PROBLEMATIC PORNOGRAPHY USE, BODY IMAGE, AND

RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION AMONG

MALAYSIAN YOUNG ADULTS

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Problematic Pornography Use, Body Image, And Relationship Satisfaction

Among Malaysian Young Adults

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APPROVAL FORM

This research paper attached hereto, entitled "Problematic Pornography Use, Body Image, And Relationship Satisfaction Among Malaysian Young Adults" prepared and submitted by Hen Zi Wei, Teeba Suriya a/p Kumar and Wong Wan Ching in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) Psychology is hereby accepted.

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia was ranked first in Asia and fourth globally for most visits to porn websites and 51% of the visitors are users aged between 18 to 34 years old. Therefore, the current study focused to look into the association between problematic pornography use with body image dissatisfaction and relationship satisfaction among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia. The current study adapted a quantitative research approach through a crosssectional survey design. A purposive sampling method was employed to recruit participants who are self-identified pornography users, individuals between the ages of 18 and 35 who are young adults from Malaysia and in romantic relationships. A total number of 194 participants ($M = 20.93$ years; $SD = 2.25$ years), where 93.3% of the participants were Chinese ($n=181$), were engaged in the current study by responding to an online self-report survey through online platforms and social media. Three instruments were untilized to measure the corresponding variables, including Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale (PPCS), Body Image-Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-5 (BI-AAQ-5), and Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS). The results indicated that problematic pornography use is correlated with increased body image dissatisfaction. In contrast, a non-significant association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction was found. The present findings not only offered a fresh perspective on the existing research about problematic pornography use in Malaysia, but they also contributed empirical evidence to policymakers to create campaigns based on evidence regarding problematic pornography use.
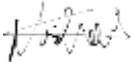
Keywords: Problematic pornography use, body image, relationship satisfaction, Malaysian young adults

DECLARATION

We declare that the material contained in this paper is the end result of our own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the bibliography and references to ALL sources be they printed, electronic or personal.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations

1. APA   -   American Psychological Association

2. BI-AAQ-5   -   Body Image-Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-5

3. CFA   -   Confirmatory Factor Analysis

4. CFI   -   Comparative Fit Index

5. CSI-4   -   Couples Satisfaction Index-4

6. HADS   -   Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale

7. KMSS   -   Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale

8. PPCS   -   Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale

9. QR code   -   Quick Response Code

10. RAS   -   Relationship Assessment Scale

11. RMSEA   -   Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

12. SCT   -   Social Comparison Theory

13. SERC   -   Scientific and Ethical Review Committee

14. SIT   -   Symbolic Interaction Theory

15. SPSS   -   Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

16. SRMR   -   Standardized Root Mean Square Residual

17. UTAR   -   Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman

18. WP   -   Wilayah Persekutuan

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

As reported by Hanaffi (2022), Malaysia was ranked first in Asia and fourth globally for most visits to porn websites according to the demographic insights released by Pornhub officials, one of the most famous global pornography websites (Statista, 2022). Based on the visitors' age demographic released by Pornhub in 2021, 51 percent of the visitors are users aged between 18 to 34 years old (Pornhub, 2022). According to the American Psychological Association (APA)(n.d.), individuals aged between roughly 20 to 35 years old are classified under young adulthood, whereas in Malaysia, an individual who is aged 18 and above is already considered an adult (Age of Majority Act 1971, n.d.). Therefore, by coordinating the definition of young adulthood provided by the APA dictionary into the Malaysian context, young adults are defined as individuals aged between 18 to 35 years old. Thus, it is shown that the majority of the users on Pornhub are young adults.

