

# Misperception and Attitude of Society against Pornography

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**Abstract**— Pornography and other sexually explicit materials are controversial issues and emotional topics to be conducted as a research study in Malaysian society. This research study aims to identify the misperception about pornography and attitude of society (age of 17 to 45 years old) against pornography. The data was collected through questionnaire. However, a persistent problem in conducting the survey was to obtain legitimate answers for sensitive questions. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics was reported as frequency and percentage to determine the perception of Malaysian society and their attitude against pornography. 505 people took part in this research but the number of respondents who answered the questionnaire correctly is approximately 325 people and consists of both men and women. The results show that there is still misperception among the society against pornography. They feel that watching pornography is a good thing. Based on the results, everyone should play their role in spreading the negative effects of watching pornography. In addition, parents should monitor their children whenever they access the internet using any device.

**Keywords**— Pornography, Misperception, Attitude, Society

## I. INTRODUCTION

Pornography is a taboo in Malaysia because it is considered immoral, adulterous and contrary to the culture and religion [1]. According to [2] it is agreed that society who is exposed to pornography will be addicted to watching its materials and they will also have the tendency to get involved in social problems such as free sex. [3] says the content of pornography is considered as prostitution. In other words, pornography has different ways of triggering or enhancing sexual imaginations and thoughts or fantasies with sexually explicit materials and sexual acts [4]. It also includes clear pictures or sexual descriptions of sexual organs such as anal or vagina, oral sex, etc [5]. Pornographic content is not only available on a particular sexual site, but it can also be found in magazines, films, social media, or comic illustrations [6]. Nowadays, the advancement of technology in mobile devices which act as a medium of sharing sexually explicit materials, as well as the accessibility of the internet are the contributing factors that help spreading pornographic images, visuals, and videos in Malaysia [7]. Therefore, some people are open to intercede [3]. In addition, the Internet allows users to explore sexuality visually (i.e. how sexual acts are conducted and the opposite sex anatomy) [8].

From the eyes of legislative jurisdiction, pornography is viewed as a form of prostitution, human trafficking and

worldwide human rights violations [9]. But most actors in sex films do not consider themselves prostitutes because they are paid by the studio and not by the sex partners [10]. The main purposes of this research are to identify the pornography misperception among the society and their attitude against pornography. It is possible for an individual to start watching pornography for the very first time from the influence of others or after watching a sexual scene in the movie. These factors trigger the individual to imitate sexual acts or feel curious about sex. It affects the attitudes and thoughts of the individual directly [11].

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

It is well known that pornography or sexual materials are the cause of misconduct which leads to sexual harassment against women. Pornography should be banned and prohibited since it leads to unreasonable attitude. Unfortunately, the above statement was not supported by previous researches. According to [12], watching pornography does not give harm to men's attitudes towards women. In fact, the research also says that there is no connection between the characters of pornography users towards women and how frequent they watch those materials.

Pornography can change individuals in terms of character, commitment in relationship, sexuality, the ability to think and the possibility to act aggressively towards women. Most of the researches clearly stated that pornography has many side effects [13]. Besides that, in the context of relationship, pornography is related with the sexual dissatisfaction with their partners [14]. In addition, another research shows the mental health effects of pornography addicts such as stress and depression [15].

Attitudes and behaviours can be classified as psychological aspect which is defined by observing certain entity on the level of support or disability [16]. According to [5], it is said that Haggstrom-Nordin, Sanberg, Hanson and Tyden have conducted a research on the reactions, attitudes or perceptions of Swedish against pornography. 51 respondents between the age of 14 and 20 years old volunteered to participate in the research. Four findings have been identified as a result from the research:

- i. Social Realism: Respondents can differentiate between fiction and reality. How far the content of pornography is similar with the actual sexual behaviour.

