

Literature Review of the impact of pornography use on the rate of intimate partner violence (IPV) in heterosexual relationships

Introduction

Pornography is defined as images and videos with both implicit and explicit sexual intent and content. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is the domestic abuse by a current or former partner in an intimate relationship against the other partner, which may also include controlling behaviors, sexual abuse and physical abuse. Studies have shown that too viewing pornography can be detrimental. The Problematic Pornography Use Scale (PPUS), the Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale (PPCS), and the Short Internet Addiction Test Adapted to Online Sexual Activities (s-IAT-sex) are scales that have been developed to measure levels at which pornography viewing becomes detrimental to the self and/or others. This review examines studies on how rates of pornography viewing correlate with rates of IPV.

Relevance

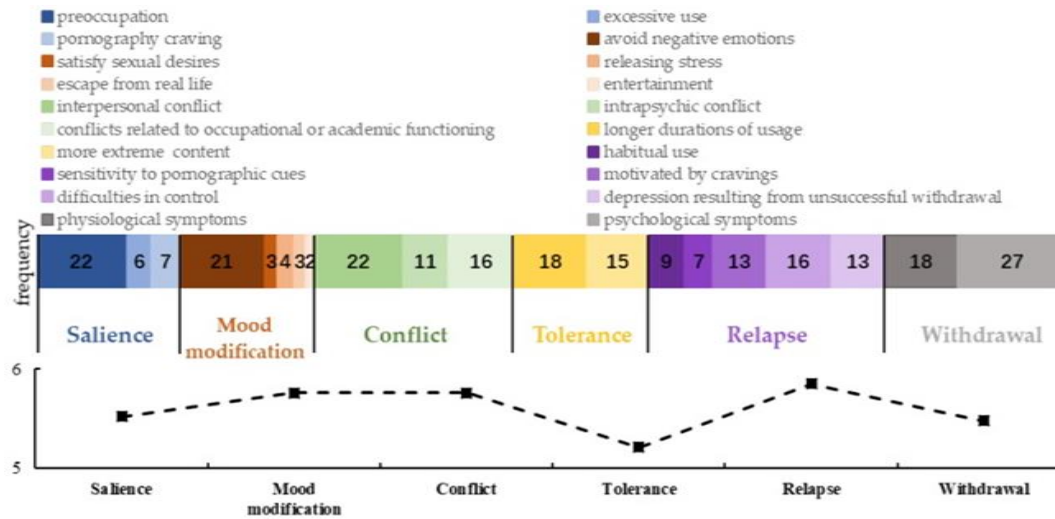
Pornography is very prevalent and easily accessible in the world today, especially now with the internet. Sexualization of women is at an all-time high. As a future social worker, it is important to know potential risk factors that may affect clients.

Methods

This literature review compared five multimodal studies, which utilized different modes or methods. These included data collection, random samples, and surveys (of both victims and abusers).

Acknowledged Limitations

Most available studies were done on men, specifically on white, educated, and financially privileged men. Many of the samples from how women felt their partners treated them were from women in battered women's shelters, so rates of IPV were already set to be high. Additionally, It is difficult to define pornography and what causes a woman to be sexualized and what does not.



Results/Findings

Men who viewed pornography were more likely to commit IPV or sexual assault, and likelihood increased with regular and uncontrollable pornography use (PPU). The kind of pornography also had an effect, and viewing rape, or sadism/masochism pornography led to a higher likelihood of sexually violence with women. Among men predisposed to violence, sexually violent behavior increased among batterers who viewed pornography. Viewing pornography with violent or harmful content resulted in less likelihood to intervene when a women was being assaulted and led to a higher belief in rape myths, as well as self-reported willingness to rape or assault a woman. Excessive viewing of Internet pornography was linked to impulsivity, compulsivity, and experiential avoidance, all of which are also associated with IPV. Viewing pornography was positively associated with men's gender role conflict, avoidant and anxious attachment styles, and negatively associated with relationship quality and sexual satisfaction, along with more controlling behaviors in relationships with women.

Conclusion

Viewing pornography and utilizing the sex industry such as sex clubs is likely to impact the way men view and treat women. Researches should explore ways to determine how much is 'too much' pornography, and if watching pornography in moderation has the same or similar effects as watching pornography often and uncontrollably. Future research should investigate the effects on women who view pornography and be more inclusive to other genders and kinds of relationships.

References

- Banyard, V. L., Plante, E. G., & Moynihan, M. M. (2005). Rape Prevention Through Bystander Education: Bringing a Broader Community Perspective to Sexual Violence Prevention. *PsycEXTRA Dataset*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/e535792006-001>
- Brem, M. J., Garner, A. R., Grigorian, H., Florimbio, A. R., Wolford-Clevenger, C., Shorey, R. C., & Stuart, G. L. (2018). Problematic Pornography Use and Physical and Sexual Intimate Partner Violence Perpetration Among Men in Batterer Intervention Programs. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 088626051881280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260518812806>
- Chen, L., & Jiang, X. (2020). The Assessment of Problematic Internet Pornography Use: A Comparison of Three Scales with Mixed Methods. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(2). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17020488>
- Foubert, J. D., Brosi, M. W., & Bannon, R. S. (2011). Pornography Viewing among Fraternity Men: Effects on Bystander Intervention, Rape Myth Acceptance and Behavioral Intent to Commit Sexual Assault. *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity*, 18(4), 212–231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10720162.2011.625552>
- McMahon, S., Peterson, N. A., Winter, S. C., Palmer, J. E., Postmus, J. L., & Koenick, R. A. (2015). Predicting Bystander Behavior to Prevent Sexual Assault on College Campuses: The Role of Self-Efficacy and Intent. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 56(1-2), 46–56. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-015-9740-0>
- Pacilli, M. G., Pagliaro, S., Loughnan, S., Gramazio, S., Spaccatini, F., & Baldry, A. C. (2016). Sexualization reduces helping intentions towards female victims of intimate partner violence through mediation of moral patency. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 56(2), 293–313. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12169>
- RAINN. (n.d.). Spread the Word & Double Your Impact this April. RAINN. <https://www.rainn.org/>.
- Simmons, C. A., Lehmann, P., & Collier-Tenison, S. (2008). Linking Male Use of the Sex Industry to Controlling Behaviors in Violent Relationships. *Violence Against Women*, 14(4), 406–417. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801208315066>
- Szymanski, D. M., & Stewart-Richardson, D. N. (2014). Psychological, Relational, and Sexual Correlates of Pornography Use on Young Adult Heterosexual Men in Romantic Relationships. *The Journal of Men's Studies*, 22(1), 64–82. <https://doi.org/10.3149/jms.2201.64>