



Jus Corpus Law Journal

Open Access Law Journal – Copyright © 2022 – ISSN 2582-7820
Editor-in-Chief – Prof. (Dr.) Rhishikesh Dave; Publisher – Ayush Pandey

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Porn Addiction in Indian Youth and the law related to Pornography

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Received 25 July 2022; Accepted 25 August 2022; Published 27 August 2022

Friends, in the rapidly developing world, it has become straightforward to access many things, whether it is educational material or entertainment material. Among all these, instant gratification pornography is the top place in the world's most searched list. Although many studies show that excessive porn consumption can negatively affect a person's health and lifestyle, many health experts disagree that instant gratification activities such as masturbation directly affect physical health. But it also affects your mental health, nervous function, sexual development, intimate relationships, and self-existence in a big way. Which eventually starts affecting your physical health as well. A study cited in an article by the Utah State Board of Education found that increased exposure to pornography leads to low motivation, poor decision-making skills, impaired impulse control, or insensitivity to sexual rewards. Not only this, but rising pornography exposure in adolescents also harms their social interaction and emotional or cognitive skills. Talking about India, in 2020, India was the third largest porn consumer in the world. Despite the ban on over 800 porn websites, India's percentage of porn consumers is continuously increasing. Pornhub's 2018 report shows that despite being banned, Indian consumers have increased their time spent on websites significantly. A webinar was organized by an NGO named Create Stories in which Psychiatrist Dr. Pawan Rathi explains that 90 percent of male adults are exposed to porn at some stage or the other.

Meanwhile, the increasing dependence on the Internet due to the Covid epidemic has increased this exposure even more. If you look at the report of the world's biggest porn websites, it shows that more than 90 billion videos are watched by people every day. Dr. Pawan Rathi says that after the lockdown, many visitors to porn websites had increased by 30 percent, which can be concluded that due to stress, frustration, social isolation, and depression among people in lockdown, porn in people increased

addiction. A website called Fight; the New Drug has conducted some experiments whereby a drug addict's brain reacts to drug consumption in the same way that a porn addict's brain responds to porn viewing. Due to almost everything that gives gratification, our brain's reward releases the dopamine hormone, making people feel relaxed and happy. Still, this reward system of excessive instant gratification creates problems like anxiety and lack of motivation and harms our health. This Journal will investigate how people make porn a source of entertainment and gratification and how pornography affects our brains without realizing it. Furthermore, before we discuss its effects and consumption, we would like to mention that porn is a significant cause of sex trafficking. America's Department of Justice and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children agree that more than 80 percent of women in the porn industry are brought into the sector through sex trafficking, initially by physical abuse and sexual exploitation in hostile environments. They are exploited and then forced to shoot porn videos, so promoting and normalizing pornography is tantamount to promoting sex trafficking.

Keywords: *pornography, VPN, websites, internet, stress, prefrontal cortex, anti-pornography law.*

INTRODUCTION

Friends, in the rapidly developing world, it has become straightforward to access many things, whether it is educational material or entertainment material. Among all these, instant gratification pornography is the top place in the world's most searched list. Although many studies show that excessive porn consumption can negatively affect a person's health and lifestyle, many health experts disagree that instant gratification activities such as masturbation directly affect physical health. But it also affects your mental health, nervous function, sexual development, intimate relationships, and self-existence in a big way. Which eventually starts affecting your physical health as well. A study cited in an article by *the Utah State Board of Education* found that increased exposure to pornography leads to low motivation, poor decision-making skills, impaired impulse control, or insensitivity to sexual rewards. Not only this, but rising pornography exposure in adolescents also harms their social interaction and emotional or cognitive skills. Talking about India, in 2020, India was the third largest porn consumer in the world. Despite the ban on over 800 porn websites, India's percentage of porn consumers is continuously increasing. Pornhub's 2018 report shows that despite being banned,

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¹ David Marcovitz & Katie D. White, 'The COVID-19 pandemic has increased addiction. We must invest in treatment | Opinion' (*The Tennessean*, 2 October 2021) <<https://www.tennessean.com/story/opinion/2021/10/02/pandemic-has-increased-addiction-we-must-invest-treatment/5936981001/>> accessed 25 July 2022

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WHY DO PEOPLE WATCH PORN?

Researcher Beata Bathe's article, published in the American Psychological Association, suggests that the primary and most common reason for pornography consumption is "Arousal". It is natural to have sexual desire because porn companies target such consumer needs. Still, in the same pornography, it is also mentioned that viewing their content may affect the consumer's personal life. Regular porn consumers tend to idealize the scene depicted in pornography so much that natural stimuli are not enough for them. To gradually meet their needs, they consider pornography as their fulfillment zone. World's renowned relationship experts Dr. John and Dr. Julie Gottman say that due to excessive porn consumption, relationship satisfaction starts decreasing between couples. Eventually, separation and hate start increasing in the couple's life.

