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Dr. Clayton Michael Fonceca, Dr. S. Paul Raj & Dr. C.R. Christi Anandan

ABSTRACT

In India, the advent of internet pornography has become widespread, resulting in 30 percent to 70 percent of web traffic (Ghosh, 2015). Studies reveal, extensive viewing of pornography has a disastrous impact on one's life as it alters the brain and the aftermath also includes increased rates of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, aggression and violence of women. The study sort of understanding the impact of pornography among college going rural youth of Vellore District (Tirupattur), Tamil Nadu, India and 853 respondents were selected at random for the study. The results highlighted the fact that; a vast majority of the respondents stated that they had access to pornography via their mobile phones and personal computers. More than half (51.8 percent) indicated that they struggled with the urge to control their addiction and also reported aggression in their behavior, with increased levels of anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. The study revealed that pornography does affect the rural youth in their behavior, eating habits, and creates addiction.

Keywords: pornography, rural youth, impact.

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Impact of Pornography on Rural Youth in Tamil Nadu - India

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ABSTRACT

In India, the advent of internet pornographic has become widespread, resulting in 30 percent to 70 percent of web traffic (Ghosh, 2015). Studies reveal, extensive viewing of pornography has a disastrous impact on one's life as it alters the brain and the aftermath also includes increased rates of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, aggression and violence of women. The study sort of understanding the impact of pornographic among college going rural youth of Vellore District (Tirupattur), Tamil Nadu, India and 853 respondents were selected at random for the study. The results highlighted the fact that; a vast majority of the respondents stated that they had access to pornography via their mobile phones and personal computers. More than half (51.8 percent) indicated that they struggled with the urge to control their addiction and also reported aggression in their behavior, with increased levels of anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. The study revealed that pornography does affect the rural youth in their behavior, eating habits, and creates addiction.

Keywords: pornography, rural youth, impact.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Advancements of Internet-enabled technology has significantly changed the way the youth access, download, and surf the web. In 2016 alone, more

than 4,599,000,000 hours of porn was estimated to be viewed on one of the world's largest porn site (PH Analytics, 2016). Today, 35 percent of all internet downloads are porn-related, and 34 percent of internet users have been exposed to unwanted porn via ads, pop-ups, etc. (WebRoot, 2016). The youth being no different are no exception to such horrors as 90 percent of boys, and 60 percent of girls are exposed to Internet porn by age 18 (Michael Castleman, 2016).

The availability and use of pornography have become almost ubiquitous among youth and adults. Extensive viewing of pornography has a disastrous impact on one's life. It alters the brain in ways similar to the neurological alterations of those addicted to cocaine, alcohol, and methamphetamines (David Perry, 2016). The aftermath also includes increased rates of depression, anxiety, self-esteem, aggression, and violence towards women.

II. INDIA AND PORNOGRAPHY

According to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), there are 391.50 million Internet subscribers in the country as on December 31, 2016. India has the second-largest number of internet users in the world after China, and according to the telecom ministry, 730 million Internet users are anticipated in the country by 2020.

In India, the advent of internet pornographic has become widespread, resulting in 30 percent to 70 percent of web traffic as a common source of data revenue for telecom companies (Ghosh, 2015). In an article by a daily newspaper (Outlook, 2019), it

was revealed that 35 percent to 40 percent of content that is downloaded daily in India is pornographic. One self-reporting survey found that 63 percent of youths in urban areas reported watching pornography, with 74 percent of them accessing it through their mobile phones.

2.1 The X Factor in India

India has more than 50 percent of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65 percent below the age of 35 (Basu Kaushik, 2016). It is estimated that, in 2020, the average age of an Indian would be 29 years. Mihir Sharma, 2018 stated, India's Youth are the World's Future with half of its population under the age of 25. However, when comparing the same to the harsh realities, the question of whether the future is bright or gloomy is left to be unanswered as a survey conducted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation in the year 2018, ranked India as number one for the world's most dangerous country for women. The statistics send a shiver down ones' spine as India has no reason to revel its name as 'Bharat Mata'. A look at the official crime statistics in the year 2016, revealed that; in every 13 minutes a woman is raped and in an average six women are gang-raped every day (BBC News, 2018).

