

# Internet Pornography Consumption and Relationship Commitment of Filipino Married Individuals

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**Abstract** - *Internet pornography has many adverse effects, especially to the relationship commitment. The use of pornography directly correlates to a decrease in sexual intimacy. Hence, this might lead to weakening of the relationship of their partner. To find out the relevance of the claim, the researchers aimed to explore the relationship of Internet pornography consumption to the relationship commitment of married individuals in the Philippines. Different factors such as level of satisfaction, investment, quality of alternatives, relationship stability and viewing habits were also considered in determining the relationship of watching online pornography and the relationship commitment of Filipino married individuals. The study used the descriptive-correlational design. A self-administered survey was distributed to 400. It is revealed that Internet pornography consumption has an adverse effect on the relationship commitment of married Filipino couples. Furthermore, watching porn online weakened the relationship commitment that leads to an unstable relationship. This investigation found out that internet pornography consumption has a nominal negative effect on the relationship commitment of Filipino married individuals. It is proven on this study that internet pornography consumption can weaken the relationship commitment of married individuals thus, it promotes knowledge about numerous effect of it, negatively and even positively. This paper also contributes to pornography related researches on the country which can give further awareness about the said area.*

**Keywords:** *Internet Pornography Consumption, Relationship Commitment, Filipino Married Individuals, Polytechnic University of the Philippines*

## INTRODUCTION

Pornography is not similar to real life. People get tired, become preoccupied, develop broader interests, and grow passionate about their other dimensions of life. Pornography might damage marriages and can wreck the arousal process in the brain of the consumer that can perhaps end up weakening the relationship commitment to their partner. Larsen [1] proves that there is a study stated some of the effects of pornography on marriage life specifically to the couple. Standing on top, pornography breaks trust. In reality, marriages are built on trust. This trust is being affected by consuming pornography. Following is that it creates comparison. Watching pornography sometimes leads to comparing those of the images to their partner and, unfortunately, this can lead to

ungratefulness. In addition, pornography can affect and damage both sexual and attitudes and behavior, which can affect the marriage, which can be the source of stability of the entire community [2].

Mainly, pornography is any materials that illustrate or shows sexual acts. However, the definition may differ from different cultures in different generations. It is needed to exert additional normative forces to manifest its term. Most of the time, people tend to portray the pornography as sexually in nature. While it is related on what Eisenstein's [3] description of pornography which is relating typically to women's side. Eisenstein [3] highlighted pornography as an easy issue for conservatives to manipulate because it so readily

conjures up anxiety and confusion about our bodies and our sex and gender identities. Endangered sex is similar to the description of pornography; where women are the primary subject of the material. However, Eisenstein [3] contrasts that pornography is just not realism, and it also includes fantasy and rebellion.

The pornography accessed through cyber media is called Internet pornography. Internet porn is the sexually explicit content made available online in various formats including images, video files, and streaming. Today Internet is the greatest medium of the pornography industry [4]. The pornography industry has larger revenues than Microsoft, Google, Amazon, eBay, Yahoo, Apple, and Netflix combined. Every second there is 28,258 Internet users viewing online pornographic materials? People enjoy Internet porn in the privacy of their homes. It is reported to be addictive because it's easy to access and convenient to watch. Also, some people like the thrill of doing something secretive. They enjoy the hidden aspects of viewing pornography online [4].

In the Philippines, Internet pornography is successfully making its path. Pornography and sex in the media have become major issues in the country and is becoming a large industry in this mostly Catholic country [5]. Pornography in the Philippines appears as a living sex shows.

Pornography statistics shows the Philippines in the 8 spot for the largest revenues from pornography in 2008 [6]. The Philippines ranked over Php50 billion in porn revenues despite the fact that per capita income was only \$11.18, the lowest of the top 10 [6]. Men comprise 70 to 95 percent of users in various locations in the Philippines of porn website. A high concentration of users in the Philippines are in Metro Manila and Central Luzon while some are scattered in the Visayas and Mindanao, especially in an urban area [6].

It is also proven that even married couples are watching Internet pornography. Schneider [7] confirmed that viewing of pornography increased the likelihood that couples would separate or divorce. The study also found out those men who are consuming pornography is more dominating to their relationship. Thus, there are some causes to foresee that pornography consumption weakens relationship commitment. Lambert [8] recommends studying the effects of consuming various types of pornography to a relationship commitment.

