

# SEXUAL PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE OF YOUNG URBANIZED MYANMAR PEOPLE CONSUMING INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL NETWORKING CHANNELS

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**ABSTRACT:** A cross sectional study was carried out in one active Myanmar Facebook group (MMTCP) in February and March, 2013. The main purpose of this study was to identify association between consuming internet pornography and sexual perception and attitude of young urbanized Myanmar people (age 18 to 24) on Facebook. The data was collected through self-administered online survey by using SurveyMonkey. Data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such as independent t-test and ANOVA test to examine the association between independent and dependent variables. The independent variables were chatting about sexual intercourse on social network, consuming pornographic related pages on social networks and consuming internet pornography and also knowledge and attitude toward internet pornography. The dependent variables were practice toward internet pornography and sexual perception and attitude scale. The results indicated that the prevalence of sex related chat on social network was 27.2%, the prevalence of pornographic related pages on social networking channels was 87.3% and the prevalence of internet pornography was 83.7% among 283 respondents. There were significant association between chatted about sexual intercourse on social network ( $t=8.24$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), consuming pornographic related pages on social networking channels ( $t=7.95$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), consuming internet pornography ( $t=5.08$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and sexual perception and attitude scale. Based on results from this study, policy makers should develop comprehensive sex education program in line with local and cultural context to overcome negative impact of internet pornography. Also should raise parental awareness on emergence of internet pornography among young people.

**Keywords:** Sexual perception and attitude, urbanized Myanmar people, social networking channels, internet pornography

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## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, technology has become progressively more important matter in human society. Young people are mass users of newer and advanced electronic communication forms such as instant short text messaging and e-mailing as well as communication-oriented internet web sites. And also after emerging the popularity of internet and social media and government release some restriction on internet surfing, young people might be exposed to sexually explicit materials from the internet more easily. Study by Shwe TN in 2001 [1] found that as a results of modernization and exposure to mass media, movies and magazine from foreign countries, premarital sexual activities among young people rapidly increased in Myanmar.

Tin's study [2] also showed that sexual activities of most urbanized young people from Myanmar derived from western films and lifestyles.

In Myanmar, sexual and reproductive health area for adolescents and youth is new thing for everyone especially for policy makers and providers. There is very limited information and research for this area. And also most people assume that unmarried people are not sexually active by consistently saying that pre-marital sex amongst girls is still said to be very rare in Myanmar [3]. But in reality, according to cultural and globalization effects, pre-marital sex during adolescent age become popular in Myanmar. Therefore, this study is aimed to assess the knowledge, attitude, and practice of pornographic internet viewing and social networking channels on sexual attitude and perception among young Myanmar people (18 to 24 years) both males and females from urban area.

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## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross sectional descriptive/analytical study was carried out in one active Myanmar facebook group. The study population was total 312 respondents (29 respondents dropped off, 283 respondents completed survey) of both gender aged between 18 to 24 years who are consuming Facebook. Firstly, purposively selected MMTCP Facebook group and then systematic sampling by dividing 2 groups of respondents by mean of gender. Before doing sampling, members who are outlier to the targeted age were excluded. Members who were involved in sampling were first contact through facebook mail system, were informed about survey and were asked to provide personal E-mail address to receive unique survey link. E-mail addresses provided by respondents were uploaded to SurveyMonkey E-mail collector system and then unique survey link was sent to each respondent by SurveyMonkey. This survey link was featured with single response per link, single response per computer and completely anonymous responses.

The questionnaires were composed of total 49 questions. Two experts reviewed and verified for validity of the questionnaires and 1 expert reviewed and checked for online survey system. Two pretests were done in two different Facebook groups with 28 respondents. The results were checked reliability for knowledge toward internet pornography with KR20 (0.71), Cronbach's alpha for attitude toward internet pornography (0.80) and Cronbach's alpha for sexual attitude and perception scale (0.84). Permission was obtained from the admin team of facebook group (MMTCP). Data was collected from February until March, 2013.

The dependent variables were practice toward internet pornography and sexual perception and attitude scale. The independent variables include gender, knowledge and attitude toward internet pornography, chatting about sex related topic on social network, consuming pornographic related pages on social network and consuming internet pornography.

Data was analyzed using SPSS version 17. The statistics used were descriptive statistics for frequencies, percentage distribution, and mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics such as independent t-test, ANOVA test for normal distribution variable and non-parametric test for non-normal distribution variable. Ethics approval was sought from the Ethic Review Committee for Research Involving Human Research Subjects, Health Science Group, Chulalongkorn University.