Dr. Sameer Parikh, Director, Mental Health and Behavioural Sciences, Fortis Hospital, New Delhi, explains that porn addiction impacts sexual relationships. Due to this, emotional distancing, unrealistic expectations, and lack of intimacy also increase in the year. The second primary reason that is very common among teenagers and working professionals is experiencing uncomfortable feelings. According to Bertha Bothe, another primary reason for increased porn consumption among adults is distraction or suppression from stress, anxiety, and emotional conflict. Basically, High school and college-going teens and adults experience a variety of emotional struggles.

Teens and adults attending high school and college experience different emotional struggles. Due to their inability to resolve these conflicts, they find ways to suppress them. Because of the ready availability of this pornography, an individual makes it a quick source of distraction and stress reduction. Not

addressing the emotional discord can prove deficient in the long run. According to studies, people who use porn as a medium of stress reduction or distraction may be victims of future emotional and mental health problems. Depression and anxiety are significant health concerns worldwide, and you will be surprised to know that being addicted porn habit can exacerbate these mental health issues. For example, two friends, Jack and Sam, are both in the second year of college and dealing with assignments, exams, careers, relationships, and emotional distress. Sam deals with these things by communicating and working on them.

On the other hand, Jack ignores all these things and starts running after instant gratification. Jack gradually starts engaging in porn, alcohol, and drugs to escape his emotional discomfort. In addition, at the end of the final year, Jack falls victim to depression and anxiety disorders due to his inability to cope with the challenges. Due to dealing with things and managing well, Sam will get an excellent job with good marks. Therefore, consuming anything more than the limit can harm a person's physical and mental health. But the dependence on the Internet has made it necessary for everyone to have a smartphone, and now accessing porn websites has become extremely easy.

In 2019, India was ranked top in smartphone traffic in an analytical report published by Pornhub. 89% of the traffic coming to the website from India was mostly from smartphones. Rising porn consumption in India and increasing smartphone penetration can be attributed to cheaper data plans and significant price drops in high-end smartphones. In India, 1 GB of data is given at a low price of ₹ 7, while in the US, it is ₹ 257 per GB, and in the UK, it is ₹ 109 per GB. A report by Top 10 VPNs in the year 2019 reported that VPNs in which banned websites could be accessed and downloaded anonymously have increased by 405 percent in India between 2018 and 2019. Various porn websites target India's vast internet user base, and porn companies launch alternative mirror porn websites

that work when the original website is banned or function as a loophole for channel bans.

WHY IS PORN CONSUMPTION INCREASING SO FAST?

In India and worldwide, porn websites are coming on top searches on the internet. Although countries like the UK and the US, where the internet is costly and people there have a lot of knowledge about sex education, these countries are in the number one and two positions in the traffic report of the Pornhub website.²As soon as it is released, we start experiencing a relaxed or feel-good state, and this reward system escalates more than limiting pornography. Due to the easy access to porn, the person's brain starts craving more dopamine again and again, but later the same thing becomes even more deadly due to the setup. Each time your brain starts craving more dopamine, your satisfaction slows down, and you begin to explore more sexual fantasies. But while on the one hand, your cravings are increasing, on the other hand, essential parts of your brain and its functionality start decreasing. A part of the prefrontal cortex, part of our brain anatomy, separates us from the rest of mammals. The prefrontal cortex controls our logical thinking, regional decision making, and calculation abilities. It tells us when we have to put a stop to our needs and desires. For example, if you are watching something on Netflix and you have to go to college or the office the next day, then, on the one hand, your reward system will force you that you will be on Watch the episode.

In contrast, your prefrontal cortex, on the other hand, will make you feel it's worth sleeping in for the time being. Similarly, the prefrontal cortex plays an essential role in breaking unhealthy habits. But the matter does not end here. In a brain scanner study of porn-addicted consumers, frontal brain matter appears to decrease, called hypo-frontality. Here hypo means less than usual; hypo-frontality

² Anja de Crom, 'Getting extensions ready for Joomla 4: Alexandre Derocq (AcyMailing)' (*Joomla*, 20 March 2021) <<https://magazine.joomla.org/all-issues/march-2021/getting-extensions-ready-for-joomla-4-alexandre-derocq>> accessed 25 July 2022

develops in these individuals. They have also developed impaired decision-making and less control over brain impulses, one of addiction's four significant hypo-frontality hallmarks. You will be surprised that over 100 studies have found hypo-frontality in excessive porn users. This means that excessive consumption of porn destroys the prefrontal cortex to such an extent that it will not be able to break such unhealthy habits. It is not only concerned with form but also with everything that provides instant gratification. After all, the brain is configured so that it appears to have very short-term rewards and pleasure rather than long-term rewards. The brain rewards things that provide immediate gratification in the brain, creating pathways that stick to that obscene path.