2.2 Legality in India

In India, watching or possessing pornographic material is legal. However, the production, publication, or distribution of such materials is illegal (Rajak, 2011). On 27th October 2018, an initiative undertaken by the Government of India directed the country's Internet Service Providers to ban 827 porn sites as this was yet another attempt in recent times following a court verdict in August 2015 which mandated the block of explicit porn on the internet. The action taken by the government was mere ephemeral as just days after the verdict, the world's biggest porn website, Pornhub, launched a mirror site with an altered web address just for its Indian users. Today, India is the third largest porn watching nation after UK and USA (Atulit Chaudhary, 2018).

2.3 Need for the study

There is limited research on the impact of pornography on young people in India and Tamil Nadu being one among the 29 states in India witnessed an alarming rise in crimes against women, rape and even incest over the past three years (The Hindu, 2018). Tamil Nadu shares 2.41 percent in the country's total crime against women about girls of younger age being victims of sexual assault and abuse. As extensive viewing of pornography alters one's behavior, habits, attitudes and aggression. It was also crucial to understand pornography as a form of violence against women as there have been many studies showing that porn addiction can lead to sexual violence against women (The Times of India, 2018). Therefore, understanding the complexity of the surrounding issues which stems from the adverse viewing of pornographic content is very critical in generating sustainable solutions as India is a very young country with half of its population is under the age of 25.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

As the research aims at understanding the impact of pornographic on rural youth; one of the oldest and backward regions of Vellore District (Tirupattur) of Tamil Nadu, India was studied. The name Tirupattur denotes a group of ten villages/small towns. Another significant aspect paying the way for the selection of the universe is that this is one of the fastest developing towns also known as the "Sandalwood City" of Tamil Nadu. According to the census taken in the year 2011, Tirupattur has a population of 63,798. Male constituted 51 percent and female 49 percent (National Population Register, 2011).

The presented research focused on the population of college going youth. The convenient sampling technique was adopted, and 853 respondents were sampled at random for the study. The descriptive research design was used to logically present the findings of the study. The survey method was incorporated to collect data. The reliability of the

instrument was found to be .846 Cronbach's Alpha.

IV. FINDINGS

4.1 Socio-demographic findings

Tirupattur being a rural area, opportunities for educational progression is given to boys rather than girls. Hence, a significant majority (80 percent) of the respondents were male. The outcome of the study revealed that; 70 percent of the respondents belong to a nuclear family structure that consists of two parents living with their children. This significant finding highlights the fact that gone were the days when the joint family system existed as a primary family setup in India, especially in rural areas. The composition of data based on the various other socio-demographic details of the respondents is statistically tabulated in Table: 1.

4.2 Access to Pornography

As pornography is unregulated and freely available to any age group, the research sort to understand the prime source or medium that is being adopted by the youth in rural areas to access the same. The study revealed less than one-third of the respondents had visited an Internet Café/Center to assess pornographic content while a little more than two-tenth (22.4 percent) of the respondents stated that they had purchased sexually explicit materials in the form of magazines, CDs and DVDs. A vast majority of the respondents quantified that they had access to pornography via their mobile phones, personal computers, and spent many hours accessing the same.

4.3 Implication of Pornography

The physical, psychological, social, and spiritual consequences of pornography addiction can be extensive. The physical dimension of the study revealed that a vast majority (84.2 percent) of the respondents stated that they had viewed pornographic content on a daily basis; while, more than half of the respondents developed a tendency to access such content longer than

intended and would also stay up late. On examination of the psychological dimension, the analysis revealed that majority of the respondents 61.8 percent and above stated that constant viewing of porn interfered with their sleep pattern and had developed thoughts of reciprocating the same behavioral patterns as exhibited in pornographic videos. More than half (51.8 percent) stated that they struggled with the urge to control their addiction. In probing into the social dimension, it was revealed that more than one-third (39 percent) of the respondents exchanged pornographic content with their friends (Table 2).

