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Undressing pornography: mental health implications for young people

Desnudando a la pornografía: repercusiones en la salud mental de jóvenes

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Abstract

Pornography consumption is a social phenomenon that has an impact on the mental health of the population due to its capacity to modify the perception of interpersonal relationships, sexuality and psychological well-being. Being adolescents and young people the most prone to develop symptoms of various disorders due to this exposure, it is essential to analyze this problem because of its impact on the emotional, social and psychological development of the next generations. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore the associated variables that affect mental health in the consumption of pornography in the population between 12 and 29 years of age. From there, a qualitative methodology with a bibliographic research design was used, which explored and analyzed 24 articles from Scopus, PubMed, EbscoHost and Scholar Google databases between the years 2014 to 2024. A documentary analysis was carried out using the fichaje technique, obtaining as the most relevant results that pornography consumption can contribute to depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and dysphoric mood. Other problems found were a distorted view of violence towards women, sexual dysfunction and a correlation with substance addictions. In conclusion, this study corroborates that pornography consumption is related to mental health problems; however, it is important to know the associated variables such as gender, age of onset and family factor that increase its probability.

Keywords: Pornography, consumption, mental health, adolescents, youths

Resumen

El consumo de pornografía es un fenómeno social que repercute a la salud mental de la población debido a su capacidad de modificar la percepción de las relaciones interpersonales, la sexualidad y el bienestar psicológico. Siendo los adolescentes y jóvenes los más proclives a desarrollar síntomas de los diversos trastornos por esta exposición, es fundamental analizar esta problemática por su impacto en el desarrollo emocional, social y psicológico de las próximas generaciones. Es así que este estudio tuvo como propósito explorar las variables asociadas que afectan a la salud mental en el consumo de pornografía en la población de 12 a 29 años de edad. Desde allí, se utilizó una metodología cualitativa con un diseño de investigación bibliográfica, que exploró y analizó 24 artículos de las bases de datos de Scopus, PubMed, EbscoHost y Scholar Google entre los años 2014 a 2024. Se realizó un análisis documental a través de la técnica de fichaje, obteniendo como resultados más relevantes, que el consumo de pornografía puede contribuir a la depresión, ansiedad, baja autoestima y estado de ánimo disfórico. Otros problemas hallados fueron una visión distorsionada de violencia hacia las mujeres, disfunción sexual y una correlación con adicciones a sustancias. Como conclusión, este estudio corrobora que el consumo de pornografía está relacionado con problemas en la salud mental, no obstante, es importante conocer las variables asociadas como el género, la edad de inicio y el factor familiar que incrementan su probabilidad.

Palabras clave: Pornografía, consumo, salud mental, adolescentes, jóvenes.

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Introduction

The word *pornography* comes etymologically from the Greek *porneia*, meaning prostitution—that is, the body being offered as merchandise—which in turn defines it as a degradation of eroticism. Han (2018) describes pornography as an elimination of eroticism, focusing on one's own desire as the utmost priority and removing any possibility of difference or otherness. In this regard, Amaya (2014) argues that eroticism represents the degree of sexuality permitted within society, as it is the only means of reclaiming intimacy as an act that encompasses the mystery of bodily interaction between two individuals, in contrast with pornography, which is a grotesque representation of sex. Thus, pornography functions as a system of control and trivialization of the sexual act, representing obscenity and stripping sexuality of intimacy by portraying sex in an ordinary manner (Marzano, 2006; Peña, 2012).

Pornography has become a cultural and social phenomenon that transcends geographical borders and linguistic barriers, establishing itself as a powerful globalizing medium of sexuality, a mediator for negative emotions, sexual and emotional well-being, female standards of body aesthetics, entertainment, and mental health (Privara & Bob, 2023; Kumbhare, 2022; Hanseder & Dantas, 2023).

According to Testa et al. (2023), in Spain, 99.6% of young people aged 16 to 24 use the internet, and 62.5% of those aged 13 to 17 have watched pornography at least once in their lives. This prevalence can be explained by the ease of accessing mobile devices at increasingly younger ages. A report by Save the Children (2020) shows that 7 out of 10 young people view pornography before age 12. Finally, a BBC report (2013) indicates that 14% of global internet traffic—based on various forums—is related to pornography. Access to pornographic content through the internet has increased exponentially over recent decades, fostering unprecedented interconnectedness among people worldwide (Alonso-Ruido et al., 2022). Although professionals often describe pornography consumption as a phenomenon capable of manipulating an individual's sexual responses within a

romantic relationship (Alonso-Ruido et al., 2022; Ballester et al., 2019), current scientific literature does not yet offer conclusive evidence that pornography consumption causes changes associated with introversion or extroversion (Privara & Bob, 2023).