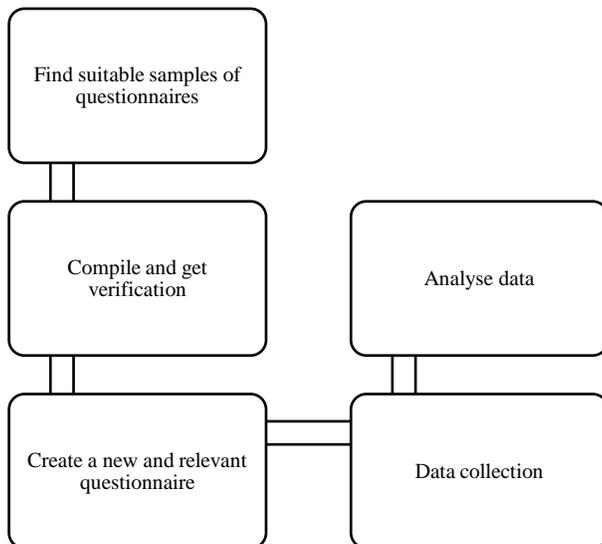
- ii. Utility: Respondents use pornographic materials as their source of sex information which can be applied in real situation. Besides that, they believe that pornography is the normal and integrated sexual lifestyle.
- iii. Conservative: Pornography is assumed as the cause of broken relationship as they believe that sex should be done after marriage or within love and affectionate relationship.
- iv. Liberal: Respondents agree that it is individual right to create and watch pornography. They also believe that pornography should be legal except for children.

III. METHOD OF RESEARCH AND FRAMEWORK

3.1 Method

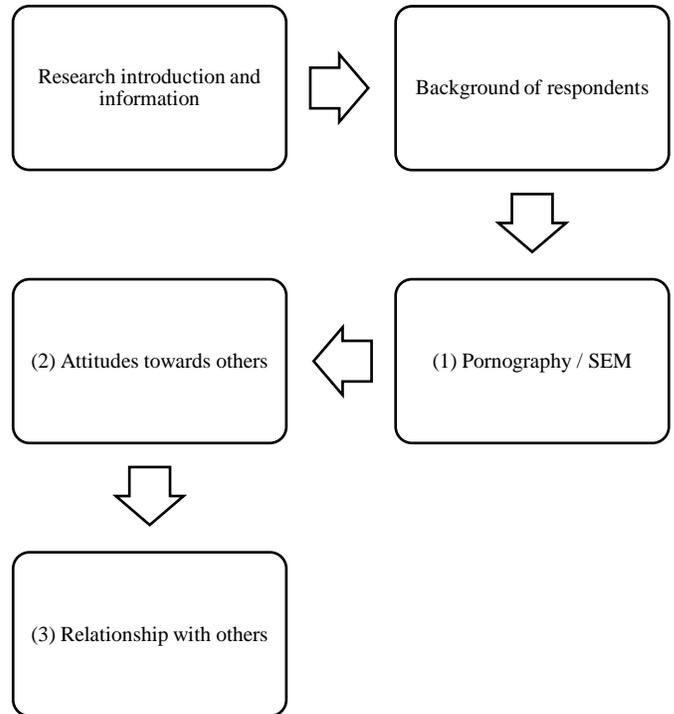
This study uses quantitative methodology in collecting data and information. Researchers studied and analysed the samples of questionnaires used in previous researches which are suitable and relevant for this research. The samples were filtered to ensure the questionnaires are appropriate in the context of Malaysian culture. After that, the researcher compiled the questions in a relevant section and then obtained questionnaire verification as a research instruction (Diagram 1). The term of pornography was not being applied when the respondents answered the questionnaire.

Diagram 1: Research Process



There are three sections in the questionnaire; 1) pornography, 2) attitudes against pornography, and 3) relationship with others. Every section is created to study different research questions. Diagram 3.1 is the visual representation on the function of the research, followed by explanation.

Diagram 3.1: Research Preparation



The source of the questionnaire is 15 items from the ‘Attitudes and Use of Pornography’ study in The Norwegian Population 2002[17]. This measure included 15 Likert scale statements marked as 1 = agree, 2 = strongly agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree. The question was:

1. Healthy sexual source
2. Regularly watch alone
3. Degrades women
4. The great way to release sexual tension
5. Harmful for society in general
6. Cause the problem in relationship
7. Must be illegal in Malaysia
8. Not as bad as how people perceive it
9. Enhance the viewer’s sexual life
10. A film genre
11. Cause aggressive sexual act
12. Degrades men
13. Watching pornography is exciting
14. Can speak openly about pornography with friends
15. Do not like talking about pornography with friends

Furthermore, descriptive statistics is being used in this study to describe the fundamental characteristics by simply explaining and displaying the data. The general review of the study shows the frequency and percentage of each respondent in terms of demographic categories such as age, gender, status and marital status.

