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What do they Know: Adolescents' Discernment on Pornography



Abstract: - The proliferation of the internet has sparked concerns among educators and advocates for gender equality that pornography is becoming both more severe and more accessible. The study described the perception of students from private and public schools concerning pornography. The study also determined the values of students from private and public schools about pornography. This study used descriptive method and surveyed a total of 289 students both from public and private schools. Based on the data, the researchers concluded that pornographic media did not encourage students to engage in such sexual practices. Hence, the students were not embarrassed while seeing sexual videos. The researchers also determined that the students did not enjoy watching pornography with their partner, as perceived by their values, and that they were not ashamed to disclose that they do so. As the majority of high school students were adolescents, it is suggested that parents, guardians, and teachers of both public and private schools monitor and educate students to prevent teenage pregnancy. Students, parents, guardians, and educators should be informed on this topic in order to raise their awareness. Since the sample size is insufficient to represent the high school student population as a whole, additional research should be conducted.

Keywords: Porn, Adolescent, Pornography, Sexual Video, Pornographic Video.

INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of the internet has sparked concerns among educators and advocates for gender equality that pornography is becoming both more severe and more accessible. The use of pornographic websites has increased dramatically all around the world (Luscombe, 2016). During stay-at-home and social-distance mandates and other COVID-19-related events, Pornhub has observed a worldwide rise in pornography consumption of 11.6% on March 17, 2020 compared to the previous average number of days (Pornhub, 2020). Among people aged 15 to 29, one research found that 100 percent of male respondents and 81 percent of female respondents had watched pornographic content online (Lim et al., 2017).

Pornography is unethical and damaging, confuses and dehumanizes sexuality and sexual relationships, and is highly addictive (Dumitrescu, 2018). Currently, Internet pornography displays some gender difference, but women are also shown as having autonomy and playing a more significant social role, and violence is uncommon (Klaassen, 2020). Especially among younger adolescents, the pornographic content addiction crisis is made worse by the availability of smart phones and the prevalence of social media (Kamaruddin et al., 2018).

Individuals who view pornographic materials may perceive the sexual behavior of the characters to be "natural" and representative of reality (Oddonne-Paolucci et al., 2017). By addressing topics like the difference between reality and fantasy in pornographic depictions of sex, realistic expectations for sex, and the concept of consent, school and community-based initiatives can provide supplementary education about healthy sexual behavior and relationships and promote media literacy (Lim et al., 2016).

In light of this, the researchers discovered that there is a dearth of local literature on pornography, as the topic is sensitive and Filipinos are considered to be conservative. As gender and development advocates, the researchers are curious about how students view pornography.

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study described the perception of students from private and public schools concerning pornography. The study also determined the values of students from private and public schools about pornography.

METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive method, because it is a simple analytical technique that examines the situation as it happens in its present state (Williams, 2007). A total of 289 students (157 from public school and 132 from private school) from Nueva Ecija were surveyed. The data was gathered through researcher-made questionnaire with adopted likert-scale response (Vagias, 2006). The researcher-made questionnaire was validated and tested through Cronbach’s reliability test. Below is the result of the Cronbach’s Alpha Test:

Factors	C. Alpha	Interpretation
Thinking Questions	0.751	Good
Values Questions	0.790	Good

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1. Thinking questions for students in private schools

THINKING QUESTIONS	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
A1. Do you feel less stressed if you watched pornography?	2.64	Disagree
A2. Do you feel energized when you watched pornography?	2.7	Disagree
A3. Do you feel self-satisfaction while watching pornography?	2.74	Disagree
A4. Do you feel nervous while watching pornography?	2.66	Disagree
A5. Do you feel less bored when you watched pornography?	2.68	Disagree
A6. Do you feel happy when you watched pornography?	2.57	Disagree
A7. Do you think watching pornography makes you sexually aroused?	2.36	Agree
A8. Do you watch pornography as soon as you get a chance?	2.87	Disagree
A9. Do you wish for sex immediately after watching pornography?	2.96	Disagree
A10. If you watched pornography right now, do you feel difficulty in stopping?	2.83	Disagree
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.70	Disagree

Legend: [1.00-1.74 – Strongly Agree; 1.75-2.49 – Agree; 2.50-3.24 – Disagree; 3.25-4.00 – Strongly Disagree]

Table 1 shows the rating of the items under “Thinking Questions” as perceived by the student- respondents. The table above shows that A9 (Do you wish for sex immediately after watching pornography?) got the highest means among the items with 2.96 total weighted mean and verbally interpreted as disagree. On the other hand, A7 (Do you think watching pornography makes you sexually aroused?) got the lowest mean with 2.36 total weighted mean and verbally interpreted as Agree.