Recent research reveals an exponential increase in pornography consumption among young populations. A survey conducted by Pornhub Insights (2018) shows an increase of 10 million new visits in less than a year, a figure that continues to rise. Torrado (2021) and Ballester & Orte (2019) describe this as a dominant trend that is offered freely, without limits, and with varying levels of interaction. Understanding that youth populations may experience distinct contexts and emotional characteristics, youth is viewed from a psychological perspective as the construction of interactions between one's environment and social relationships (López & Manco, 2023) and is considered a period of identity construction and affirmation, during which a crisis of intimacy may occur (Fernández, 2021).

Thus, this research aimed to explore pornography consumption from a psychological health perspective, guiding the study with the following question: *What are the associated variables that affect the mental health of adolescents and young people who consume pornography?* Studying pornography as a global sexual phenomenon requires an in-depth examination of its sociocultural, psychological, and ethical implications (Triviño & Salvador, 2019), as well as a deeper understanding of the interpersonal dynamics and psychological issues that may lead to its consumption. To address this issue, a study was conducted to highlight how pornography influences associated variables and psychological traits that determine users' mental health.

Accordingly, the research method used was a literature review. This type of study made it possible to explore and analyze different perspectives and findings from previous research on the phenomenon—an essential step toward fully understanding pornography and its impact on the mental health of young people. Likewise, through the review of specialized literature, patterns, trends, and

potential risk factors associated with pornography in this population were identified.

Methodology

This research is qualitative in nature, understood as an exhaustive and investigative process that explores a social or human problem by analyzing variables in their natural environment (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Within the qualitative research process, the literature review is a systemic-level analysis that collects and selects documents on a specific subject of study in order to approach it from a broad perspective through the selected sources (Reyes-Ruiz & Carmona Alvarado, 2020). Accordingly, for this investigation, the phenomenon of pornography and its impact on young people's mental health was examined systemically through selected academic articles. After analyzing these texts, the information was coded and grouped into two study categories.

The criteria considered focused on a ten-year interval, from 2014 to 2024, and included publications in both Spanish and English. Likewise, only peer-reviewed academic publications with full-text availability were included. The keywords used were: "pornografía," "adolescentes," "jóvenes," "pornography," "teenagers," and "adolescent."

The primary sources of information were Scopus, PubMed, EbscoHost, and Google Scholar. Data were collected from scientific articles, excluding other types of literature such as book reviews, undergraduate and graduate theses, letters to the editor, and conference proceedings. Duplicate and non-original articles were also excluded.

For the data collection procedure, an information matrix was created in an Excel spreadsheet, where the extracted data from the selected articles were recorded. Among the scientific articles found, those that met the inclusion criteria and contained adolescent and young adult populations were considered. Additionally, articles that related the phenomenon under study to associated variables and mental health were included. Eligibility criteria were then applied through full-text reading, identifying quantitative-focused articles to ensure the objectivity of the research.

From these articles, information was analyzed regarding year of publication, country of origin, type of population, educational level, family system, consumption frequency, beliefs, and main findings related to mental health. Similarities and differences were examined to draw accurate conclusions. Finally, through thematic analysis, two categories were constructed: variables associated with pornography consumption and consequences for mental health.

Among the articles selected in figure 1, all used non-experimental designs, including simple descriptive, associative, and technological studies. Statistical techniques used in the studies included simple association, logistic regression, multiple regression, mediation analysis, network analysis, and meta-regressions.

Regarding geographic distribution, the studies shown in Figure 1 originated predominantly from Europe (15 articles), followed by the Americas (6 articles), and Asia (3 articles). Spain contributed the most research with six articles, followed by Croatia, Poland, Sweden, China, and the United States with two articles each. Finally, one article was selected from Germany, the Netherlands, Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, Taiwan, and Turkey.

Most of the articles reviewed focused on non-clinical populations, mainly from secondary schools, institutes, and universities.