3.2 Participant

505 respondents responded to this questionnaire but the number of respondents that answered the questionnaire

correctly is approximately 325 people and consists of men and women. The data was collected from July 7th, 2018 until August 5th, 2018, where the daily average number of respondents was 16.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result shows that there are three different levels of age who answered the questionnaire; age of 17-25 (76.0%), 26-30 (19.1%), and 31-45 (4.9%).

Chart 1: The age levels of the respondents

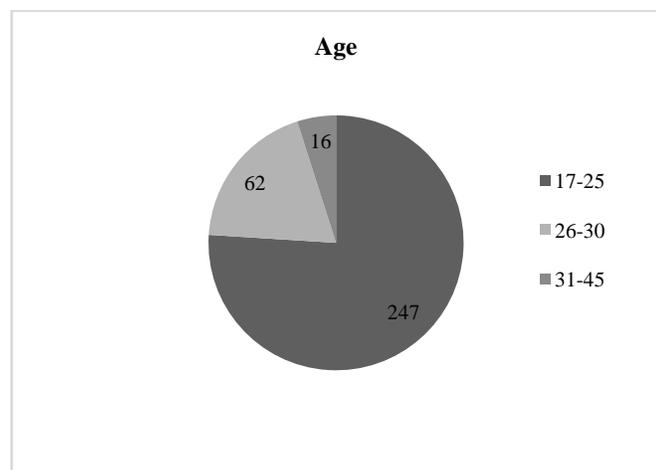


Table 1 shows misperception of society against pornography which is 'healthy sexual sources' (61.5%). Truthfully, pornography can damage your sex life and health because it will send scripts of sexual acts acquired by visual means and have an effect when viewers use it for their own sexual purposes [18]. Pornography can be an addictive substance like tobacco whereby cerebrum responds to solid and characteristic delights like sustenance or sex [19].

Next, 'not as bad as how people perceive it' (59.4%) A study on pornography has shown negative effects on the paradigm of how it affects sexual behaviour and sexual attitudes [20]. Sex is acceptable and normal but pornography is something completely different. According to [21], the more people use pornography, the more it become anxiety, depression, and feel lonelier than before.

Furthermore, majority of respondents (57.2%) think pornography can increase their individual sex life and alter a consumer's sexual tastes. Studies have shown that there is no acceptable role for pornography within their relationship commitment. Besides, pornography is something that can harm relationships and partners [22]. Literally, pornography changes expectations of sex and attraction by presenting an unrealistic picture.

Pornography does not only change attitudes, but also actions. Therefore, pornography is not 'just a genre of movies' (54.8%) and the perception of 'accessing and watching pornography is fun and exciting' (49.2%) is totally a misperception. Pornography violent or non-violent

pornography is more likely to use drugs, verbal coercion, or alcohol to force person into sex and increase aggressive reactions[23]. The longer they get themselves involve in pornographic activity, the more likely they will become seriously addicted and increase the possibility of taking banned or forbidden substance[19]. Plus, research appears that those who watch pornographic materials are more often to have minds that are less associated, less dynamic, and indeed slower in several aspects[24].

According to[25], those who watch pornography especially young people have less self-control and less content with their social lives. Last misperception is 'best way to release sexual tensions' (46.8%). Pornography guarantees a fantasy world filled with a way better sex. Moreover, watching pornography frequently can lead to the feel of making lesser number of sex, dissatisfaction in sexual relationship with the partner, and perhaps, not wanting to have sex at all [26].

Table 1: Misperception of Society against Pornography

Misperception of Society against Pornography	f	%
Healthy sexual source	200	61.5
Not as bad as how people perceive it	193	59.4
Enhance the viewer's sex life	186	57.2
A film genre	178	54.8
Watching pornography is exciting	160	49.2
The great way to release sexual tension	152	46.8

#### V. CONCLUSION

Overall, this research identifies the misperception of society against pornography. Out of 325 respondents, 61.5% thinks watching pornography is a healthy source of sexual life. This is definitely a serious issue. There are many negative effects from pornography but disappointedly, people are not aware of the implications from watching pornography and other sexual materials in their life. Besides that, pornography users always share the positive sides of watching it. However, they do not realise that it can ruin their soul and connection. The development of technology and wireless world has made the accessibility of pornography among youths and youngsters become easier. It is the responsibility of the society to understand and spread the information on the harm and effects of pornography so that other people can make decision and take necessary actions.

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