Limited literature in the Philippines pushed the researchers to explore the study. Given the scenario, the researchers pursued the study to identify the relationship of Internet pornography consumption to the relationship commitment of married individuals in the Philippines.

#### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This study aims (1) to measure the Internet pornography consumption of married individuals particularly the frequency and duration of watching Internet pornography; (2) to measure the relationship commitment of the married individuals towards their partner that involves pornography consumption as to satisfaction, quality of alternatives and investments; (3) to determine the relationship stability based on the relationship commitment of married individuals; and (4) to know if relationship exist between pornography consumption and the relationship commitment of married individuals.

#### **METHODS**

The researchers used the descriptive-correlational design. Four hundred (400) Filipino married couples were purposively surveyed using the modified Investment Model [12] questionnaire. A researcher-formulated survey questionnaire and a modified questionnaire called "Investment Model" by Carl Rusbult where in it measures, satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment level. To analyze the data, the researchers used percentage, weighted mean, and Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient. The population included in this study are selected married individuals of Quezon City. This is for the reason that they had the most number of married individuals not only in National Capital Region, but also to the Philippines. Given the scenario; researchers utilized multi-stage sampling using, simple random sampling, cluster sampling and quota sampling.

Moreover, the final step that the researchers used is Purposive Sampling; it is the type of non-probability sampling technique wherein it based on a certain criteria lay down by the researchers. The respondents are chosen on the basis of their knowledge of the information desired [10]. And for this study, the researchers lay down the following criteria: (1) The respondents should be a resident of Quezon City, (2) The respondents should be married and living with his or her partner and (2) respondents

should be watching pornographic videos on the Internet.

The researchers conducted the survey on the last week of August 2015 until the second week of September 2015. The time span set for the data collection was just enough to gather all the data. It was also enough because of the number of respondents and the sensitivity of the topic needed for the completion of the study and with the matter for tallying.

The data collected from the respondents from Quezon City, who were married individuals, served as the primary data through an interview process. All the gathered personal information like the identity of the respondents was observed by the researchers and treated it confidentially.

In addition, the secondary data for the study in helping the researchers to further explain and expound the resulted data came from thesis, books, journals, and online websites that the researchers studied and scrutinize in order to fully understand and analyze the result of the survey and the focus of the study which is the effect of pornography consumption to the married individuals.

**Table 1. Socio Demographic Profile of Filipino Married Individuals**

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Filipino Married Individuals' Sex</b>		
Male	360	90
Female	40	10
<b>Filipino Married Individuals' Religion</b>		
Catholic	361	90.3
Born Again	12	3
Iglesia Ni Cristo	24	6
<b>Filipino Married Individuals' Age</b>		
18 - 25 years old	66	16.5
26 - 33 years old	181	45.3
34 - 41 years old	82	20.5
42 - 49 years old	59	14.8
50 years old and above	12	3
<b>Filipino Married Individuals' Length of Marriage</b>		
1 - 5 year/s	142	35.5
6 - 10 years	117	29.3
11 - 15 years	93	23.3
16 - 20 years	27	6.8
Above 20 years	21	5.3

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Filipino married individual and internet pornography consumption

**Table 2: Duration of Watching Internet Pornography**

Duration	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 minutes	40	10.0
5 -10 minutes	94	23.5
10 - 15 minutes	135	33.8
15 - 20 minutes	50	12.5
20 - 25 minutes	27	6.8
Above 25 Minutes	54	13.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Three out of 10 Filipino married individuals are watching pornography on the Internet with a span of 10 to 15 minutes while nearly 7% of the population spends 20 – 25 minutes. In relation to this, one study about pornography consumption said the same result as what the data above is. 62.7% of the total population of the study said that they are allotting 1-29 minutes when watching pornography, which is same as what the data above is saying that the highest percentage of the duration of watching pornography on the study is 10-15 minutes, which falls under the range of 1-29 minutes. While both the studies also revealed that the least of the respondents are allotting 1 hour and above when watching pornography [17].

