

# Comparative Study of Pornographic Craving and Sexual Satisfaction among Women who are in a Committed Relationship and Women who are Not in a Committed Relationship

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## Abstract

Pornographic craving is a relative term to describe the affliction of consuming pornography in visual, audio, or written format. The study has been conducted to explore the intriguing relationship between pornographic craving and sexual satisfaction in 106 women between 18-30 years of age who experience sexual encounters with committed partners and without committed partners. The pornographic craving questionnaire by Kraus and Rosenberg was used to measure the level of pornographic craving in the sample selected. Sexual Satisfaction was measured by the New Sexual Satisfaction Scale developed by Štulhofer. Interpretation of the t-test shows that there is a significant difference in sexual satisfaction among the women in a relationship than women who are not in a relationship. There is a higher satisfaction level recorded in women who are in a stable relationship. There was no significant difference in the pornographic craving levels between the two groups. Findings also concluded that there is no prominent correlation between sexual satisfaction and pornographic craving among these young adult women.

**Keywords:** *pornographic craving, sexual satisfaction, committed relationship, non-committed relationship*

## Introduction

Pornographic craving can be described as the need or yearning to watch or read pornographic material. It is often referred to as compulsive or problematic pornography consumption.

Internet pornography, which is defined as sexually explicit content that inspires erotic sensations, ideas, and behaviours, is a pervasive form of media that can encourage problematic use and a need for participation. [<sup>1</sup>]

It is a term used in psychology and sexual health to describe a heightened, persistent, and sometimes uncontrollable desire or urge to consume explicit sexual material. This condition is characterised by an individual's preoccupation with pornography, leading to negative consequences in various aspects of their life, including relationships, work, and overall well-being. It's crucial to understand that reasons for watching porn vary greatly from person to person, and that, as long as it's done in a healthy and consensual way, watching porn is a decision that fits within the range of human sexuality. Some persons use pornography compulsively or addictively, which is indicated by an apparent inability to stop using it, detrimental psychosocial effects, and/or psychological suffering. [<sup>2</sup>]

Although there are many different reasons why people watch pornographic material, at its core, it frequently serves as a source of sex arousal, pleasure, and fantasy. It gives them a safe and private setting in which to experience sexual scenarios and behaviours that they might not otherwise pursue in real life. For many, it's an opportunity to explore their own desires and interests. Couples looking to increase their intimacy or liven up their sexual encounters together can also use porn as a tool. In addition to its simply sexual appeal, some people use porn to unwind, relieve stress, or even learn about sexual hygiene and practises.

Pascoal et al. (2014) investigated the meaning behind sexual satisfaction. Two themes emerge from the investigation. The first emphasises the pleasurable elements of a person's sexual experience, such as arousal, positive feelings, and orgasm. The second topic focuses on aspects of relationships like mutuality, romanticism, emotional expression, creativity, acting out impulses, and frequency of sex. [3]

Sexual satisfaction is a complicated, subjective emotional and physical experience that represents a person's overall satisfaction and contentment with their intimate relationships and sexual activity. It is a multifaceted - complex idea influenced by various relational, psychological, emotional, and physical elements.

Ashdown & Clark (2011) found that in a married relationship, particular sexual acts, such kissing, having oral sex, and having sexual discussions, were more likely to be linked to higher levels of sexual satisfaction. [4]

A significant indicator of sexual health is sexual satisfaction. A complicated and diverse idea, sexual satisfaction is influenced by many different factors. It includes elements that are psychological, emotional, and physical. Physically, it entails the presence of arousal, sexual desire, and the capacity to experience and enjoy climax. Feelings of emotional connection, closeness, and trust with a spouse are all examples of emotional aspects. In order to promote emotional fulfilment, communication and understanding between parties are essential. Sexual arousal is an emotional/motivational state that can be brought on by both internal and external stimuli and that can be deduced from behavioural (including action tendencies and motor preparation) as well as central (including verbal), peripheral (including genital), and central (including genital) responses. [3]

Sexual satisfaction is greatly influenced by psychological elements like self-esteem, body image, and sexual confidence. Additionally, outside variables including the calibre of a relationship, social and cultural conventions, and personal values can have an impact on a person's sense of sexual fulfilment. In the end, sexual fulfilment is a highly individual and subjective experience that differs from person to person and is influenced by a variety of complex factors.