To conduct the data analysis, bibliographic material (articles) was selected based on the research question and in accordance with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Subsequently, using a notetaking and coding technique, the texts were codified and finally grouped into two categories.

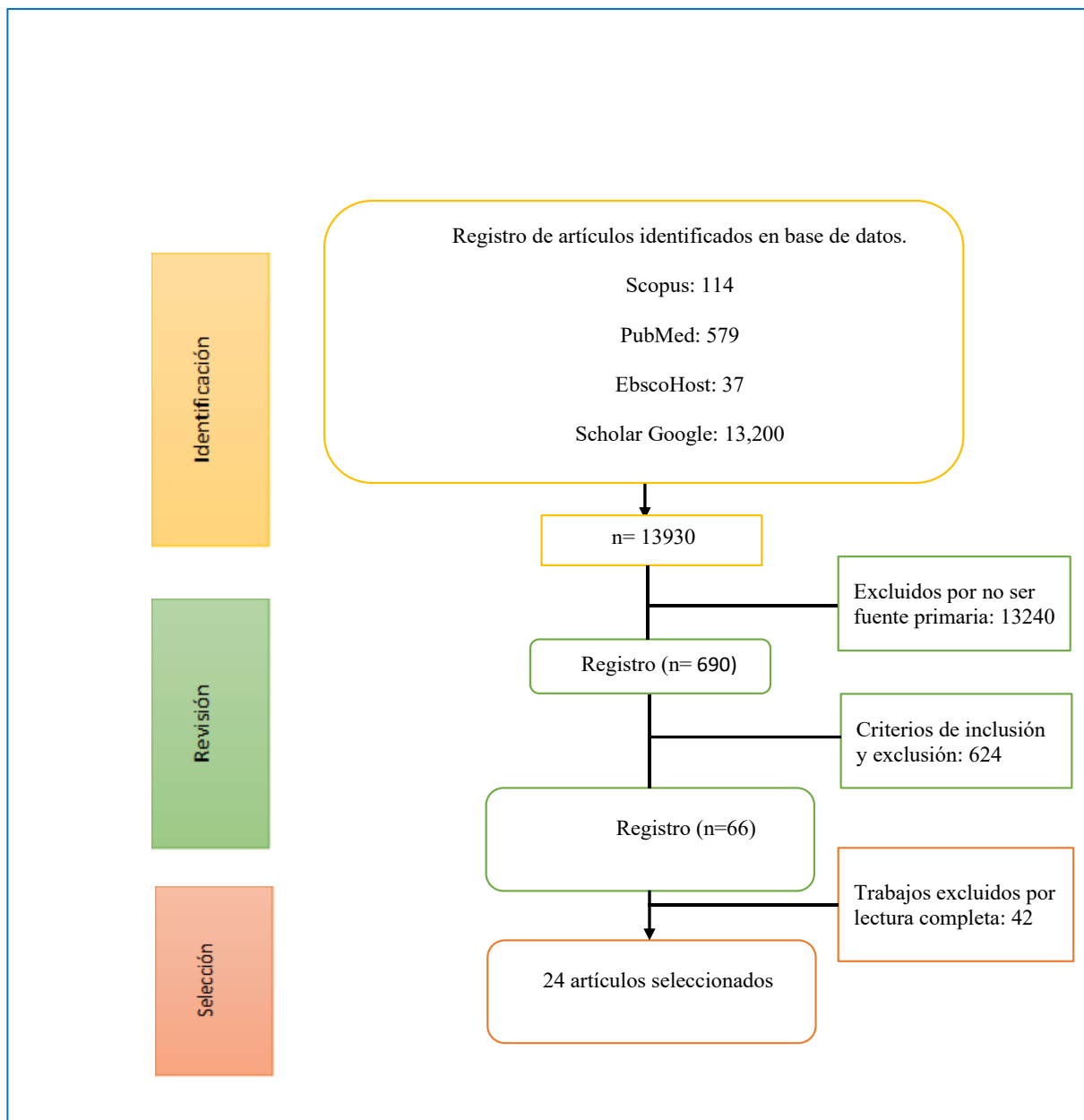


Figure 1. Data selection flowchart. **Source:** Own elaboration. Database and selected articles from December 2023 to June 2024.