Many students are involved in gaming and addiction by not paying attention to their communication and learning skills. All things like career, relationships, and financial security are achieved after a long struggle. Still, people who are only engaged in instant gratification due to hypo-frontality are never able to focus on the long term. In extreme cases, people become so addicted that they lose their ability to morally justify their actions and commit severe teen crimes such as individual rape and sexual violence to achieve sexual persuasion. Several studies on pornography show that for individuals who are already sexually aggressive and consume a lot of sexually aggressive pornography, their chances of rape and sexual hostility are also increased.

But in India, the subject of sex is seen as taboo, due to which porn addiction goes unnoticed in most cases. Dr. Roshan Jain, Deduction Specialist, Apollo Hospitals, says many young people today suffer from porn addiction. But people cannot talk about it because of the shame associated with porn. Ironically, in India, where the Kamasutra originated, sexuality is being repressed so much that it has become different to openly discuss. Dr. Jain believes this problem can be tackled by introducing sex education in Indian schools. According to sex impractical science experts, sex is such a subject that teenagers are most curious about it if they do not

get the proper sex education. Because of this, this curiosity gets channelized into other alternatives, i.e., porn websites. Dr. Sudhir Krishna Murthy, director of Andromeda Andrology Center Hyderabad, says that people's ignorance about sex has become the primary factor in porn addiction today. Dr. Sudhir believes that people must know about healthy lovemaking.

LAW RELATING TO PORNOGRAPHY IN INDIA

Pornography is called porn in short, such as videos, magazines, books, or other material which contains sexual content and increases the feeling of sex of the person. These porn videos are called blue films in common parlance. In full-fledged porn, sex is clearly depicted, and the presentation of sexual content in these videos is such that it does not slightly increase the viewers' excitement but pushes them badly. That's why such porn always has to be viewed personally sticky. In earlier times, porn videos were watched through CD or pen drive. Still, in today's era, porn is available on mobile phones with the help of fast internet, which provides private and personal space. Watching full-fledged porn is allowed in many countries where websites that offer porn will find videos of every nation and type of sex. These websites trace your app and location and show you porn content from your country. There is a ban on making, selling, sharing, and displaying porn in India. Despite this, India is the world's third largest porn viewing country. According to a news report 2018, between 2017 and 2018, the fear of watching porn in India had increased by 75%. But people in small towns are still seeing it in considerable economic numbers. However, in 2018 the Government of India banned about 850 porn websites, which they have done before but had no significant effect. It comes to the Indian market by taking the new domain and now through many apps like WhatsApp and Telegram. VPN is only for users watching porn; that is, if porn content is blocked on an Indian server, then they can watch porn videos on a foreign server with the help of a VPN, then they cannot say that by banning the website, watching porn videos in India will be closed.

Apart from making porn, it is illegal in India to publish, broadcast and transmit it to other people through electronic means, but watching and listening to it is not considered illegal. It is also illegal to watch child pornography under this. According to India, there is an Anti-Pornography Law, which provides for punishment in cases related to porn under Section 68A³ of the IT Amendment Act 2008 and Section 292, 293, 294, 500, 506, and 509⁴ of the IPC. According to the laws related to porn, if the content of porn is rape or physical abuse, then action will be taken under IT Act section 68A. If child porn is circulated, then action will be taken against him under section 67B of the IT Act. If someone makes a video of any sex or sexual activity, it is an offence that will be dealt with under section 66E of the IT Act. According to the IT Act, subject to the gravity of the offence under section 68A, the first offence is punishable with imprisonment of up to 5 years and a fine of Rs 10 lakh. For the second time, committing the same offence will attract 7 years imprisonment and a 10,00,000 fine. If the first offence is child pornography, the punishment of 5 years and a penalty of Rs 10 lakh will be imposed, and the second offence will attract 7 years of imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10 lakh. Both these sections are non-bailable, and action can also be taken under the POSCO Act on child pornography.

CONCLUSION

As we saw in this article that porn addiction is increasing very fast, not only in India but worldwide, for many reasons. Therefore. There are many articles available on the internet, which are thousands of ways to get out of porn addiction. Explains the methods. Identifying your problematic behaviour is an essential part of our lifestyle. It is vital for all of us that we observe our actions and behaviour well and work on them by communicating our emotions, conflicts and challenges, and problems well, just as our brain can develop affected conditions like hypo frontality, in the same way, our Phenonium-like neural calm

³ Information and Technology (Amendment Act 2008, s 68A

⁴ Indian Penal Code 1860, s 292, 293, 294, 500, 506 and 509

that occurs in the brain can be established on brain networks and lead to better neural connections. We also studied some laws relating to pornography in India.