In the study of Zohor Ali et al. (2021), the common use of pornography among young adults is explained due to their developing and curious minds. Notably, pornography use has always been taboo in Malaysia, people tend to avoid discussing pornography-related topics due to many different factors, i.e., religious factors, societal norms, morality, law, etc (Yunos & Althabhawi, 2021). Because of this intended avoidance, pornography-related topics had slowly put on a mysterious mask, causing more and more curious minds to want to reveal the content hidden behind the mask, leading to the opening of Pandora's box. Moreover, upon watching

pornography, the reward pathway in the brain will be stimulated thus releasing dopamine and further leading to self-gratification and impulsivity in the users (Brown & Wisco, 2019, as cited in Zohor Ali et al., 2021). Furthermore, considering that most young adults are facing the social transition of going to university and enlarging their social circle, the hormonal and physical change due to growth, developing brain, and curiosities would drive the young adults further in exploring new things like watching pornography (Zohor Ali et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, past studies (Grubbs & Kraus, 2021; Willoughby et al., 2021) also indicated that problematic pornography is often associated with decreased relationship satisfaction. For instance, in the study of Perry & Schleifer (2017), it was found that the divorce rate has doubled for men and tripled for women with problematic pornography use over the years according to the data that they drew from 2006 to 2014 based on the context of American society. Furthermore, according to their analysis, the probability of divorce was lowered upon discontinuing problematic pornography use. This is evident that problematic pornography use is associated with decreased relationship satisfaction since research has shown that low relationship satisfaction is interrelated with high rates of divorce (Abreu-Afonso et al., 2021). However, it is notable that the study of Perry & Schleifer (2017) was conducted based on the western community, similar research based on the Malaysian context is by far still very limited to none. Remarkably, it is important to have good relationship satisfaction as a high level of it would be highly beneficial to personal well-being, health, and longevity (Bühler et al., 2021). This indicates that it is crucial to identify if there is a relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction as it could be a very concerning issue, especially for a country with the highest usage of Pornhub in Asia. In order to study relationship satisfaction, Malaysian young adults who are in a romantic relationship were targeted as the target participants of this study.

Moreover, previous studies had also indicated that problematic pornography use shares a relationship with negative body image (Cranney, 2015; Goldsmith et al., 2017; Laemmle-Ruff et al., 2019; Paslakis et al., 2020). According to Paslakis et al. (2020), problematic pornography use is associated with a negative body image in a way such that it would increase one's desire to make modifications to their body due to dissatisfaction with their current body. With many pornography films demonstrating unrealistic images of beauty by portraying extremely slim, and young people, concerns were raised that pornography would cause low self-esteem and unrealistic expectations of their sexual partner among the audience (Villines, 2020). This could be explained by the Social Comparison Theory coined by Festinger (1954) which claimed that people tend to evaluate their own values, opinions, abilities, and achievements by comparing themselves with the values, opinions, abilities, and achievements of others (Powdthavee, 2014). According to Pedalino & Camerini (2022), social comparison is directly interrelated with larger comparisons of ideal body image and dissatisfaction with one's own body image. Notably, a negative body image would cause an increased risk of eating disorders, and negative emotions such as depression, isolation, loss of self-confidence, and obsession with weight loss (Yazdani et al., 2018), which could be fatal in severe cases. However, most studies that examined the relationship between problematic pornography use and negative body image (Cranney, 2015; Goldsmith et al., 2017; Laemmle-Ruff et al., 2019; Paslakis et al., 2020) are conducted based on Western context while there is little to none study that is based on Malaysian context thus making it crucial to identify if there is a relationship between problematic pornography use and body image, especially in the context of Malaysians.

In short, there is a need to examine the relationship between problematic pornography use, relationship satisfaction, and body image among Malaysian young adults that are currently in romantic relationships in Malaysia.

1.2 Problem Statement

Most modern romantic relationships today certainly begin with at least one partner who regularly watches pornography (Carroll et al., 2017). This means that choosing to reveal and discuss pornographic use within a romantic relationship will be part of the intimacy-building and disclosure processes associated with creating shared meaning and relational commitment. According to Vaillancourt-Morel et al. (2020), a partner who uses pornography in a relationship may perceive it differently than a partner who does not, likewise for couples who use pornography together. Studies found that problematic pornography use is linked to lower relationship stability and satisfaction when patterns of use among couples diverge significantly between partners (Bühler et al., 2021; Willoughby et al., 2016). The problematic use of pornography was associated with lower levels of relational satisfaction, lower levels of relational stability, lower levels of positive communication, and higher levels of relational aggressiveness based on a study by Willoughby et al. (2016. Based on the script theory that was claimed by Willoughby et al. (2015), problematic pornography may contribute to unfavourable relationship outcomes by causing individuals' sexual scripts to be altered and possibly leading to the development of unrealistic sexual partner expectations.