**Table 3: Frequency of Watching Internet Pornography**

Frequency	Frequency	Percentage
Everyday	43	10.8
Five times a week	1	0.3
Twice a week	5	1.3
Four times a Month	42	10.5
Thrice a Month	77	19.3
Twice a Month	123	30.8
Once a Month	109	27.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The majority of the Filipino married individuals on this study watch Internet pornography twice a month while smaller percentage (1.3% and 0.3%) of the total population watch online porn twice or for five times a week. It is quite different based on one study that focuses on the Internet behavior, it is being

stated that out of 300 people, 62 of them are watching pornography daily. While, 90 said that they are watching pornography weekly, 50 said that a couple of times a month, 36 said a couple of times a year, and 58 said that they never watch pornography. Basically, most of them do so in weekly basis and the least said that they are watching pornography a couple of times a year [11].

### **Relationship commitment of Filipino married individuals and their internet pornography consumption**

Carl Rusbult (1983) proposed that there are three elements to commitment: satisfaction, quality of available alternatives, and level of investment in the relationship. The three elements can easily predict whether there is strong relationship stability by individual partner in order to maintain their relationship. Relationship commitment was measured through (1) Satisfaction (2) Quality of Alternatives and (3) Investment and their internet pornography consumption.

### **The relationship of Internet Pornography Consumption and Filipino married individuals' Satisfaction**

Satisfaction is experience of a person in the relationship whether positive or negative. It also represents the degree on how individual fulfills the essential needs of their partner [9]. According to Corey [13], it is proven that to have a satisfying, stable and healthy marriage, couples should try different ways of gaining sexual intimacy. There are characteristics for it to be visible: investment in the well-being of the beloved; respect; admiration; sexual desire; intimacy; commitment; exclusivity; and understanding.

Moreover, the research of Stewart (2012), a clinical psychologist at the University of Florida found out that watching pornographic videos online can boost the self esteem and the sexual satisfaction of the viewers, mainly male respondents. Furthermore, the findings of Stewart also said that the people who watch porn videos online can make them feel secure to their partner. In this study, the Filipino married individuals are satisfied with their partner that involves Internet pornography consumption ( $\bar{X}2.75$ ).

**Table 4. : Level of Satisfaction of Filipino Married Individuals to their Relationship Commitment that involves their Pornography Consumption.**

<b>Level of Satisfaction</b>		<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
Fulfillment for emotional intimacy (sharing personal thoughts, secrets, etc.) because of watching pornography on the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.78$	Satisfied
Fulfillment for companionship (doing things together, enjoying each other's company, etc.) because of watching pornography on the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.89$	Satisfied
Fulfillment for sexual needs (holding hands, kissing, sexual intercourse etc.) because of watching pornography on the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.83$	Satisfied
Fulfillment for the needs of security (feeling trusting, comfortable in a stable relationship etc.) because of watching pornography on the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.69$	Satisfied
Fulfillment for the needs of emotional involvement (feeling emotionally attached etc.) because of watching pornography on the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.75$	Satisfied
Satisfaction to the relationship because watching pornography on the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.71$	Satisfied
Our relationship is much better than others' relationships because of watching pornography on the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.68$	Satisfied
Our relationship is close to ideal because of watching Internet pornography.	$\bar{X}2.70$	Satisfied
Our relationship makes me very happy because of watching pornography on the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.71$	Satisfied
Our relationship does a good job of fulfilling my needs for intimacy, companionship, etc because of watching pornography on the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.74$	Satisfied

**The relationship of Internet Pornography Consumption and Filipino married individuals' Quality of Alternatives****Table 5. Size of Investment Filipino Married Individuals to their Relationship Commitment that involves their Pornography Consumption.**

Size of Investment		VI
I have invested a great deal of time in our relationship because of watching pornography in the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.77$	Agree
I have told my partner many private things about myself because of watching pornography in the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.83$	Agree
My partner and I have intellectual life together that would be difficult to replace because of watching pornography in the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.65$	Agree
My sense of personal identity (who I am) is linked to my partner because of watching pornography in the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.76$	Agree
I have put a great deal into our relationship because of watching pornography in the Internet that I would lose if the relationship were to end.	$\bar{X}2.72$	Agree
Many aspects of my life have become linked to my partner (recreational activities, etc.), because of watching pornography in the Internet and I would lose all of this if we were to break up.	$\bar{X}2.73$	Agree
I feel very involved in our relationship because of watching pornography in the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.69$	Agree
My relationships with friends and family members would be complicated if my partner and I were to break up (e.g., partner is friends with people I care about) because of watching pornography in the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.63$	Agree
Compared to most people I know, I have invested much time and effort in my relationship with my partner because of watching pornography in the Internet.	$\bar{X}2.82$	Agree