Results and Discussion

Variables associated with pornography consumption

Among the variables considered in the literature, the various studies converge on measuring age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, educational level, family environment, relationship status, romantic involvement, parents' employment, socioeconomic

level, school absenteeism, sexual debut, and initiation into pornography. Although there is no single measurement tool, the studies by Zhang et al. (2022), Pirrone et al. (2022), and Svedin et al. (2023) consider these associated variables as mediating factors in pornography consumption. In addition, Wright and Tokunaga (2018) take into account attendance at religious services in different cross-sectional and longitudinal samples, offering a broad view of how

these factors vary among pornography consumers in different contexts.

It is also noted that sexual development occurs naturally over the years as part of the human maturation process. This is an aspect that may be susceptible to the effects generated by pornography consumption of various magnitudes. Sexual preferences may be modified since massive consumption of such media largely involves heterosexual content.

a) Age of onset and gender

In this regard, studies such as Sanz-Barbero et al. (2023) indicate that the average age of onset in pornography consumption is earlier in males (14 years) than in females (17 years). Likewise, Lin et al. (2020) mention that the average age of early exposure to sexually explicit material (SEM) is 13.3 years, and it is related to risky sexual behaviors in late adolescence. On the other hand, Dwulit and Rzymiski (2019) and Gil et al. (2018) indicate that the age of first exposure to pornography is 12 years, with prevalence equal in males and females.

Regarding gender, some studies indicate that there is no significant association between SEM use and risky sexual behaviors (Koletić et al., 2019; Dwulit & Rzymiski, 2019). However, Lin et al. (2020) state that male adolescents are more likely than females to have multiple sexual partners and engage in unprotected sex, in relation to consumption. Nonetheless, this does not vary in terms of early sexual initiation. Additionally, Vélez (2022) shows that adolescents and young people who consume more pornography are more prone to engaging in sexual relations.

On the other hand, Fernández-Ruiz et al. (2023) show that women experience discomfort with conventional pornography consumption, as they reject sexual violence and submissive roles. However, when conventional pornography and paraphilias are compared, women rate the latter as more unpleasant (Prantner et al., 2024).

b) Educational background

Young people and adolescents may construct sexual imaginaries as a result of pornographic consumption (Alonso-Ruido et al., 2022; Triviño & Salvador, 2019).

Thus, researchers explore whether this global phenomenon is associated with an educational factor. Pornography consumption exists among participants of all educational levels. Study results indicate consumption among university-level or higher-education participants (Sanz-Barbero et al., 2023; Prantner et al., 2024) as well as in basic education levels (Murin et al., 2018).

Likewise, Murni et al. (2018) report that hundreds of basic-education students experienced pornographic exposure, most of them from the first year of elementary school. Horner (2020), in a recent report, states that hundreds of children have suffered pornographic exposure.

In this same line of research, pornographic content is easily linked to the presence of sexual content online, which primary school students can access with ease (Potoglou et al., 2017), affecting both boys (Laconi et al., 2016) and girls (Bóthe et al., 2022). Interestingly, the environment of primary students in a digital era may facilitate exposure to pornography, and this exposure is classified into three types:

1. Physical, linked to having and easily accessing mobile devices.
2. Social, arising from peers who have already been exposed in the absence of parental supervision.
3. Virtual, due to easy access to the Internet in a globalized world (Fauzi et al., 2024).

However, according to Vélez (2022), educational level does not influence or is not associated with pornography consumption.

c) Beliefs

Regarding pornography consumption and religious beliefs, atheists or agnostics predominate (Prantner et al., 2024), unlike the study by Wright and Tokunaga (2018), where participants who consumed pornography attended religious services once a month.

As for social beliefs related to pornography consumption, one of the most common among men is the pressure to satisfy women sexually—the belief that a man must always desire and be ready for sex at any time. Likewise, beliefs and imaginaries conveyed

by pornography influence male sexual self-perception, including penis size or expectations about the duration of sexual activity (Mora et al., 2023).

d) Frequency of consumption

Regarding frequency, Lin et al. (2020) indicate that greater exposure is associated with increased likelihood of risky sexual behaviors ($p < 0.05$), including early sexual debut, unprotected sex, and multiple partners. However, Bõthe et al. (2020a) argue that frequency is not a relevant measure of problematic pornography use, noting that high consumption does not necessarily indicate pathological characteristics.