Additionally, there is an inconsistency in the findings found by different scholars between the conclusions that investigate the relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction, especially among young adults in romantic relationships. For instance, some researchers have found that watching pornography has a negative effect on relationship satisfaction, most importantly due to their perception of pornography use (Kohut, 2021), but a dyadic daily diary study by Vaillancourt-Morel et al. (2020) found that using pornography does not seem to have an impact on couples' satisfaction with their relationships. For example, it seems that pornography users' negative feelings about pornography may cause them to see their use as more dangerous than it really is (Grubbs et al., 2018). Many researchers (Kohut, 2021; Vaillancourt-Morel et al., 2020) have said that the link between problematic pornography use and relationship quality needs to be looked at in a more nuanced and context-based way. Following that, the majority of the studies were conducted in western countries, and not many studies have been conducted in Asia, especially in Malaysia. Taking into consideration that Malaysia was ranked first in Asia and fourth globally for most visits to porn websites (Hanaffi, 2022), the present study would like to explore more on the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction.

Furthermore, the study of Laemmle-Ruff et al. (2019) indicated that the potential harm of problematic pornography on body image are moderated by factors such as the viewer's age, with younger people being more vulnerable to negative effects, and the internalisation of norms presented in pornography. In conjunction with this, compared to males, who demonstrated a higher possibilityof being more critical of their partners' bodies than themselves, women reported a higher likelihood that their partners were critical of their bodies. Plus, women who are experiencing relationship problems as a result of their partners' problematic usage of pornography

report that some of them felt "fat" and "ugly" when compared to other women. Problematic

pornography consumption was linked to lower genital body image and higher muscle

dissatisfaction (Tylka, 2015) in studies where the majority of the men were heterosexual

(Cranney, 2015; Gleason & Sprankle, 2019). However, there are not many articles that broadly

discuss this relationship (Goldsmith et al., 2017).

Pornographic viewing is considered as a sinful conduct among conservative nations like

Malaysia since it represents an immoral individual value and a harmful social side (Tan et al.,

2022). Even with these limitations, it still happens covertly (Tan et al., 2022). As evidenced by

The Star Online (2022), the survey done by Durex Malaysia stated that approximately 48% of

Malaysian young adults learn about sex from pornography. Hence, this study intends to fill the

knowledge gap by learning more about the relationship between problematic pornography usage,

relationship satisfaction, and body image among Malaysian young adults.

The majority of the research regarding the subject of problematic pornography was

conducted among Western nations (Cranney, 2015; Gleason & Sprankle, 2019; Kohut, 2021;

Vaillancourt-Morel et al., 2020). As a result, most of the past literature and research data

provided on the study of problematic pornography use are based on Western context. Due to

social, cultural, and economic disparities, the results drew from the data gathered in these study

might not apply to other regions of the world. In order to get relevant information and data that

reflects more precisely to the association between problematic pornography use, relationship

satisfaction, and body image in the Malaysian context, it is crucial to conduct a similar study in

our nation. With hope, this study may provide knowledge contribution to the database thus acting

as a potential source of reference for future similar studies in Malaysia.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research aims to determine the association of problematic pornography use with body image and relationship satisfaction among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia.

1.   To examine the association between problematic pornography use and body image among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia.

2.   To examine the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a romantic relationship in Malaysia.

1.4 Research Questions

1.   Is problematic pornography use associated with body image among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia?

2.   Is problematic pornography use associated with relationship satisfaction among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

Research Question 1

H_{0a}: There is no significant association between problematic pornography use and body image among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia.

H1a: There is a significant association between problematic pornography use and body image among youngadults in romantic relationships in Malaysia.

Research Question 2

H0b: There is no significant association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfactionamong young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia.

H1b: There is a significant association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfactionamong young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study aims to discover whether relationship satisfaction and body image are associated with problematic pornography use among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia. The findings may later provide insights into the role of problematic pornography use on relationship satisfaction and body image, as well as contribute to the understanding of the significance of problematic pornography use among Malaysian young adults. In addition, some theories argue about the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction and body images, i.e., the Social Comparison Theory and the Symbolic Interaction Theory.

