of the independent and dependent variables only once at a time.

Sample and Setting

The sample was obtained by the researcher selecting class XI students at X Senior High School in Sidoarjo who fit the inclusion and exclusion criteria from a total population of 210 people. Then, a simple random sampling technique was carried out; male and female students from class XI at X Senior High School in Sidoarjo were selected by simple random sampling using a lottery technique. The students who met the criterion for inclusion, adolescents aged 14-17 years, were taken accordingly, with the sample size of 138 teenagers taken from the entire population calculated using the Slovin formula.

Instruments

The instrument used in the study were the Cyber Pornography Use Inventory (CPUI) questionnaire to collect data related to porn viewing attitudes, the Cyber Pornography Use Inventory (CPUI) to collect data related to porn watching activity (Grubbs *et al.*, 2010), and the Adolescent Sexual Activity Index (ASAI) to collect data related to sexual behavior (Hansen, Paskett and Carter, 1999).

The attitude questionnaire consists of 10 statements: Favorable strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1, and Unfavorable questions strongly agree = 1, agree = 2, disagree = 3, strongly disagree = 4. The questionnaire was modified from research by Grubbs, Sessoms, Wheeler and Volk (2010). This instrument has been tested for validity with a value in the R table of 0.84, meaning this questionnaire is valid and can be used as a research questionnaire. Reliability test with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.89 means this questionnaire is reliable.

The pornographic film-watching activity questionnaire consists of eight questions: Favorable always = 4, often = 3, rarely = 2, never = 1, and Unfavourable questions always = 1, often = 2, rarely = 3, never = 4. Preparation This questionnaire was modified from research by Grubbs, John, Dana and Volk (2010). This instrument has been tested for validity with a value in the R table of 0.84, meaning this questionnaire is valid and can be used as a research questionnaire. Reliability test with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.89 means this questionnaire is reliable.

The sexual behavior questionnaire consists of 10 questions with the statements never = 1 and never = 0. The preparation of this questionnaire was adapted from research (Hansen *et al.*, 1999); this instrument has been tested for validity with a value in the R table of 0.537, which means this questionnaire is valid and can be used as a research questionnaire. A Reliability test with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.910 means this questionnaire is reliable. The research was carried out by spreading G-form links by scanning barcodes to students in each class. The data were analyzed using the SPSS program to obtain the frequency distribution.

Procedure

The research was conducted at X Senior High School in Sidoarjo. Researchers entered each class XI to determine research respondents who fit the inclusion criterion of female students who are declared still sexually active. After that, the researchers conducted a random lottery of students' names who met the criterion as respondents, as many as 138 people according to the sample size with the Slovin formula. After obtaining the sample, the researcher and the counseling teacher entered each class of potential research respondents. Then, the researcher explained the research and submitted informed consent to the respondents. The guidance counselor, the respondent's guardian and the witness in this study accompanied the filling out of informed consent. After asking for consent to be a research respondent (informed consent), the researcher accompanied the respondent while filling out the questionnaire to help the respondent if they experienced difficulties in filling out the questionnaire. The completed questionnaire was then given back to the researcher. This research was conducted on one day, which took place at 08.00-11.00 WIB. The data collection process went well, and the researchers encountered no problems or obstacles

Data Analysis

This study analyzed the data with the Spearman-Rho correlation. This analysis model is used to see whether there is a relationship between variables, where the data scale uses an ordinal data scale. All research variable data are ordinal data.

Ethical Considerations

This research has been declared to have passed an ethical review and received an Ethical Approval certificate with No. PE/29/V/2023/KEP/SHT issued by the Research Ethics Committee of the Hang Tuah High School of Health Sciences Surabaya on June 14, 2023.

RESULTS

Characteristics of respondents based on demographic data reveal that 56.5% are female. Table 1 further illustrates that out of 138 respondents, 69.6% are 17 years old, 15.9% are 16 years old, and 14.5% are 18 years old. The respondents' attitudes are largely supportive, with 43.5% indicating strong support, while only 7.9% express support for watching pornographic films. A significant portion of respondents, 30.4%, fall into the high category of watching pornographic films, while 7.3% report moderate levels of engagement. Regarding sexual behavior, 9.5% of respondents indicate involvement in sexual intercourse.

The correlation coefficients in Table 2 indicate the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. In this study, both variables, "Viewing Attitudes of Porn Films" and "Activity Viewing Porn Films," show a positive correlation with "Sexual activity."