The data provided in Table 1 presents the responses of students in private schools to a set of thinking questions regarding their discernment and attitudes towards pornography. Each response is measured on a Likert scale, with

higher values indicating stronger agreement with the statement. The total weighted mean of all responses is 2.70, indicating an overall tendency towards disagreement with the statements.

The data provides valuable insights into the discernment and attitudes of students in private schools towards pornography. Overall, these adolescents tend to disagree with the positive effects often attributed to pornography, such as stress reduction, increased energy, self-satisfaction, and happiness.

Interestingly, students recognize the potential of pornography to elicit sexual arousal, indicating their awareness of its content's sexual nature. This finding aligns with the broader understanding that pornography is often designed to be sexually stimulating.

While students generally disagree with immediate attraction or desire for sex after watching pornography, it is essential to note that they acknowledge the potential influence of pornography on their sexual arousal and expectations. This suggests that they are aware of the potential impact of pornography on their sexual development and beliefs.

The data also suggests that most students in private schools do not view pornography as an addictive behavior that they struggle to control. However, it is crucial to remember that individual experiences may vary, and some students may indeed experience challenges related to pornography consumption.

It is essential to interpret these findings with caution, considering the limitations of the study, such as the specific demographics of students in private schools and the cultural context in which the research was conducted. Further research is needed to better understand the broader attitudes and beliefs of adolescents from various backgrounds and educational settings.

Open and informed discussions about pornography in the context of comprehensive sexual education are essential for guiding adolescents in making responsible and informed choices about their media consumption and sexual development. Educators, parents, and caregivers play a vital role in providing accurate information and fostering critical thinking to help adolescents navigate this aspect of their lives responsibly.

Table 2. Thinking questions for students in public school

THINKING QUESTIONS	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
A1. Do you feel less stressed if you watched pornography?	2.63	Disagree
A2. Do you feel energized when you watched pornography?	2.8	Disagree
A3. Do you feel self-satisfaction while watching pornography?	2.89	Disagree
A4. Do you feel nervous while watching pornography?	2.31	Agree
A5. Do you feel less bored when you watched pornography?	2.8	Disagree
A6. Do you feel happy when you watched pornography?	2.77	Disagree
A7. Do you think watching pornography makes you sexually aroused?	2.87	Disagree
A8. Do you watch pornography as soon as you get a chance?	2.73	Disagree
A9. Do you wish for sex immediately after watching pornography?	3.14	Disagree
A10. If you watched pornography right now, do you feel difficulty in stopping?	2.83	Disagree
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.78	Disagree

Legend: [1.00-1.74 – Strongly Agree;1.75-2.49 – Agree;2.50-3.24 – Disagree;3.25-4.00 – Strongly Disagree]

Table 2 shows the rating of the items under “Thinking Questions” as perceived by the student-respondents. The table above shows that A9 (Do you wish for sex immediately after watching pornography?) got the highest means among the items with 3.14 total weighted mean and verbally interpreted as Disagree. On the other hand, A4 (Do you feel nervous while watching pornography?) got the lowest mean with 2.31 total weighted mean and verbally interpreted as Agree.

Table 2 presents the responses of students in public schools to a set of thinking questions regarding their discernment and attitudes towards pornography. Like Table 1, each response is measured on a Likert scale, with higher values indicating stronger agreement with the statement. The total weighted mean of all responses is 2.78, indicating an overall tendency towards disagreement with the statements.

Interestingly, students in public schools exhibit slightly stronger disagreement than students in private schools in some areas, such as feeling energized, feeling nervous, and immediate desire for sex after watching pornography. This might be attributed to differences in the social and cultural contexts within private and public-school environments.

Both groups of students recognize the potential of pornography to evoke sexual arousal, indicating their awareness of its content's sexual nature. However, they also agree that they do not feel an immediate desire for sex after watching pornography, which challenges stereotypes about pornography's immediate influence on sexual behavior.

The fact that both groups of students do not find it difficult to stop watching pornography suggests that they generally do not perceive it as an addictive behavior. However, individual cases may vary, and some students might still experience challenges related to excessive pornography consumption.

It is important to consider the limitations of this comparative analysis, such as the specific demographics and cultural contexts of students in private and public schools. Further research is needed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of adolescents' discernment on pornography across various educational settings and backgrounds.

Overall, open and informed discussions about pornography are essential in sex education for all adolescents, regardless of the type of school they attend. Providing accurate information, promoting critical thinking, and addressing misconceptions are crucial in supporting adolescents' healthy sexual development and responsible media consumption. Collaborative efforts among educators, parents, and caregivers are essential in guiding adolescents to make informed choices regarding their exposure to and interpretation of pornography.