The quality of alternatives is the degree on how individual's primary needs could found outside their relationship and putting them as alternatives to their partners; it could be by their friends or family members [9]. The fewer alternatives that are present, the less like that the relationship will struggle, when the partners are young there are more temptations and more alternatives, but as the time passes there are fewer alternatives. If someone sees their relationship as the only one possible, and if the feeling is mutual, the relationship will be more satisfying and lasting [1].

One of the primary threats to close relationships is the temptation of attractive relationship alternatives. From an evolutionary perspective, engaging in extra-pair relationships can enhance men and women's reproductive success; to the extent that they can increase the number and quality of offspring they produce. Consequently, one's commitment to a relationship can be undermined by the presence of highly desirable alternatives to one's current partner (Kenrick, Neuberg, Zierk, & Krones, 1994).

In this study, Filipino Married Individuals agreed (2.75) that their internet pornography consumption has direct effect to their quality of alternatives or the degree on how individual's primary needs could found outside their relationship and putting them as

alternatives to their partners especially on physical needs as well as to their emotional needs. When it comes to physical aspects are such as security (2.80), sexual (2.88), and dating other than their partner (2.70). While things that comes in to emotional aspects are in the scope of intimacy (2.77) and companionship (2.79).

Furthermore, Rusbult extended interdependence theory with the development of the investment model. Rusbult reasoned that, because some relationships persist despite low rational satisfaction or an abundance of quality alternatives, other factors also must contribute to dependence. This reasoning resulted in Rusbult and Colleagues (2006) propose that investment into the relationship also should increase dependence on a relationship. Investments can be direct (e.g., partner support, effort, time) or indirect (e.g., children, friends). Investments increase dependence because they raise the costs of ending the relationship (Rusbult et al., 2006).

**Relationship stability of Filipino married individuals**

Relationship Stability determines whether the relationship will last or not. This can determine if the relationship commitment is positive or negative.

**Table 6: Level of Satisfaction and Level of Alternatives of the Filipino Married Individuals and The Difference of Level of Satisfaction and Size of Investment and the Quality of Alternatives of the Filipino Married Individuals**

<b>Relationship Commitment</b>	
Level of Satisfaction	$\bar{X}2.75$
Size of Investment	$\bar{X}2.73$
Average Sum	$\bar{X}2.74$
<b>Relationship Commitment</b>	
Sum of Level of Satisfaction and Size of Investment	$\bar{X}2.74$
Level of Alternatives	$\bar{X} 2.75$
Total Relationship Commitment	<b>-0.01</b>
Relationship Stability	<b>Unstable</b>

Base on the Investment Model of Commitment by Carl Rusbult [14], the researchers will add the level of satisfaction and the size of investment of the respondents to get the sum. Investments may determine commitment in a relationship. If someone invested a great deal in their mutual history, children, home, common religion, they are likely to stay within the relationship. More committed relationships produce more independent lives where the focus is on the unit and not the individual [18]. Commitment also encourages forgiveness, the feeling that one should never let the sun set on a bad argument [1].

Moreover, interdependence theory stated that, a person feels more committed to his or her partner in a close relationship as a function of satisfaction, investments, as well as having only few alternatives to the relationship. Satisfaction is important being the degree of happiness one has due to being in a romantic relationship. Investments is a representation of actual shared material goods, children time spent together, future plans, as well as shared goals. On the other hand, investments can also be considered as a hindrance to leaving the relationship. Arguably the most important aspect of a romantic relationship is the level of satisfaction each partner experiences. Other aspects of relationships hold little importance if the individuals are not satisfied with their relationships. Having a high level satisfaction through the help of each investment can help to work a good relationship [15].

In relation to this, it is stated that one of the primary threats to close relationships is the temptation of attractive relationship alternatives. Relationship alternatives who are physically attractive are particularly threatening to a relationship, as studies of

mate selection suggest that both men and women place a premium on the physical attractiveness of extra-pair relationship partners. Greater attention toward attractive relationship alternatives predicts lower levels of commitment in a relationship and is a strong predictor to relationship dissolution [16]. Thus, relationship alternatives, particularly those who are highly attractive are a primary threat to relationship maintenance.