Sex is a complicated, significant, and sensitive matter that is entwined with every aspect of human existence. It is obvious that sexual function, specifically sexual satisfaction, has to be addressed given the significant shifts in attitude, function, and behaviour. Marriage contentment is greatly influenced by sexual fulfilment. [5]

The latest I-PACE model adaptation suggests that craving and desire thinking may be directly associated to problematic Internet pornography consumption. The overarching goal of the current studied desiring and two aspects of want thinking (verbal perseveration and imaginal prefiguration) contribute to problematic Internet pornography use. [6] More frequently than in terms of quantity, problematic online sexual activities (OSAs) were linked to pornography seeking, and OSAs were linked to negative academic emotions. [7]

### **The rationale of the study:**

The rationale for conducting a comparative study on pornographic craving and sexual satisfaction among women who are in a relationship and those who are not is multifaceted and can serve several academic, clinical, and societal purposes. This can aid in the need for a more in-depth understanding of how women's sexual behavior and satisfaction are influenced by their relationship status.

### **Methodology**

#### **Aim**

To study the effect of relationship status on ss and pc among young adult women in urban Indian context

### Objectives

1. To study the difference in sexual satisfaction among young women in a relationship and those who are not.
2. To find if there is a significant difference in pornographic craving between single women and women in a relationship
3. This comparative study seeks to clarify the potential influence of relationship status on the aspects of sexual satisfaction and craving for pornographic material among women who are in committed relationships and those who are not.
4. The study seeks to identify any notable relation between the consumption of pornography and their relationship to sexual satisfaction in these two different groups.

### Hypothesis

1. There will be no significant difference in pornographic craving between single women and women in a relationship
2. There will be a significant difference in sexual satisfaction between single women and women in a relationship
3. There will be a significant correlation between sexual satisfaction and pornographic cravings.

### Research Design

The current study is a cross-sectional study utilizing a quantitative approach.

Two individual group designs has been used in the study,

### Sample:

A judgemental sampling technique, snow ball sampling, was utilized to select the sample, which included( $n=106$ ) urban Indian females. The age range of this sample, which was chosen, was between 18 and 30 years. The mean age was found to be 22.25 ( $SD = 2.628$ ). The sample comprised both single women (60%) and women who are currently in a committed relationship (45%).

The sample included women who engaged in sexual activities with a committed partner where they were in a relationship and women who engaged in sexual activities without a stable partner,

### Psychological measures

#### **The pornographic craving questionnaire**

This tool was developed by Shane Kraus and Harold Rosenberg (2012). A seven-point Likert scale with 12 items, ranging from "completely disagree" to "completely agree," is used. A score of 5.0 or higher is seen as indicative of a pornographic craving.

The PCQ's convergent and criterion validity were supported by its correlation with measures of sexual compulsivity, passionate attachment to pornography, and compulsive internet use. The test has a good test-retest reliability coefficient of  $r(42) = .82$ . Overall, it's a reliable and valid measure for pornographic cravings.[<sup>8</sup>]

#### **The new sexual satisfaction scale**

The new sexual satisfaction scale developed by Stulhofer, Buško & Brouillard is a comprehensive measure of sexual satisfaction suitable for both clinical and non-clinical samples. By using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied), the respondent is required to rate their level of satisfaction in their sexual life in the preceding 6 months. A higher score indicates an higher level of sexual satisfaction. The internal consistency reliability of the scale was found to be high with a cronbach alpha of 0.91 to 0.93 In a sample of Croatian students ( $N = 219$ ) over the course of one month, test-retest reliability of the NSSS was

found to be satisfactory. NSSS scores and a global (single-item) measure of sexual satisfaction had strong and significant relationship. (convergent validity;  $r = .44-.67$ ). [9]

#### Procedure

Due to the sensitive nature of the study, data was gathered via an online survey platform.