For "Viewing Attitudes of Porn Films," the correlation coefficient is 0.453, indicating a moderate positive correlation. This suggests that as the viewing attitudes towards porn films increase, there is a tendency for sexual activity to increase as well. The significance value (Sig.) of 0.000 indicates that this relationship is statistically significant.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n=138)

Characteristics	n	%
Gender		
Male	60	43.5
Female	78	56.5
Age		
16	22	15.9
17	96	69.6
18	20	14.5
Attitude		
Does not support	67	48.6
Enough support	60	43.5
Support	11	7.9
Porn watching activity		
Never	25	18.1
Low	61	44.2
Current	42	30.4
High	10	7.3
Sexual behavior		
Low Risk	87	63.0
Risk of Engaging in Sexual Activity	38	27.5
Sexual Intercourse	13	9.5
Sexual Activity Initiation	0	0.0
Sexually Active	0	0.0

Table 2. Relationship between Viewing Attitudes and Activity of Porn Films with Sexual Behavior

Variables	Sexual activity	
	Correlation coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
Viewing Attitudes of Porn Films	0.453	<0.001
Activity Viewing Porn Films	0.489	<0.001

Similarly, for "Activity Viewing Porn Films," the correlation coefficient is 0.489, indicating a stronger positive correlation compared to the attitudes variable. This suggests that as the actual activity of viewing porn films increases, there is a stronger tendency for sexual activity to increase. The significance value (Sig.) of <0.001 also indicates that this relationship is statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study in Table 1 show that attitudes toward watching porn among two public high school students are 67 respondents (48.6%) did not support it, 60 respondents (43.5%) quite supported it, and 11 respondents (7.9%) supported it. Attitude is a person's assessment of a stimulus or object in the form of feelings of support or disapproval of the object. Attitude is one of the factors that can influence adolescent sexual behavior. Suppose adolescents have a negative attitude toward pre-marital sex. In that case, these adolescents will tend to have pre-marital sex, which can harm adolescents themselves, one of which is the attitude of watching porn movies (Ramadhani and Arifin, 2019). Individual attitudes are influenced by several factors, including age, gender, and information related to sexual reproduction.

The results of the attitude category research found that a small proportion supported the attitude of watching porn as many as 11 respondents (8.0%). Male respondents dominate the attitude toward watching porn. Previous study explained that men access pornographic sites more often than women; this is because men prefer audiovisual content that can trigger sexual desire. Audiovisual content contains sound and image elements that can be seen, for example, in pornographic films (Sanjaya, 2014).

The researcher's assumption that respondents in the attitude category support watching porn movies, in accessing porn movies is not only based on curiosity about sexual material but watching porn is a need to satisfy their sexual appetite so that respondents will experience addiction to watching porn and will make efforts to support the activity of watching porn movies.

The results of the study in Table 1 show that porn viewing activity in two public high school students is 61 respondents (44.2%) having low porn viewing activity, 42 respondents (30.4%) have moderate porn viewing activity, 25 respondents (18.1%) have never watched pornographic films, and ten respondents (7.3%) are other high porn viewing activity. Technological sophistication and ease of accessing the internet affect the increase in adolescent activity in accessing

and viewing pornography. In line with the research conducted (Wulandari, Gantini and Nurvita, 2019), female adolescents are more passive and less aggressive in their sexual activity than male adolescents. Adolescent girls in their sexual activity prefer content that is more romantic compared to porn, which looks more aggressive. Boys were more likely than girls to report sexual intercourse (Pengpid and Peltzer, 2021). Researchers assume that the low activity in watching porn films mainly occurs in young women because women, who often perceive watching porn movies as one of the most disgusting things, do not experience addiction to them.

The results of the study in Table 1 show that the sexual behavior of students in two public high schools is 87 respondents (63%) had low-risk sexual intercourse, 38 respondents (27.5%) had risk-engaging sexual intercourse, and 13 respondents (9.5%) had sexual intercourse. Sexual desire in adolescents arises due to the growth of hormones and sex glands, giving rise to sexual urges in adolescents which will affect sexual behavior in adolescents, such as the desire to hug, kiss, touch the partner's sensitive parts, and to have intercourse (Pawestri, Wardani and Sonna, 2013).

The results of the questionnaire analysis showed that the majority of respondents had low-risk/less-risk sexual behavior because most of them had average sexual behavior in the holding hand, hugging, and spending time indicators, where most respondents answered "Yes" to questions related to hugging, holding hands, and spending time together. Respondents who had risk-engaging sexual intercourse behaviors, on average, their sexual behavior apart from holding hands, hugging, and spending time together, also averaged kissing and cuddling indicators. Whereas for respondents who had sexual intercourse behavior in addition to the five indicators mentioned above, the average respondent also answered "Yes" to the question of holding a sensitive part of themselves or their partner.