As India, is a land of spirituality, diversity and religion, the spiritual dimension was also studied. The findings revealed that 66.3 percent of the respondents stated that pornography interfered with their religious life, and they often felt guilty about it. A little more than one-third of the respondents were aware of the fact that their grades in the examination dropped significantly because of their addiction to pornography and majority (64.7 percent) reported the same (Table 2).

4.4 Impact of Pornography

The effects of pornography, whether violent or non-violent, on sexual aggression, have been debated for decades. The present study revealed that majority (67.3 percent) of the respondents reported aggression in their behavior and also stated increased levels of anxiety. For many, a porn habit can become a substitute for the feeling of happiness, however, in the study undertaken, it was revealed that more than half (58 percent) of the respondents stated; they often felt depressed, which highlights the fact that no amount of pornography will take away life's problems. The findings also denoted low levels of self-esteem and a feeling of guilt among the respondents (Figure 1). The presented findings state that it's not just the youth in urban areas that are affected with this harsh reality but also the ones in rural areas.

The independent sample t-test was applied to understand the overall impact of porn on the

gender of the respondents. The study revealed a significant difference between the genders of respondents and the impact of pornography, further implying that frequent viewing of porn does affect both (Table 3). In the application of the test of correlation, the research highlighted that pornography significantly impacted one's grades, eating habits, aggression, and behavior. It also stimulated the youth to engage in explicit adult chats and interfered with their inability to control their addiction (Table 4).

V. CONCLUSION

It is unlikely that young people will talk openly about the presence and perceived normality of being interested in pornography. In India, most educational settings are less than ideal for discussion of pornography as a topic, and it as it can be quite uncomfortable for teachers. The very aspect of sex education itself remains a stigma and taboo in India. We live in a smart world, where almost everyone now has a smartphone, and with mobile networking giants offering free internet at an affordable cost to market and distribute their network, access to pornography has become more convenient especially for the youth.

The study reveals that; it's not just that the youth residing in metropolitan regions that are affected but also the ones in rural areas. Pornography does affect both genders and stimulates aggression, behavioral change, anxiety, and depression among the youth. The study is an eye opener for the government in framing educational policies, teachers to educate the youth, mobile networks to recheck what they offer and parents to govern and sensitize their children on the ill aspects of pornography.

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-governments-attempt-to-ban-porn-will-most-likely-fail-once-again.

Table 1: Socio-demographic findings

Independent Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age		
Below 19 years	348	40.8
20 to 21 years	323	37.9
Above 21 years	182	21.3
Gender		
Male	692	81.1
Female	161	18.9
Type of Family		
Nuclear	597	70
Joint	256	30
Nature of Residence		
Day Scholar	397	46.5
Residence with Relatives/Friends	59	6.9
Hosteller	397	46.5

Table 2: Implication of Pornography

Dimensions	Analysis on the Implication of Pornography N:853)			
Physical	Low level	Percentage	High level	Percentage^e
Watched Pornographic content	135	15.8		84.2
Viewed pornography longer than Intended	330	38.7	718	61.3
Stayed up late night to watch porn	291	34.1	523 562	65.9
Psychological				
Struggle to control ones addiction	411	48.2	442	51.8
Thoughts of reciprocating the same which is portrayed	279	32.7	574	67.3
Interfering with ones sleep pattern	326	38.2	527	61.8
Social				
Exchange of pornographic content with friends	520	61.0	333	39.0
Impacts the way one sees the opposite gender	457	53.6	396	46.4
Interferes with ones social view on life	438	51.3	415	48.7
Spiritual				
Interfering with ones religious life	282	33.1	571	66.9
Feeling of guilt after watching porn	483	56.6	370	43.4

