

Summary

The Relationship of Pornography Consumption Situations with Difficulties in Emotion Regulation and Subjective Well-being: A Quantitative Research

Esma Melike Gürel¹

Yağmur Kuş²

Üyesi Burak Acar³

Ömer Miraç Yaman⁴

Pornography consumption has become an important research topic in psychology and social sciences in recent years. In particular, the effects of pornography on individuals' emotional and psychological states have been extensively addressed in the literature. These studies have investigated the potential effects of pornography consumption on emotional regulation difficulties and subjective well-being levels. Emotion regulation can be defined as the ability of individuals to control and direct their emotional reactions. When this skill is inadequate, individuals' emotional and psychological health may be negatively affected. Subjective well-being refers to individuals' satisfaction with their own lives and their general sense of well-being. Studies show that pornography consumption may be associated with emotional regulation difficulties. In particular, it is suggested that excessive pornography consumption may negatively affect emotional regulation strategies and reduce individuals' general well-being. In this context, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship between pornography consumption, emotional regulation difficulties, and subjective well-being levels, and whether this relationship differs in terms of gender. The study was conducted to understand the effects of pornography consumption on emotional and psychological health and to determine which factors shape these effects.

Method

The study was conducted using quantitative research methods. Data from a total of 429 participants were collected online via Google Forms on a voluntary basis. The data collection process was carried out between December 2022 and February 2023. There are three subgroups in the sample: 140 participants (32.6%) who did not consume porn (Group 1), 107 participants (24.9%) who

previously consumed but do not currently consume due to reasons such as Nofap, fasting, therapy, etc. (Group 2), and 182 participants (42.4%) who currently consume porn (Group 3). The research data were obtained using the survey method, which is one of the quantitative research data collection techniques. The survey questions were created using the PERMA-Subjective Well-Being Scale and the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale Short Form (DERS-16). The data were analyzed using statistical analysis techniques, including correlation analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA-MANOVA) and several nonparametric analyses.

Results

In the findings of the study, significant differences were found in the difficulties in emotion regulation variable according to the frequency of pornography consumption among male participants. In this regard, those who consume pornography more frequently have significantly more difficulties in emotion regulation. Additionally, differences were found in subjective well-being according to the frequency of pornography consumption. In other words, it was observed that subjective well-being scores decreased in those who consumed pornographic content more frequently. Analyses conducted in terms of demographic characteristics revealed that these relationships were more pronounced in certain demographic groups. For example, the relationship between pornography consumption and difficulty with emotional regulation was found to be stronger in male participants than in female participants. Significant relationships were found between the total scores of the participants on the subjective well-being and difficulties in emotion regulation scales. Accordingly, there is a moderate negative significant relationship between subjective well-being

Address for Correspondence: ¹Esma Melike Gürel, gurelmelike@outlook.com

²Yağmur Kuş, Uludağ Üniversitesi, yagmurkus18@gmail.com

³Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Burak Acar, Tokat, acarburak.tr@gmail.com

⁴Prof. Dr. Ömer Miraç Yaman, omermirac@gmail.com

and difficulties in emotion regulation scores. The total scores of subjective well-being and difficulties in emotion regulation, and the scores obtained from the difficulties in emotion regulation sub-dimensions, did not differ according to their current porn consumption groups (Group 1: I do not consume, Group 2: I used to consume but now I do not consume, and Group 3: I consume). However, the scores of the participants from the attachment, positive relationships, achievements, and loneliness sub-dimensions of the subjective well-being scale differed according to their current porn consumption status groups. Another finding in the analysis results is that Group 1 scored higher on the attachment sub-dimension compared to Group 2. This suggests that those who do not consume porn exhibit a better level of attachment to life compared to those who used to consume but no longer do.

One of the important results obtained in the study is the finding that the group that does not consume porn (Group 1) is less lonely than the group that used to consume but no longer does (Group 2). The analysis was carried out separately in female and male samples to make the study more nuanced. The analysis results showed that the subjective well-being level among male participants according to their current porn consumption was higher in the participants in the I do not consume (Group 1) category compared to those in the I consume (Group 3) and I used to consume but no longer consume (Group 2) categories. Another significant finding is related to how the scores obtained from the dependent variables and sub-dimensions differ according to the frequency of porn consumption, as investigated within the scope of Hypothesis 5. Before proceeding to the analyses, the sample was divided into four different groups according to the frequency of porn consumption: Group 1 (rarely), Group 2 (sometimes), Group 3 (frequently), and Group 4 (very often). The analysis results showed that the subjective well-being levels of the participants differed according to the frequency of porn consumption. On the other hand, no significant difference was found between the groups in terms of difficulty in emotion regulation. Accordingly, the subjective well-being level of Group 1 was higher than those of Groups 3 and 4. Group 2 scored higher in subjective well-being than Group 4. This suggests that those who rarely and sometimes consume porn are subjectively better off compared to those who frequently and very frequently consume porn. Significant differences were obtained from the positive emotions, attachment, meaning, and achievements sub-dimensions of the PERMA subjective well-being scale according to the frequency of porn consumption. According to the results, Group 1 (those who rarely consume porn) scored higher than Group 4 (those who very frequently

consume porn) in the positive emotions sub-dimension. This finding indicates that those who consume porn very frequently experience lower levels of positive emotions compared to those who rarely consume porn.

According to the analyses performed, while the total scores obtained from the variables of subjective well-being and difficulties in emotion regulation did not differ in female participants, significant differences were found in male participants. Accordingly, those who rarely consume porn have higher subjective well-being levels than those who sometimes, frequently, and very frequently consume porn. Those who sometimes consume porn have higher subjective well-being levels than those who very frequently consume porn. In parallel with all these findings, another important result obtained from this study is related to how difficulty in regulating emotions differs in male participants according to the frequency of porn consumption. The results obtained show that male participants who frequently consume porn (Group 3) have more difficulty regulating their emotions than male participants who sometimes consume porn (Group 2).

Discussion

In conclusion, the findings of this study provide important contributions to understanding the effects of pornography consumption on emotional and psychological health and to determining which factors shape these effects. It is recommended that these relationships be examined more deeply in future studies and that research be conducted on different demographic groups. Additionally, it is emphasized that intervention programs should be developed and implemented to reduce the negative effects of pornography consumption on emotional and psychological health.