

# Youth Pornography Exposure: Addiction Screening Test and Treatment Recommendation

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine youth exposure toward pornography. 1765 Junior High School and Senior High School students age 12-18 were participated. Data were collected by Kita dan Buah Hati Foundation. The objective of the study is to asses' pornography addiction among youth. 25 Linker scale of Youth Pornography Addiction Screening test (YPAST) was used to determine whether they are in mild, at risk or fully addict category. Result found that, 58.1 % of respondent in the category of mild exposure to pornography, 34.7 % are at risk category and there are 7.2 % are in the category of fully addict. Result of cross tabulation shows that there are more male students in category of at risk and fully addict than female students. Result of t test also indicated that there is significant different between male and female students in term pornography addiction in which male students score higher than female students. Further analysis on bivariate correlation found that, there are positive correlations between age and pornography addiction score, the older the age the score of pornography addiction are higher. Furthermore, the present study also indicated that YPAST is a valid and reliable measure in Indonesian sample with good validity and reliability. The result of the present study provides empirical evidence on the description of youth exposure to pornography. Result of this study can be used as a framework to implement several preventions and treatments to pornography addiction among children and youth.

**Index Terms:** Pornography, Youth, Addiction

## INTRODUCTION

Pornography nowadays is inevitable, due to the accessibility, availability, affordability and of course the anonymous nature of accessing it (Kastleman,2007). Lately, pornography creates various problems to our children and youth who have a big curiosity about it. Literature found that pornography can lead to behaviour addiction. Pornography addiction may lead to a serious mental health problem such as loliness, depression and compulsive behavior(Carnes,1983; Muhammad Iqbal & Gadies Nurdiani)). Not only that pornography addiction may result in brain damage and prolong psychological problem (Belnap, 2008).

### *Pornography Addiction*

Fremuth (2008) state that an addiction toward substance or behavior, is characterized by repetitiveness, high frequency or excess. Pornography consider as one of the behaviour addiction if individual continue watching pornography and lost control toward it, increase tolerant toward pornography and experience negative consequences (Skinner,2005).

There are several continuum of addictive behaviour according to Fremuth (2008) including:

#### **Recreational level**

- Controlled by the situation
- Frequency and intensity of behavior is relatively stable
- Negative effects are rare, unexpected, private and a direct effect of the behavior

#### **At-risk level**

- Controlled by intrinsic reinforcement
- A once social behavior occurs alone or with "like-minded" others

–Negative effects are intermittent, a direct effect of the behavior, and not unexpected

### **Problematic level**

- Doing the behavior is more important than the people it is done with
- Frequency and intensity of behavior is increasing
- Secondary negative consequences: physical, psychological, & social responses to direct negative effects

### **Fully Addicted level**

- Behavior continues even after desired effect is achieved
- Behavior is in-discriminant
- Tertiary negative consequences (e.g., depression forms as a result of guilt and inability to control the behavior, risk of job loss as a result of lowered work performance).

Skinner (2010) in his book treating pornography addiction explains the continuum for pornography addiction into seven level. In each of the seven level of pornography addiction there are common behaviours that distinguish each level from the others. These difference identified based on the compulsivity, frequency and intensity and the belief that individual forms about self. According to this model, level one is consider as the mildest form of involvement with pornography. In which this person in this level have very limited exposure to pornography or accidentally watch pornography and do not have problem with pornography. In level two, viewing pornography not become compulsive, but the curiosity about pornography is increase and pornography slowly became a problem in that individual life. Level three is actually the border line between a growing problem and compulsive behaviour, in this level pornography somehow become impulsive, individual need to put extra effort into quitting because they have been exposed to stronger forms of pornography, this level also characterized by fantasizing and experience withdrawal symptom if they don't give in. In level four, involvement in pornography is likely impacting more and more aspect of person life, fantasizing also increase, withdrawal symptom is increasing, individu try to cut back but they can not do it and continue watching pornography again. In level five, pornography is impacting day to day living. At this level individu spending significant amount of time watching pornography, they might losing aspects of their life, individu in this level usually fighting for pornography addiction for many years, they really want to stop but they don't know how to stop, this lead to feeling of depression. Level six, individu life is dominated by pornography, they experience negative consequences because of pornography but still continue watching it. In level seven, individu already acting out after watching pornography, they feel loss of control, lying frequently about their involvement with pornography, his thought dominated with pornography.

Based on this continuum, Aspen Counseling Service developed Youth Pornography Addiction Screening Test (YPAST). This measure divides three levels of pornography addiction based on norm reference of adolescent at the age group 12-18 years in USA. The three level include: level one is the mild exposure to pornography, second level is at risk and problematic pornography addiction and the third level is fully addict. In this study YPAST is used to examine the pornography addiction among teenagers age 11 to 19 years old.