The study's goal and the participants' rights as subjects were clearly explained to them. An informed consent was obtained and the subjects were ensured that the data would be kept confidential.

Socio-demographic information about the subject was gathered in the first segment preceding the use of reliable and valid psychological tests.

#### Data Analysis

After scoring the data using the respective test manuals, the statistical package for social sciences (IBM version 16) was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation were employed to encapsulate the properties of a data set. To look for any significant differences between the two groups, inferential statistics like the t-test were conducted. Lastly, Pearson's correlation was used to examine the relationship between sexual satisfaction and pornographic craving.

#### Results

**Table 1: Sexual satisfaction among group 1: young women who are not in a committed relationship and group 2: young women who are in a committed relationship.**

##### Group Statistics

	Your relationship status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
sexual satisfaction	Not in a relationship	60	58.70	20.322	2.624
	In a relationship	45	75.82	18.496	2.757

**Table 2: Pornographic craving among group 1: young women who are not in a committed relationship and group 2: young women who are in a committed relationship.**

##### Independent sample t test

##### Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	T	df	Significance One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
sexual satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.720	.398	-4.438	103	<.001	<.001
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.499	99.138	<.001	<.001

**Group Statistics**

	Your relationship status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PCQ	Not in a relationship	60	27.28	13.709	1.770
	Ina relationshio	45	30.18	17.472	2.605

**Table 3: Correlation between sexual satisfaction and pornographic craving****Correlations**

		sexual satisfaction	PCQ
sexual satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.060
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.544
	N	105	105
PCQ	Pearson Correlation	.060	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.544	

**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
PCQ	Equal variances assumed	1.581	.211	.951	103	.172	.344	-2.894	3.043	-8.929	3.140
	Equal variances not assumed			.919	81.114	.180	.361	-2.894	3.149	-9.160	3.371
		N		105		105					

**Discussion**

For most couples, sexual satisfaction is vital. People worry about their partner's and their own levels of sexual satisfaction in addition to the quality of their sexual connection. The following is Lawrance and Byers' (1992; 1995) definition of sexual satisfaction: "An affective response arising from one's subjective evaluation of the positive and negative dimensions associated with one's sexual relationship." [10]

The internet functions as a worldwide network that facilitates connections with other networks. It serves as a medium through which we can convey meaning or purpose and assign significance to various aspects. The emerging trends of internet addiction have also introduced new avenues for sexual exposure to individuals around the world.

According to Hald & Malamuth (2008), pornography is defined as "material intended to induce sexual arousal or excitement" [<sup>11</sup>]

The tools that measured the pornographic craving score was developed by Shane Kraus & Harold Rosenberg which can be used to examine the prevalence and contextual desire triggers among various types of pornography users as well as in therapeutic settings to plan and assess therapy for problematic pornography users. A seven-point Likert scale with 12 items, ranging from "completely disagree" to "completely agree," is used. Items 1 through 12 are averaged for a possible range of 1.0 to 7.0. A score of 5.0 or more is seen as favorable for desire. [<sup>8</sup>]

Professor Aleksandar Stulhofer developed the New Sexual Satisfaction Scale that measures and rates the sexual satisfaction of an individual in the last 6 months, using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'not at all satisfied' to extremely satisfied. [<sup>9</sup>]

The current study shows that since,  $p < 0.05$ , indicating there is a significant difference in sexual satisfaction between women who are in a relationship and those who are not in a relationship. The mean score for sexual satisfaction was found to be higher in females who are in a relationship i.e. 30.18 (SD= 17.472), while the mean score for females who are not in a relationship is 27.28 (SD= 13.709)

The results of this study provide evidence to support the assertion that there is a significant difference in sexual satisfaction between women who are in a relationship and those who are not. These findings have significant ramifications for how we perceive the influence of women's relationship status on their sexual health. Thus, our first hypothesis is accepted.

