

# NET NEUTRALITY: A LACK OF ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PORNOGRAPHY EXPOSURE AND SEXUAL FUNCTIONING AND WELL-BEING

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## STUDY OVERVIEW

WHO WATCHES VIOLENT ACTION/HORROR MOVIES?



WHO BELIEVES THAT BY WATCHING VIOLENT MEDIA, YOU  
ARE MORE LIKELY TO COMMIT VIOLENT ACTS??



HOW MANY OF YOU WATCH / HAVE EVER WATCHED  
PORN??



- A popular website streaming free pornographic content reported 21.2 billion visits to its site in 2015
- International studies consistently report high rates of pornography use in the range of 50% to 99% among men and 30% to 86% among women (Hald, Seaman & Linz, 2012)

**HOW MANY PEOPLE FEEL THAT WATCHING PORN IS HARMFUL TO SEXUALITY AND WELL-BEING?**



**WHAT DO PEOPLE HAVE AGAINST PORN?**



**THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED REALISM**

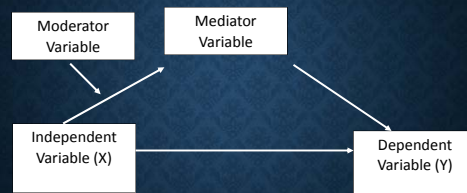
- There is still little known about the processes that underlie the relationships between oSEM use and psychosocial outcomes, hindering the formation or validation of theories relating to sexual media effects.
- The role of perceived realism has been highlighted as an important individual difference in the susceptibility to these sexual media stimuli (Baams et al., 2015)
- Perceived realism refers to the extent that the consumers believe the material depicted in the sexually explicit material (SEM) is a realistic portrayal of sexual relationships
  - Social realism
  - Utility

**FAMILY COMMUNICATION ABOUT SEX**

- What influences perceived realism?
- Research suggests that a young person's ability to communicate with their parents about sexual topics can influence their sexual development and subsequent behaviours.
- Without this, individuals may be (1) more likely to consider oSEM to be a realistic and definitive model of sexual relationships, and concomitantly (2) more susceptible to be influenced by oSEM.

**RESEARCH AIMS**

- What is the relationship between (1) use of oSEM and (2) sexual satisfaction, sexist attitudes, body satisfaction, and psychological well-being?
- What is the role of perceived realism in mediating the relationship between oSEM exposure and these outcomes?
- If this relationship exists, is it moderated by family openness and communication about sex?



A model of moderated mediation

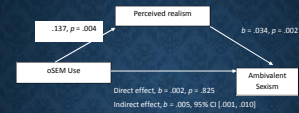
## METHODS

- A mixed-gender sample of adults (aged 18 and above) was sampled opportunistically through the use of advertisements around host universities and social media (Facebook and Twitter)
- We utilised a cross-sectional, online survey design using a secure institutional survey platform to design and distribute the questionnaires
- Participants completed a number of self-report measures embedded in the survey

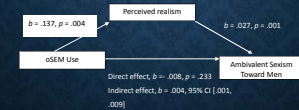
## RESULTS

- 272 participants completed the survey
- Age range 18 to 70
- 68.6% female, 27.9% male and 2.8% other gender identity
- 71.8% sample reported using oSEM in the last 3 months

|                                 | 1. | 2.   | 3.   | 4.   | 5.   | 6.   | 7.   | 8.   |
|---------------------------------|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. oSEM Use                     |    | .18* | .13  | -.00 | .07  | .02  | -.07 | .04  |
| 2. Perceived realism            |    |      | -.02 | -.01 | -.02 | .22* | .18* | -.02 |
| 3. Body satisfaction            |    |      |      | .28* | .46* | .06  | -.01 | .02  |
| 4. Sexual satisfaction          |    |      |      |      | .32* | -.10 | -.12 | .01  |
| 5. Wellbeing                    |    |      |      |      |      | -.12 | -.06 | .04  |
| 6. Total Ambivalent Sexism      |    |      |      |      |      |      | .70* | -.05 |
| 7. Total ambivalence toward men |    |      |      |      |      |      |      | -.09 |
| 8. FCSQ                         |    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |



- A significant indirect relationship between oSEM exposure and Ambivalent Sexism through Perceived Realism,



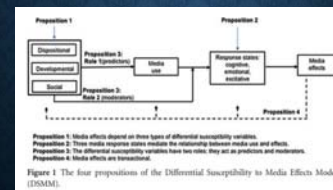
- A significant indirect relationship between oSEM exposure and Ambivalent Sexism Toward Men, through Perceived Realism

- No relationships between oSEM use and sexual satisfaction, body satisfaction, sexist attitudes and psychological well-being uncovered
- Small indirect effect of oSEM on sexist attitudes, through perceived realism
- No moderating effect of family communication

## IMPLICATIONS

### Theoretical:

- The Differential Susceptibility in Media Effects Model (DSMM; Peter & Valkenburg, 2013)

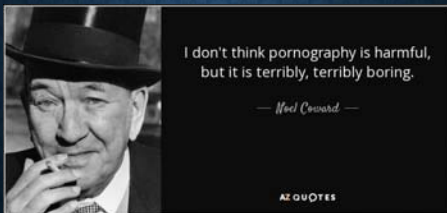


**Research:**

- Results portray a neutral picture regarding the influence of pornography on a range of outcomes
- OR
- Methods not sophisticated enough to effectively and meaningfully examine these relationships
  - Sexuality too intricate a construct to be understood in quantifiable terms

**Clinical:**

- Provides an interesting challenge to dominant narratives around the impact of pornography
- Importance of ideographic approach when formulating the role and function of pornography for the individual

**THANK YOU FOR LISTENING****Any questions?**