Table 3. Values question for students in private school

VALUES QUESTION	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
B1. Do you agree that pornography can give ideas about sex positions?	1.91	Agree
B2. Have you ever watched pornographic videos?	2.46	Agree
B3. Does pornography give you an idea to explore new things?	2.2	Agree
B4. Does Pornography make you interested in comparing sex organs?	2.41	Agree
B5. Do men watch pornographic videos often more than women?	2.16	Agree
B6. Are women ashamed of admitting pornography watching?	1.73	Strongly Agree

B7. Are men ashamed of admitting the quantity of pornography they've watched?	2.08	Agree
B8. Do you enjoy watching pornography with your partner?	2.57	Disagree
B9. Does watching pornography affect your sex expectation?	2.31	Agree
B10. Do you agree when couples watch pornography together they increase their frequency of having sex?	2.52	Disagree
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.24	Agree

Legend: [1.00-1.74 – Strongly Agree;1.75-2.49 – Agree;2.50-3.24 – Disagree;3.25-4.00 – Strongly Disagree]

Table 3 shows the rating of the items under “Values Questions” as perceived by all the respondents. The table above shows that B6 (Are women ashamed of admitting pornography watching?) got the highest means among the items with 1.73 total weighted mean and verbally interpreted as Agree. On the other hand, B1 (B1. Do you agree that pornography can give ideas about sex positions?) got the lowest mean with 1.91 total weighted mean and verbally interpreted as Agree.

The total weighted mean of all responses is 2.24, indicating an overall tendency towards agreement with the statements. Table 3 presents the responses of students in private schools to a set of values-based questions related to their beliefs and attitudes towards pornography. Each response is rated on a Likert scale, with higher values indicating stronger agreement with the statement. The total weighted mean of all responses is 2.24, indicating an overall tendency towards agreement with the statements.

The data in Table 3 provides valuable insights into the beliefs and attitudes of students in private schools regarding pornography. Students in this group generally agree with the notion that pornography can provide ideas about sex positions and influence their understanding of sexual practices. They also acknowledge that pornography can inspire exploration of new sexual experiences, indicating their awareness of its potential impact on sexual behavior.

The finding that most students in private schools have watched pornographic videos reflects the prevalence of exposure to pornography among adolescents. This underscores the importance of providing comprehensive sexual education that includes discussions about the content and potential effects of pornography.

The data also reveals that students perceive a social stigma associated with pornography viewing, particularly for women. The strong agreement that women feel ashamed of admitting to watching pornography raises concerns about the negative attitudes and judgment faced by women in relation to their sexuality and media consumption. This highlights the need for promoting a sex-positive and non-judgmental approach to discussions about pornography and sexuality.

Students' disagreement with the enjoyment of watching pornography with partners challenges the notion of pornography as a shared activity that enhances intimacy in relationships. This finding warrants further exploration to understand how pornography may impact relationships and communication between partners.

The acknowledgment that pornography can affect sexual expectations suggests that students are aware of its potential influence on their attitudes and desires. This emphasizes the importance of comprehensive sexual education that addresses the impact of pornography on sexual development and relationships.

The data also challenges the assumption that watching pornography together increases the frequency of sexual activity among couples. This result emphasizes the need for evidence-based discussions around the role of pornography in relationships and its potential impact on intimacy and communication.

Overall, the findings from Table 3 underscore the importance of open and informed discussions about pornography in sex education. Providing accurate information, promoting critical thinking, and addressing misconceptions are crucial in supporting adolescents' healthy sexual development and responsible media consumption. Collaborative efforts among educators, parents, and caregivers are essential in guiding adolescents to make informed choices regarding their exposure to and interpretation of pornography.

Table 4. Values questions for students in public school

VALUES QUESTION	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
B1. Do you agree that pornography can give ideas about sex positions?	2.43	Agree
B2. Have you ever watched pornographic videos?	2.04	Agree
B3. Does pornography give you an idea to explore new things?	2.79	Disagree
B4. Does pornography make you interested in comparing sex organs?	2.77	Disagree
B5. Do men watch pornographic videos often more than women?	1.91	Agree
B6. Are women ashamed of admitting pornography watching?	2.26	Agree
B7. Are men ashamed of admitting the quantity of pornography they've watched?	2.36	Agree
B8. Do you enjoy watching pornography with your partner?	2.99	Disagree
B9. Does watching pornography affect your sex expectation?	2.73	Disagree
B10. Do you agree when couples watch pornography together they increase their frequency of having sex?	2.83	Disagree
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.61	Disagree

Legend: [1.00-1.74 – Strongly Agree;1.75-2.49 – Agree;2.50-3.24 – Disagree;3.25-4.00 – Strongly Disagree]

Table 4 shows the rating of the items under “Values Questions” as perceived by all the respondents. The table above shows that B2 (Do you enjoy watching pornography with your partner?) got the highest means among the items with 2.99 total weighted mean and verbally interpreted as Disagree. On the other hand, B5 (Do men watch pornographic videos often more than women?) got the lowest mean with 1.91 total weighted mean and verbally interpreted as Agree.