Additionally, more recent studies show that pornography consumption is higher among males than females, and the likelihood increases with age for both sexes (Vélez, 2022; Sanz-Barbero et al., 2023). Moreover, pornography use is more frequent in women in romantic relationships than in single women, and average usage duration does not exceed one hour, with no gender differences (Dwulit & Rzymiski, 2019).

e) Family factors

The family environment is an important factor in shaping adolescents' mental health. Studies focused on this variable report that family dysfunction in adolescents is related to pornography consumption (Li et al., 2023; Mattebo et al., 2018). Furthermore, evidence shows that pornography consumption increases in the presence of a negative intrafamily environment compared to a positive one (Rivera et al., 2016; Li et al., 2023). Conversely, adequate family functioning fosters self-esteem, making both variables protective against problematic internet pornography use (Li et al., 2023).

There is an impact on poor mental health, according to Svedin et al. (2023), in cases of aberrant pornography consumption (violence, animals, and children). This is linked to family factors such as parental unemployment, high parental control, dysfunctional family structures, and early sexual abuse in children. For these authors, low- or high-frequency pornography consumption alone does not explain an association with poor mental health (except

in aberrant pornography), as it correlates instead with sociodemographic variables such as absent parents and dysfunctional family structures.

From these studies, it becomes clear that adequate family structure and functioning can help prevent problematic pornography consumption, supporting adolescent mental health. Education on these topics is essential within families as part of comprehensive development. Triviño and Salvador (2019) note that parents may be aware of problematic pornography use and its consequences for adolescents' mental health, but they lack didactic strategies to address these topics. It is also crucial for educational institutions to guide parents and jointly prevent problematic pornography consumption.

As researchers, variables associated with pornography consumption cannot be understood in isolation nor reduced to simple statistical correlations. Although the reviewed studies show the influence of factors such as age, gender, educational level, and family environment, the analysis must go beyond identifying associations and focus on understanding the structural basis that explains the impact of pornography consumption on sexuality, interpersonal relationships, and mental health. Furthermore, the different findings regarding consumption frequency and its effects suggest that it is not enough to quantify pornography access; it is essential to analyze the quality of consumed content and how it shapes sexual expectations and behaviors. Finally, while pornography consumption cannot be considered a unique predictor of risky behavior or psychological dysfunction, it does reveal broader sociocultural patterns that merit critical and multidisciplinary debate.

Consequences for Mental Health

Focusing on the youth population is important for this study, since they will be the pillars that shape their culture and society. Thus, understanding this global phenomenon is crucial for identifying which factors may or may not be associated with its impact on the mental health of this population. Current reports show that pornography consumption leads to a decrease in mental well-being (Kohut et al., 2018). There is also the possibility that exposure—regardless of frequency (Bõthe et al., 2020b)—when not reaching problematic

use, may even enhance intimate partner relationships and sexual exploration. Amid this seemingly contradictory body of literature, it is necessary to consider how this phenomenon may contribute to the development of what are called new psychogenic neuroses (Sassenfeld, 2011). Although evidence on associated variables may point to a fundamental role, it will always remain a matter of exploration and analysis to distinguish them from populations highly susceptible to physical, psychological, and social problems. Thus, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, dysphoric mood, aggression, sexism, erectile dysfunction, among others, are disturbances related to mental health as a result of pornography consumption (Prantner et al., 2024; Mattebo et al., 2018; Li et al., 2023; Bőthe et al., 2020a; Hervías Ortega et al., 2020; Herbitter et al., 2022; Jacobs et al., 2021). This contrasts with studies that report no relevant issues or insufficient evidence supporting significant mental-health problems (Bőthe et al., 2020a; Svedin et al., 2023). Considering this background, the aim guiding our research was to explore the associated variables that affect mental health in the pornography consumption of adolescents and young people.

a) Mood problems

Studies conducted mainly in Europe and Asia (China) show a tendency to associate pornography consumption with negative affect, expressed through boredom, irritability, depression, anxiety, and dysphoric mood. Prantner et al. (2024) found a negative correlation between anxiety development and disgust toward paraphilic pornography consumption among young women. Likewise, depression was observed among female adolescents who consumed pornography (Mattebo et al., 2018).

Regarding self-esteem, Li et al. (2023) found a negative correlation between self-esteem and problematic internet pornography use among adolescents. Similarly, Beáta et al. (2020) report an impact on self-esteem in young people due to high-frequency problematic pornography use. Based on these studies, pornography may negatively affect self-esteem in non-clinical adolescent and young populations.