### ***Development of Addiction in Human mind***

Several studies examine how pornography can create addiction in human mind. One of the pioneer on the study of how pornography cause addiction is establish by Ronald Hilton the author of "the New Drug of Millenium" he explain the neurotransmitter involve when individu watching pornography. The neurotransmitter including, serotonin, oxytoxin, dophamine

Skinner (2005) also explain that at the first time people see pornography their mind does not understand the stimulus that triggers strong emotions and feeling, but they generally like it. However, the next time they view pornography, they enjoy the experience of viewing pornography, after several times a person can associate this feeling with findings comfort when they are under stress and lonely. Therefore the human mind with more exposure toward pornography are demanding for such strong feeling, these strong feeling are accompanied by the release of chemicals inside the brain such as Dophamine and seretonin that can create addiction.

### ***Past study on the addiction toward pornography among youth***

Chelsen, P.O. (2011) examine the correlation between the extent of access to Internet pornography among male undergraduates at select Evangelical Christian colleges in the Midwest and indicators of addiction patterns, guilt regarding online use and online sexual behavior that is social in nature?" This correlational study collected data through an online survey with 46 questions and was sent to 2,245 male undergraduate students at three different Evangelical Christian colleges in the Midwest. Result in present study found a statistically significant relationship exists between the extent of Internet pornography usage

among male undergraduates at three Evangelical colleges and indicators of addictive patterns related to Internet pornography, guilt regarding online pornography use, and online sexual behavior that is social in nature. Furthermore, the multiple regression results overall suggest that students who do not self-identify as Evangelical, spend higher amounts of time online, demonstrate higher indicators of Internet pornography addiction and demonstrate online social behavior that is sexual in nature are more likely to access Internet pornography a higher number of hours each week. The addictive scale emerged as the strongest predictor for the amount of time, on average, spent viewing Internet pornography each week.

Laier, C.; Pawlikowski, M.; Pekal, J.; Schulte, F.; Brand, M. (2013) conducted two experimental studies. The first study aimed at identifying predictors of cybersex addiction in a freely recruited sample of 171 heterosexual males. The aim of the second study was to verify the findings of the first study by comparing healthy ( $n = 25$ ) and problematic ( $n = 25$ ) cybersex users. *Results:* The results show that indicators of sexual arousal and craving to Internet pornographic cues predicted tendencies towards cybersex addiction in the first study. Moreover, it was shown that problematic cybersex users report greater sexual arousal and craving reactions resulting from pornographic cue presentation. In both studies, the number and subjective quality of real-life sexual contacts were not associated to cybersex addiction. The results support the gratification hypothesis, which assumes reinforcement, learning mechanisms, and craving to be relevant processes in the development and maintenance of cybersex addiction. Poor or unsatisfying sexual real-life contacts cannot sufficiently explain cybersex addiction. This study concludes that positive reinforcement in terms of gratification plays a major role in cybersex addiction.

Yang and Youn (2012) examined whether exposure to pornography leads to aggression, utilizing pornographic video excerpts and measuring participants' aggression by the number of human faces chosen as targets during a dart-throwing decision task. Male college students ( $n = 120$ ) were randomly assigned into one of three experimental groups who viewed the sexually explicit material (nonviolent, sadomasochistic, or violent pornography) or to a control group who viewed nonsexual, nonviolent material. Each participant could then behave aggressively, or not, in a dart-throwing decision task offering pictures of human faces as possible targets. The facilitative effect of aggression was significant for all three groups exposed to pornography. The effect was especially conspicuous for those groups exposed to violent pornography.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In the second study 1765 Junior High School and Senior High School students age 12-18 were participated. The objective of second study is to assess pornography addiction among youth. 25 Likert scale of Youth Pornography Addiction Screening test (YPAST) was used to determine whether they are in mild, at risk or fully addict category. This instrument is reliable with Cronbach alpha greater than .80 (0.893). Furthermore, this instrument also shows evidence of construct validity in which each item is correlated significantly with the total score of all items with corrected item total score greater than 0.3 for all items. Furthermore, results of factor analysis also confirm the addiction theory in which there are three factors of addiction criteria including loss of control, tolerance increase and continue doing the addictive behaviour with the presence of negative consequences. These three factors explain 50.21 % of variance that can explain addiction toward pornography.

Analysis used in the present study is descriptive analysis and cross tabulation to examine the profile of pornography addiction across gender, area and economic background. The present study also used t test and one-way Anova to analyse if there are any significant differences in terms of pornography addiction level across gender, age and economic background which is measured by the amount of money that students bring to school every day.

First procedure in the present study is asking permission from school authority, to collect data. Participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire at their school for a duration of 5 to 7 minutes. All of the samples are school students who participated in a program organized by Yayasan Kita dan Buah Hati from the month of January until June 2015.