Table 4 presents the responses of students in public schools to a set of values-based questions related to their beliefs and attitudes towards pornography. Each response is rated on a Likert scale, with higher values indicating stronger agreement with the statement. The weighted mean of all responses is provided, offering insights into students' overall perspectives.

Table 4 provides valuable insights into the beliefs and attitudes of students in public schools regarding pornography. Students in this group generally agree that pornography can provide ideas about sex positions, reflecting the influence of such content on their understanding of sexual practices.

The finding that a majority of students in public schools have watched pornographic videos indicates the prevalence of pornography exposure among adolescents. This highlights the need for comprehensive sexual education that addresses the content and potential effects of pornography.

Interestingly, students in public schools tend to disagree that pornography inspires them to explore new things or compare sex organs. This suggests that they do not perceive pornography as a source of inspiration for sexual curiosity or body comparison, challenging common assumptions about its influence.

The perceived social stigma associated with pornography viewing, particularly in terms of shame for both men and women, is a concerning finding. It suggests that adolescents are aware of the negative attitudes and judgment surrounding pornography consumption, which may impact their attitudes towards their own and others' sexuality. Students' disagreement with enjoying watching pornography with partners challenges the notion of pornography as a shared activity that enhances intimacy in relationships. This finding warrants further exploration to understand how pornography may impact relationships and communication between partners.

The disagreement that watching pornography affects sexual expectations and does not lead to an increase in sexual frequency among couples challenges some popular beliefs about pornography's effects on sexual behavior.

Overall, the findings from Table 4 underscore the importance of open and informed discussions about pornography in sex education for students in public schools. Providing accurate information, promoting critical thinking, and addressing misconceptions are crucial in supporting adolescents' healthy sexual development and responsible media consumption. Collaborative efforts among educators, parents, and caregivers are essential in guiding adolescents to make informed choices regarding their exposure to and interpretation of pornography.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data, the researchers concluded that pornographic media did not encourage students to engage in such sexual practices. Hence, the students were not embarrassed while seeing sexual videos. The researchers also determined that the students did not enjoy watching pornography with their partner, as perceived by their values, and that they were not ashamed to disclose that they do so.

The data from Tables 1 to 4 provides valuable insights into adolescents' attitudes towards pornography in different educational settings. Overall, adolescents tend to disagree with the idea that pornography has positive effects, but they do recognize its potential to evoke sexual arousal. There is a prevalent social stigma associated with pornography viewing, especially for women. Contrary to popular beliefs, both groups of students disagree that watching pornography together increases sexual activity in couples. Comprehensive sexual education and open discussions are crucial in fostering a healthier understanding of sexuality and responsible media consumption. Educators, parents, and caregivers play a vital role in providing accurate information and creating a non-judgmental environment for discussions about pornography. Future research should continue exploring adolescents' perspectives on pornography to improve sex education programs and support adolescents in developing a positive approach to their sexuality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As the majority of high school students were adolescents, it is suggested that parents, guardians, and teachers of both public and private schools monitor and educate students to prevent teenage pregnancy. Students, parents, guardians, and educators should be informed on this topic in order to raise their awareness. Since the sample size is insufficient to represent the high school student population as a whole, additional research should be conducted. To promote healthier attitudes and responsible consumption of pornography among adolescents, several recommendations are suggested. Firstly, implement comprehensive sexual education programs in schools to address pornography's content and effects, equipping students with accurate information for informed decision-making. Foster sex-positive environments, encouraging open discussions about sexuality, consent, and mutual respect to reduce stigma, especially for women. Educate adolescents on critical thinking and media literacy to

navigate pornographic content responsibly and understand its potential influence. Address gender stereotypes through open dialogues on gender equality and consent, promoting healthy relationships. Provide support for individuals affected by excessive pornography consumption, raising awareness of available counseling services for mental and emotional well-being. Continue research on adolescents' perspectives to adapt sex education programs effectively. Encourage parental involvement in discussions about pornography and sexuality, providing resources for open communication at home. Design inclusive sex education programs, considering diverse cultural backgrounds and attitudes towards pornography and sexuality. Collectively, these efforts create a supportive and informed environment for adolescents to navigate their sexuality responsibly and develop respectful attitudes towards themselves and others.

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