The results of this study indicate that the majority of respondents have low sexual behavior/less risk; low sexual behavior among respondents in this study can be influenced by several factors, such as exposure to information related to reproductive health, age maturity, and parental supervision. Communication between teenagers and their parents will affect teenagers' sexual behavior. A positive parent-child relationship is characterized by open communication and the ability for both parents and children to discuss sexual and reproductive health matters comfortably. Adolescents who have a strong bond with their parents feel encouraged and empowered to initiate conversations about sexual health topics. Conversely, when the parent-child relationship is strained or lacking, communication about these issues may be absent or ineffective (Ndugga *et al.*, 2022).

The cross-tabulation analysis in Table 2 reveals a significant relationship between adolescents' attitudes toward viewing pornography and their sexual behavior at X Senior High School in Sidoarjo (P -value 0.001, indicating P -value <0.05). The correlation coefficient of 0.453 suggests a moderate level of association, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. This indicates a link between attitudes toward watching pornographic content and engaging in pre-marital sexual behavior among adolescents at X Senior High School in Sidoarjo. Interestingly, the majority of respondents, comprising 54 individuals (39.1%), demonstrated a disapproving attitude towards pornography viewing alongside low-risk sexual behavior.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted

by Purwanto, Ningtyias and Ririanty (2023), which stated that respondents who did not support viewing pornography was because most of them thought about the consequences of watching pornography and agreed to intend to stop accessing pornography as an effort to prevent pre-marital sexual behavior. Respondents' decision to consider the consequences of watching pornography can also be influenced by several factors, one of which is the knowledge they have obtained, insights and discussions on the internet about the effects of pornography. Knowledge and understanding of reproductive health are fundamental domains for shaping a person's attitude that influences good or bad behavior (Wulandari, Gantini and Nurvita, 2019).

The researcher assumes that there is a relationship between attitudes that do not support watching porn with low-risk sexual behavior because the good attitude of the respondents is to reduce and stop watching porn; this is inseparable from knowledge regarding the dangers of watching porn as well as behavior. This low sexuality can be seen from the results of the questionnaire analysis, where most of those who are dating only spend time together by walking around and just holding hands. Adolescents' low self-esteem makes them tend to seek peer support by engaging in sexual activity. This study supports previous research where teenagers who reported frequently using social media applications had a greater chance of having any sexual contact, including just kissing, touching genitals, oral, vaginal and anal sex (Romo *et al.*, 2017).

The activity of viewing pornographic films puts teenagers at risk of experiencing emotional disorders. Providing reproductive health education can overcome problems and improve the social and emotional skills needed by teenagers (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2021). Effective parental monitoring plays a crucial role in mitigating adolescent sexual behavior. Thoughtful parental oversight can potentially delay adolescents' initiation of sexual activity by enabling them to act upon their intentions to engage in such behavior. By monitoring teenagers closely, parents can intervene to modify their sexual decision-making, thereby reducing the likelihood of early sexual debut. Parents who demonstrate curiosity about their teenagers' activities, social circles, whereabouts, and establish clear expectations can effectively discourage pre-marital sexual behavior in adolescents (Debele *et al.*, 2022).

The cross-tabulation analysis in Table 2 revealed a significant relationship between attitudes toward pornographic content and sexual behavior among adolescents at X Senior High School in Sidoarjo (P -value <0.001), indicating a correlation coefficient of 0.489. This outcome led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, affirming a connection between watching pornographic films and pre-marital sexual behavior among adolescents at X Senior High School in Sidoarjo, albeit at a moderate level. Consistent with these findings, the majority of respondents reported low levels of engagement with pornographic content and exhibited low-risk sexual behavior, with 47 respondents (34.1%) falling into this category. These results are consistent with the findings of prior research, which similarly identified a positive correlation between consumption of pornographic content and adolescent sexual behavior. Watching pornographic content, both in the form of pornographic videos and films, can affect adolescent behavior because there is an urge to imitate sexual behavior with any object they can reach. In

addition, teenagers who often watch pornographic films tend to view free sex as normal behavior, and natural to the extent that it has an impact on sexual deviations (Haidar and Apsari, 2020).

Researchers assume that the higher the activity of watching porn movies, the higher the pre-marital sexual behavior in adolescents. Conversely, the lower the activity of watching porn films, the lower the pre-marital sexual behavior in adolescents. The low risk of sexual behavior in respondents occurs because of the low activity of watching porn, and this has a positive impact because, with low activity of watching porn, teenagers tend to have the self-control to see and imitate sexual things in porn movies. In addition, adolescents must be selective in choosing friends to support daily behavior positively and prevent sexual risk behavior (Hastuti, Wulandari and Yunitasari, 2022).

CONCLUSION

The results of this study found that the attitude of students watching porn movies was included in the category of users who were at risk, and the level of self-control in students was included in the low category so that it could lead to sexual behavior. This can happen because of stable internet access, lack of parental supervision of their teenage children, and the lack of educational activities held by schools regarding reproductive health and the dangers of pre-marital sexual behavior.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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Data Availability

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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