Intellectual				
Impact on ones grades and marks	301	35.3	552	64.7
Awareness on the impact of porn in ones grade	662	77.6	191	22.4

Table 3: Independent Sample t-test (Gender vs. Overall Pornography Implications)

Gender	Impact of Pornography					
	No. of Respondents	Mean	SD	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Statistical Inference
Male	692	1.50	.500	851	.000	P<0.05 Significant
Female	161	1.17	.380	303.497	.000	P<0.05 Significant

Table 4: Correlation (Grades, Eating Habits, Aggression, Behavior, Indulgence in Sexual Chats and Addictions vs. Overall Pornography Implications)

Variables	Correlation Value	Statistical Inference
Grades	.399**	Significant
Eating Habits	.434**	Significant
Aggression	.380**	Significant
Behavior	.331**	Significant
Indulgence in Sexual Chats	.357**	Significant
Addiction	.331**	Significant

***.* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

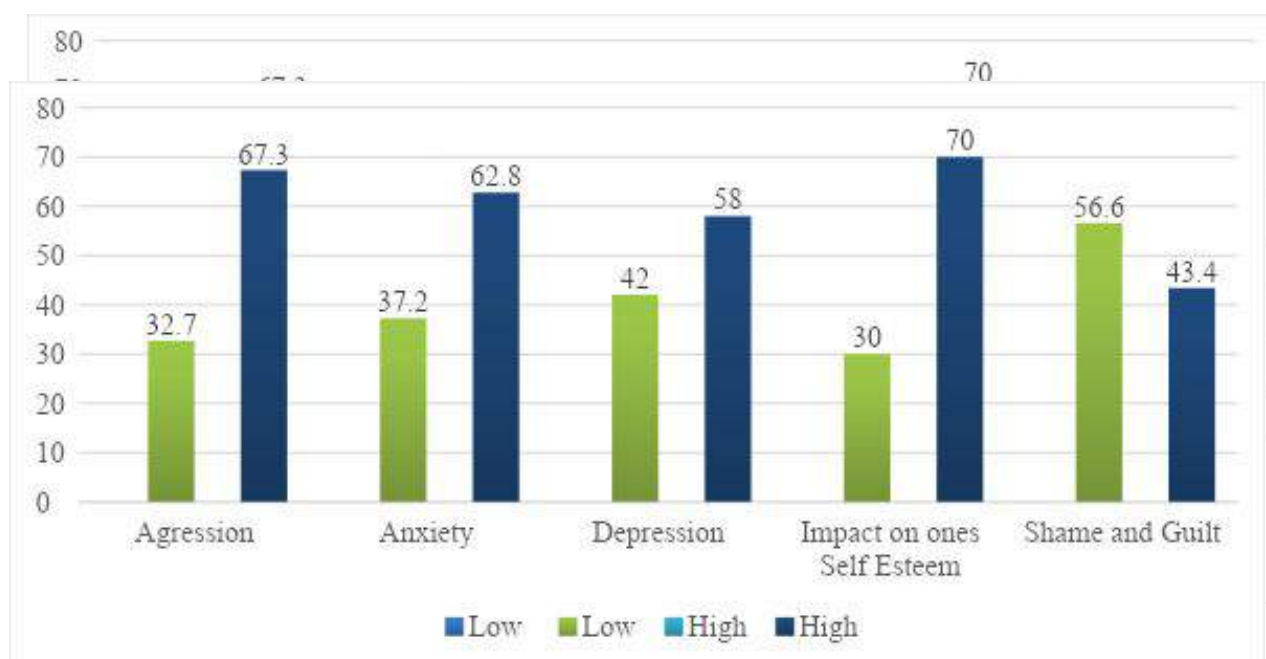


Figure 1: Impact of Pornography