**Table 7: Relationship between Internet Pornography Consumption and Relationship Commitment of the Filipino married individuals**

<b>Relationship Commitment</b>	<b>Internet Pornography Consumption Correlation Coefficient</b>	<b>P-value</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Level of Satisfaction	0.083*	0.208	Correlation is Significant, Positively Strong
Quality of Alternatives	0.068*	0.126	Correlation is Significant, Positively Strong
Size of Investment	0.069*	0.239	Correlation is Significant, Positively Strong

There is a positive strong relationship between internet pornography consumption and all of the three elements of relationship commitment. This data proves the more the Filipino married individuals consume pornography on the Internet, the more it affects their relationship commitment to their partner. Thus, it also means that the Filipino married individuals increase their level of satisfaction and size of investment to their partner and also increases the search for the quality of alternatives as shown and proven in this study.

According to the study of Fagan [2], there is a strong relationship between pornography consumption and relationship commitment. The study found out that Pornography significantly distorts attitudes and perceptions about the nature of sexual intercourse. Men who habitually look at pornography have a higher tolerance for abnormal sexual behaviors, sexual aggression, promiscuity, and even rape. In addition, men begin to view women and even children as “sex objects,” commodities or instruments for their pleasure, not as persons with their own inherent dignity. The result of the study also shows Pornography affects people’s emotional lives. Married individuals who are involved in pornography feel less satisfied with their marital sexual relations and less

emotionally attached to their partner. Women married to men with a pornography addiction report feelings of betrayal, mistrust, and anger. Pornographic use may lead to infidelity and even divorce. Adolescents who view pornography feel shame, diminished self-confidence, and sexual uncertainty.

Moreover, there is a study conducted by Einstein [3] that understands the impact of consuming sexually explicit material on male and female participants. Results showed that exposure to pornography have an adverse effect to the self-assessment of sexual experience while other aspects of life (e.g., professional satisfaction) remained constant. Participants reported less satisfaction with their intimate partner and particularly on their partner's affection, physical appearance, sexual curiosity, and sexual performance.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the discoveries of the study, the following conclusions are drawn: First, The Filipino married individuals watch porn videos online approximately twice a month with 10 to 15 minutes duration of watching it. Second, the Internet pornography consumption of the Filipino married individuals has a positive effect on the relationship commitment in terms of satisfaction, watching online pornographic videos increase the satisfaction of the Filipino married individuals especially on the needs for sexual intimacy that includes holding hands, kissing, and sexual intercourse. However, even though the Filipino married individuals are satisfied to their relationship commitment, watching pornographic videos online can trigger them to commit lies that will lead to an unfaithful relationship with their partner. When the partner cannot fulfill the needs especially for sexual intimacy, there is a chance that the married individuals will find someone to meet that need. Moreover, because of watching pornography, the Filipino married individuals invest more to their relationship in terms of time, personal information and personal materials. Third, obtained results conclude that Internet pornography consumption has an adverse effect to the relationship commitment of married individuals. It is because of the high quality of alternatives the Filipino married individuals have. The Filipino married individuals have an unstable relationship commitment that may lead to an unfaithful act to their partner. Lastly, obtained results conclude that the frequency of the number of times the

respondents watch porn videos a month has nothing to do to with the relationship commitment of the respondents. However, the duration of watching pornography to the Internet significantly affects the relationship commitment of married individuals especially to the satisfaction and alternatives. Mostly, the respondents gain more options like seeking to someone to fulfill his or her needs in the relationship that is why the relationship commitment of them weakened. It means that the respondents are prone to find someone that will fulfill the needs regarding sexual intimacy, emotional needs, security, and companionship.

On the other hand, in obtaining the necessary information, the researchers utilized the survey questionnaires which were answered by selected married individuals living in Quezon City. Because it has the highest number of married couples and highest number in divorce/separation, the researchers got the sample as married individuals in Quezon City. While the study only focused on the Internet pornography and on how it affects to the relationship commitment of married individuals. While aspects like moral issues, respondent's behavior and others are not part of the study.

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