Irritability, boredom, and dysphoric mood also appeared as symptoms in young people in Croatia and Spain (Beáta et al., 2020; Hervías, 2020), which further suggests that pornography consumption may negatively influence the mood of frequent users.

b) Aggression–violence symptoms

Studies on aggression and violence in pornography appear in research from Spain and the United States. In this context, violent content against women was examined in sexual scenes on Pornhub. This study concludes that women are the objects of aggression in most cases, with men perpetrating the violence in the analyzed scenes (Fritz et al., 2020).

Empirical research shows that exposure to violent pornography may increase aggression toward partners among adolescent women from sexual minority groups, compared with heterosexual women and those belonging to ethnic and sexual minorities (Herbitter et al., 2022). Furthermore, Alonso-Ruido et al. (2022) report that adolescent males show an association between pornography consumption, sexism, and violence against women. Violent pornography consumption among young people also correlates with beliefs justifying violence, rape myths, and sexist attitudes reflected in male aggression toward women (Gallego Rodríguez & Fernández González, 2019). Many of these studies underscore the link between the objectification of women and the justification of violence against them.

c) Sexuality-related symptoms

Pornography, as part of adolescents' and young adults' consumption, has repercussions on human sexuality. Among young women, pornography consumption may generate sexual arousal, a search for physical sensations, and erotophilia, which promote sexual desire. Conversely, it may also increase sensitivity to sexual disgust, lack of sexual control, problematic pornography use (Prantner et al., 2024), and hypersexuality (Bőthe et al., 2020b). Dwulit and Rzymiski (2019) also report increased pornography consumption among women in romantic relationships. Thus, pornography consumption in young women may influence desire, perceptions of sexuality, and sexual practices.

Among young men, studies report erectile dysfunction when pornography consumption becomes problematic or highly prevalent. The likelihood of these symptoms increases according to marital status, performance expectations, and sexual orientation (Jacobs et al., 2021). Problematic pornography use affects compulsive sexual behavior and sexual performance in both sexes. Symptoms accompanying these conditions include a greater need for sexual stimuli, prolonged stimulation to reach orgasm, and reduced sexual satisfaction (Lewczuk et al., 2022; Dwulit & Rzymiski, 2019). Pornography also promotes non-conventional sexual practices such as BDSM (Von Andrian-Werburg et al., 2023) and the eroticization of violence through exposure and imitation of pornographic content (Benavent & Martínez, 2023). Thus, pornography may distort perceptions of sexuality toward less common practices and those characteristic of paraphilic disorders.

For adolescents, pornography consumption may distort sexuality (Alonso-Ruido et al., 2022). Early exposure can trigger desensitization to sexual stimuli, reducing sexual satisfaction due to a need for more intense stimulation (Dwulit & Rzymiski, 2019). However, pornography consumption does not necessarily predict risky sexual behaviors, multiple partners, or early sexual debut (Koletić et al., 2019).

d) Addiction or problematic pornography use

The DSM-5 defines addictions as patterns related to substance consumption that remains harmful to a person despite continued use. This definition also includes behaviors that interfere with psychosocial development. Although problematic pornography use (PPU) is not an official diagnostic category, generational changes and the social role of pornography (Grubbs et al., 2015) have produced contrasts and consequences worth examining in clinical practice.

Pornography consumption tends to be riskier when first exposure occurs before age 12, as it affects sexual well-being (Dwulit & Rzymiski, 2019). This primarily affects adolescents' sexual lives and is referred to in scientific literature as PPU. PPU can be understood similarly to other addictions, with

symptoms (Mauer-Vakil & Bahji, 2020) characterized by impairment in daily activities and inability to voluntarily stop consumption despite negative consequences affecting quality of life (Böthe et al., 2020b). Addictive pornographic content is linked to various physical and psychological problems, such as depression, anxiety, stress, or dependence (Burke & Miller, 2021; Camilleri et al., 2021).

It is important to distinguish conventional pornography consumption from problematic pornography use. Studies such as Ballester-Arnal et al. (2021) show that pornography consumption is present in up to 90% of men and 50% of women. However, only a small portion of consumers develop PPU, with a prevalence of 11% in men and 3% in women (Böthe et al., 2020a; Grubbs et al., 2019).