**Table 1** Relationship between chat about sex related topic on social network channels and sexual attitude and perception scale

Chatted about sex related topic	Frequency	Mean	SD
Yes	77	22.03	4.777
No	206	28.08	5.584

t=8.42, p<0.05

**Table 2** Relationship between viewing pornographic pages on social network and sexual attitude and perception scale

Viewing pornographic pages on social network	Frequency	Mean	SD
Yes	247	25.45	5.480
No	36	33.17	5.130

t=7.95, p<0.05

**Table 3** Relationship between consuming internet pornography and sexual attitude and perception scale

Consuming internet pornography	Frequency	Mean	SD
Yes	237	25.08	5.19
No	19	31.42	5.58

t=5.08, p<0.05

## RESULTS

Three independent t tests (Table 1, 2, 3) were conducted to study the difference in sexual perception and attitude scale with different independent variables (Chatting about sex related topic on social networking channels (t=8.42, p<0.05), consuming pornographic related pages on social networking channels (t=7.95, p<0.05) and consuming internet pornography (t=5.08, p=<0.05). All three tests revealed that there were significant difference of mean score of independent variables in order to association with sexual perception and attitude scale. The respondents who had experience about chatting sex related topic on social network channels had lower mean score of sexual perception and attitude (Table 1). The respondents who had viewed pornographic pages on social network channels had lower mean score of sexual perception and attitude (Table 2) and the respondents and who consumed internet pornography had lower mean score of sexual perception and attitude (Table 3) compare with the respondents group who did not have those experience. The lower mean score of sexual perception and attitude means they have liberal attitude and perception toward premarital sexual intercourse and casual sex. Liberal attitude

**Table 4** Relationship between times spent on internet pornography and sexual attitude and perception scale

Time spent on internet pornography	Frequency	Mean	SD
Less than once a month	34	29.24	3.72
1- 3 times a month	76	26.62	4.67
Once a week	45	24.84	3.79
Several times a week	74	22.26	5.25
Everday	8	20.38	3.46

**Table 5** Relationship between level of internet pornography consumer according to practice and sexual attitude and perception scale

Consumer category	Frequency	Mean	SD
Low level consumer	44	29.91	3.42
Medium level consumer	116	26.12	4.25
High level consumer	77	20.77	3.97

(Mean score=3.22, SD=1.54). There are total 5 items to access practice related with internet pornography and level was categorized by low level (0 to 1.67) medium level (1.672 to 4.76) high level (4.77 to 5).

and perception means acceptance of sex outside of traditional monogamous relationships (primarily marriage) and acceptance of premarital sex.

A one-way ANOVA (Table 4) was conducted to compare mean score of sexual attitude and perception by mean of time spent on internet pornography. There was a significant difference in mean score by mean of time spent on internet pornography at the  $p < 0.05$  level for the five category according to time spent [ $F = 18.441$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ]. Post hoc comparisons test revealed that there were significant differences between each and every groups of time spent on internet pornography. However, spent several times a week ( $M = 22.26$ ,  $SD = 5.25$ ) did not significantly differ from the spent every day ( $M = 20.38$ ,  $SD = 3.46$ ). Taken together, these results suggest that time spent on internet pornography has associated with sexual attitude and perception of the respondents. Specifically, results suggest that when there is the more time spent on internet pornography, mean score of sexual attitude and perception becomes lower.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare mean score of sexual attitude and perception by mean of internet pornography consumer level. There was a significant difference in mean score by mean of internet pornography consumer level at the  $p < 0.05$  level for the three categories according to time spent [ $F = 79.920$ ,  $p = < 0.05$ ]. Post hoc comparisons test revealed that there were significant differences between each and every groups of internet pornography consumer level. These results suggest that internet pornography consumer level according to practice has associated with sexual attitude and perception of the respondents. Specifically, results suggest that the higher of the practice level of internet pornography,

the lower of the mean score of sexual attitude and perception, Table 5. The lower mean score of sexual perception and attitude means they have liberal attitude and perception toward premarital sexual intercourse and casual sex. Liberal attitude and perception means acceptance of sex outside of traditional monogamous relationships (primarily marriage) and acceptance of premarital sex.

## DISCUSSION

### Relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and level of practice toward internet pornography

There was significant association between male and female practice level on internet pornography. Most of the female (86.1%) contributed into low practice level whereas most male involved in moderate (55.2) and high practice level (38.3%). This finding reflects finding from Gudrun about gender difference attitude and perception on pornography [4]. Also findings from Malamuth & Peter [5, 6] showed that male are high frequency users of pornography reported a higher amount of sexual permissiveness, more lifetime sexual partners and more intense substance use than non-users.

Concerning with marital status, singles tended to have more high practice level (34.7%) than married respondents (5.6%). Single could spend their time on internet and internet pornography more than married respondents and also single could have a chance to view internet pornography alone.

### Relationship between consuming internet pornography and sexual attitude and perception

There was significant association between consuming internet pornography and sexual attitude and perception. Respondents group which have been exposed to internet pornography had lower sexual

attitude and perception scale compare with who did not have [5, 6]. Lower sexual perception and attitude scale can be translated as liberal attitude toward sexual intercourse and premarital sex.

In term of time spent on internet pornography by respondents, it shows that the more frequent use of internet pornography, the less mean scale of sexual attitude and perception. There was a finding of previous study about association between frequent use of pornography and sexual offense. For example, Malamuth & Huppini [5] found that for most young men, a high rate of pornography use did not predict sexual aggression but frequent users who also scored high on other individual risk factors were significantly more likely to have engaged in sexual aggression than those who used pornography more seldom or not at all.

### RECOMMENDATION

Based on results from this study, policy makers should develop comprehensive sex education program in line with local and cultural context to overcome negative impact of internet pornography. Also should raise parental awareness on emergence of internet pornography among young people.

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