First off, it's important to highlight that women in partnerships reported higher levels of sexual satisfaction than their counterparts who were single.

This finding is consistent with earlier research that indicates emotional closeness, trust, and having a reliable partner can all have a good impact on sexual satisfaction. Through increased sexual satisfaction, a more positive body image has been linked to improved perceived romantic relationship quality. There were no gender differences, suggesting that sexual pleasure and body image are equally significantly correlated with how well people consider their relationships to be. [<sup>12</sup>].

Women in partnerships could feel more at ease exploring their wants and discussing their needs with a trusted partner, which may lead to a more rewarding sexual encounter. Commitment and emotional stability are also frequently associated with stable relationships. A model of healthy sexuality that integrates attachment and sexuality is presented. [<sup>13</sup>]

Conversely, single women in the study reported lower levels of sexual satisfaction. [<sup>14</sup>] This could be attributed to various factors, including the absence or lack of a regular sexual partner or fewer opportunities for sexual intimacy. Additionally, social and cultural variables may be at play because being single can often result in stigma or other obstacles that limit one's ability to enjoy one's sexuality. [<sup>4</sup>]

Furthermore, these findings highlight the complexity of the relationship between pornography consumption and sexual satisfaction. For example, women in relationships may use pornography as a means to enhance their sexual experiences with their partners [<sup>15</sup>], whereas single women may use it as a substitute for physical intimacy. Understanding these nuanced dynamics can inform tailored interventions to increase both groups' sexual satisfaction.

Importantly, these results underscore the need for comprehensive sexual education and relationship counseling that takes into account the unique challenges and experiences of women in different relationship statuses. By recognizing the varying factors that influence sexual satisfaction, educators and therapists can provide more targeted support and guidance to help women achieve fulfilling and healthy sexual lives.

There is no significant difference in pornographic craving between the groups that are: women who are in a relationship and women who are not in a relationship since  $p > 0.05$ . However, the results show that women who are in a relationship have a slightly higher affinity towards pornographic craving than their single counterparts. This proves our hypothesis accurate and accepts that there is no significant difference in the pornographic craving found in women who are in a relationship and women who are not.

The results of this study provide intriguing insights into the complex interaction between relationship status and sexual desire, showing no discernible difference in pornographic appetite between women who are in relationships and those who are not. While it could be appealing to firmly believe that having a sexual partner available would naturally result in decreased levels of pornographic craving, this study sheds doubt on that notion.

The third hypothesis is rejected as there is no significant correlation between sexual satisfaction and pornographic craving in young women. There is no prominent correlation between sexual satisfaction and pornographic craving among young women who are in a relationship with a single partner, and women who are not in a committed relationship. Further research needs to be done to explore the nuances of this parameter.

#### **Limitations:**

- It is essential to delve deeper into the reasons behind the observed differences in pornographic craving and its relationship with sexual satisfaction in both groups. This study was conducted on 106 young females. However, different results may be anticipated if the sample was larger. Further research needs to be validated to prove the notion.
- Study can be carried out on other gender.

#### **Conclusion**

The findings of this study shed light on the significant differences in sexual pleasure between women who are in relationships and those who are not. The findings of this study have significance for both clinical practice and sexual education by deepening our awareness of the complex interactions between relationship status, pornography use, and sexual satisfaction.

The findings from this study offer proof that a notable distinction exists in sexual satisfaction between women involved in a relationship and those who are not. These results carry substantial implications for our understanding of how women's relationship status affects their sexual well-being.

There is a lack of significant correlation between sexual satisfaction and the desire for pornography in young women who are either in a committed relationship or married to a single partner, as well as in women who are not in a committed relationship.

Further research is needed to explore the specificities underlying these differences and to develop tailored interventions to promote sexual well-being among diverse groups of women.

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**Conflict of interest:** None

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