## RESULT

Respondents of the second study consist of 1765 students from Subang and Jabodetabek, Bandung are participated in this study. However, after data cleaning and removing the data with missing values, total respondents are 1543. Consist of 587 female students and 619 male students. Results indicated that, 58.1 % of the respondents are in the category of mild exposure of pornography, 34.7 % are at risk and problematic category and 7.2 % are in the category of fully addict. Results of cross tabulation show that, there are more male students at the fully addict and at risk category in comparison to female students. With regard to location, students from Bandung area show the highest score for fully addict category. Cross tabulation for age group also indicated that the group age 11 to 15 years old show the highest score for fully addict category.

Results for correlation analysis show that, there is a positive and significant relationship between age group and pornography addiction level ( $r=0.77$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), this indicates that the older the students' age the higher the addiction level.

Other important findings from this research are:

1. 31.9% of the respondent always feel ashamed with themselves because of watching pornography
2. 46.9 % of the respondent promise themselves everyday that they don't want to watch pornography anymore
3. 42.2 % of the respondents never delete the history after browsing in internet however, 57.8 % of the respondent delete the history after browsing pornography material
4. 76.1% of the respondent worried that there is something wrong in their mind because of pornography
5. 58.4% of the respondent feels that their fantasies about pornography disturb their religious and moral values.
6. 73.5 % of the respondent feel that they are annoyed by their thinking about pornography
7. 45.2 % of the respondent admit that they have difficulties to stop watching pornography
8. 22.1% of the respondent always feel that pornography disturb their academic activities at school
9. 67.4 % of respondent did not masturbate when watching pornography however, 15.2 % do masturbation at least one time in a year, 9 % do masturbation one time in a month, 3.8 % do masturbation 3-6 times i a month and 1.7 % do masturbation everyday when watching pornography.
10. 54.1% of the respondent have lied to their family member about watching pornography
11. 4 % of the respondent always looking for a situation where she or he can be alone and enjoy pornography.

## DISCUSSION

Result in the present study found that, children and youth exposure to pornography is quite high in Indonesia. This is because the accessibility of pornography itself. Furthermore, lack of parent control over the used of technology for pornography. Most of our youth are disturb by their thinking and fantasy about pornography, they feel ashamed, they lied about watching pornography and most of them delete the history after browsing pornography material, furthermore, half of the respondent reported that they have difficulties to stop watching pornography.

Finding in the present study, in line with previous study who stated that high exposure to pornography make people want more and difficult to control the behaviour. Although only 7.2 % of the respondent at fully addict categories, if this small portion did not get a proper treatment the addiction might getting worse. There are several recommendations that we can do to help fully addict categories based on the literature according to several scholars including Skinner, 2010; Harker, 2011; and Chelsen 2011:

- Fully addict people need to realized that, they have problem with the addiction, parents counsellor can help them by helping them to realized that they can not control the behaviour, the tolerance toward pornography is increase as well as they experience negative consequence.
- Parents and counsellor also can motivate them to change using the motivational interviewing method, by asking question if they are not addicted to pornography how their life will be better
- Several cognitive, behaviour, emotional and spiritual therapy can be used to treat the addicted behaviour

Furthermore 34.7 % are at risk categories. There are several recommendation that we can do to help the at risk category so that they are not moving to fully addict category:

- Parents and counsellor need to help them to realise how they are trap in pornography, what could be the situation, people and things that can trigger
- After knowing the trigger help them to design activities that can be done when the trigger happen this what Skinner (2010) called as a game plan)

- Encourage children to activate good behaviour including daily sport and daily spiritual intervention as well as daily communication with parents or family member and recorded the activities in daily journal

Lastly, there are 58.1 % of respondent at the mild exposure to pornography. Several things that we can do to help this mild exposure so that they are not moving into at risk category including:

- Educate them about the dangerous of pornography, including that addicted nature of pornography, because its release the dopamine hormone that can make people feel relax and happy when watching pornography, this can create addiction
- Prolong exposure to pornography can cause a brain damage, because the pre frontal cortex no longer active to prevent individu from doing what the animal brain want.
- Talk with your student/parent that pornography is not real, its create false relationship, its exploitation and its disturb our perception about good relationship and the scarcity of marriage and sexual activities between husband and wife.

### ***Limitation and Recommendations***

Several limitation for the present study are, first, the sampling method in the present study is not systematic random sampling, for future study it is suggested that the stratified random sampling based on the region in youth population in JABODETABEK can be done.

Second, single method use in data collection which is questioner. For the future study it is recommended to use more than one method in data collection for more comprehensive data explanation.

Third, the present study only describe youth pornography addiction in JABODETABEK, future study should elaborate more on the predictors of youth addiction and effectiveness of treatment on pornography addiction school age children.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study found that, around 7 % of youth consider as fully addict toward pornography in which they loss control, tolerance increase and continue doing the behaviour with the present of negative consequences. The present study also validate the YPAST to be used in Indonesian sample, this measure are having good reliability as well as evidence for the validity. The present study also discuss several treatment recommendation based on literature for the mild, at risk and fully addict category.

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