Like conventional addictions, the brains of individuals with PPU show activity patterns in neuroimaging similar to addiction disorders, such as increased activity in the ventral striatum and a negative relationship between consumption and gray matter volume (Gola et al., 2017; Kühn & Gallinat, 2014). Neurological studies indicate that the ventral striatum and prefrontal cortex process cue reactivity and novelty-seeking in PPU (Kühn & Gallinat, 2014). However, striatal volume may require additional external factors to become a preexisting condition. Increased activation of the ventral striatum appears in response to signals predicting erotic—but not monetary—rewards, correlating significantly with the severity of compulsive sexual behavior, pornography use, and masturbation frequency. The difference between men with problematic use and those without lies in ventral striatal reactivity, specifically triggered by cues predicting erotic rewards (Gola et al., 2017).

The hypothesis that pornography consumption increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic, greater availability of materials, reduced social interaction, and increased PPU guided Irizarri et al.'s (2023) meta-analysis. While consumption did increase, there was no corresponding rise in other addictive disorders. This raises the question of how much consumption becomes harmful to mental health.

e) Psychoactive substance use

Other problems associated with pornography consumption relate to the use of psychoactive substances (Gámez-Medina et al., 2020; Alonso-Ruido et al., 2022). Evidence shows that men are the primary consumers of pornography as well as tobacco and alcohol. Women, however, show a positive association between alcohol consumption and pornography-induced fantasies at the onset of use (Gámez-Medina et al., 2020). Furthermore, pornography use among adolescents shows a greater tendency toward psychoactive substance consumption (Alonso-Ruido et al., 2022).

Considering all evidence on the consequences of pornography consumption on mental health, interpersonal, emotional, sexual, cognitive, and neuropsychological impairments are observed in young people worldwide. Thus, this is an intercultural phenomenon with detrimental repercussions for young people's mental health, regardless of their culture or nation.

It is also necessary to note that the most significant negative impact on mental health is linked to associated variables such as early consumption, preexisting substance addictions, mood disorders, and a society increasingly oriented toward hypersexualization and sexual performance. This postmodern environment—where young people report greater mental health crises (Haidt & Lukianoff, 2019) than in the past, and an excessive interest in sexual gratification (Bauman, 2018)—has contributed to a greater problematic consumption of pornography.

Finally, public health and educational policies must prevent problematic pornography consumption by promoting comprehensive sexuality education (affection, sexuality, and commitment) that helps young people develop greater psychosexual awareness and responsibility.

Conclusions

This study has psychosocial relevance, given that the phenomenon of pornography is a global issue that affects young people sexually, affectively, and cognitively in different parts of the world, as demonstrated in the studies included in this literature

review. From this perspective, public health policies should provide society with prevention strategies for pathological or addictive consumption of pornography, which, as described, is related to disorders associated with mood, psychosexual development, and neurocognitive functioning.

Mood disorders arising from pornography consumption may vary depending on gender. Adolescents and young adults exposed to pornographic material often experience depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and dysphoric moods. The impact on mental health is similar to that of other addictions, involving a progressive loss of daily activities—both work-related and academic—as well as an inability to control pornography use. This phenomenon is further aggravated by brain alterations such as reduced gray matter and abnormal changes in the ventral striatum, which also affect the physical health of consumers.

Furthermore, sexuality is negatively influenced by exposure to pornography, leading to sexual dissatisfaction, hypersexuality, poor sexual performance, and erectile dysfunction. Practices such as BDSM may encourage the development of paraphilias and increase pornography addiction. It is important to highlight that, in the field of mental health, a greater number of disorders and symptoms are associated with pornography consumption, with gender being a relevant factor in its incidence and the resulting dysfunction.

Variables associated with pornography consumption include gender—with males being more likely to consume it—being under 12 years of age at the time of first exposure, and coming from a dysfunctional family. These factors also predict a higher prevalence of negative mental health outcomes such as mood disorders, sexual dysfunction, increased levels of violence, and pornography addiction.

This study was conducted at a bibliographical level, and one limitation is the lack of primary sources addressing the phenomenon under consideration. Likewise, there are studies that are not statistically conclusive, which indicates that the phenomenon addressed is still an emerging area of exploration for mental health.

Author contribution

All authors of this research participated equitably and fully in the development of this article, including conceptualization, selection of studies, formal analysis, writing, methodology, results, and the review and editing of the final manuscript.

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