To illustrate more, some scholars who applied the Social Comparison Theory to the issue of problematic pornography use concentrated more on how problematic pornography users altered their perceptions of their own sexual lives as a result of how they viewed themselves and their romantic relationships in comparison to what they saw in pornography (Carroll et al.,

2017; Matotek et al., 2021). On the other hand, the Symbolic Interaction Theory explains that an individual tends to hold symbolic internal meanings about relationships after viewing pornography, which in turn influences their behaviour (Brown et al., 2016). Hence, the present study will help further validate the theory used in this study.

Furthermore, the findings of this study have the potential to provide information and raise awareness among young adults in romantic relationships about how problematic pornography use affects relationship satisfaction, and perceptions of their body image. As young adults may find pornography to be one of the few activities that are available for them to explore their sexuality in a private and non-judgmental settings, they should be aware of the effects of problematic pornography use. Last but not least, in the future, the findings from the present study may also be able to contribute to the development of similar studies by other researchers in Malaysia.

1.7 Conceptual Definitions

Problematic pornography Use. The persistent and uncontrollable use of writings, images, or any sexually explicit materials such as illustrations and films with blunt, often exploitative sexual content that are designed solely to arouse a sexual response and to satisfy the sexual urges of the user (American Psychological Association, n.d.-d). Parallelly, problematic pornography use is defined as an uncontrollable and persistent media consumption that depicts nudity and sexual acts for sexual arousal and excitement despite adverse outcomes (Tan et al., 2022; Kumar et al., 2021).

Body Image. The mental picture one forms of one's body as a whole, including its physical characteristics and one's attitudes toward these characteristics (American Psychological Association, n.d.-b). Similarly, body image has been defined by Ramos et al. (2019) as the

multifaceted psychological experience of embodiment that comprehends one's body-related self-attitudes and self-perceptions, including feelings, behaviors, thoughts, and beliefs.

Relationship Satisfaction. The subjective evaluation, experience, and opinion of one's relationship (Keizer, 2014). Homogeneously, relationship satisfaction is referred to as one's overall evaluation of the relationship, which may entail the degree to which one's needs and desires for love, security, support, or one's expectations are met (Gerlach et al., 2020).

1.8 Operational Definitions

Problematic pornography Use. Problematic pornography use will be measured using the Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale (PPCS) developed by Bőthe et al. (2017). PPCS consists of 18 items covering six factors, namely salience, mood modification, conflict, tolerance, relapse, and withdrawal. A 7- point scale, ranging from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*all the time*) based on self-reporting methods is utilized. 76 points or more indicate possible problematic pornography use.

Body Image. Body image will be measured using the Body Image-Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-5 (BI-AAQ-5) developed by Basarkod et al. (2018). BI-AAQ-5 consists of 5 items in total and each item is graded based on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (*never true*) to 7 (*always true*) based on self-reporting methods. The higher the total score indicates the higher the body image dissatisfaction.

Relationship Satisfaction. Relationship satisfaction will be measured using the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) developed by Hendrick (1988). RAS consists of 7 items in total and each item is graded using a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (*low satisfaction*) to 5 (*high*

satisfaction) based on self-reporting methods. The higher the score, the more satisfied the

respondent is with his/her relationship.

Chapter II

Literature Review

2.1 Problematic Pornography Use

Pornography refers to any sexually explicit material which includes nudity and sexual behaviour that has sexual intention designed solely to increase sexual arousal among its users (Mckee et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2022). As such, problematic pornography use could be defined as the uncontrollable and persistent use of sexually explicit material consumption intended to arouse despite adverse outcomes. As the world has become more developed, pornography use has become a common recreational activity, especially in most developed nations with unrestricted internet access (Grubbs & Kraus, 2021; Grubbs et al., 2019; Hoagland & Grubbs, 2021), due to the nature of internet property that provides anonymity, affordability, and accessibility (Zohor Ali et al., 2021).

On top of that, past studies indicated that problematic pornography use is also significantly predicted by factors such as loneliness (Butler et al., 2017; Cardoso et al., 2022), difficulties in emotion regulation (Cardoso et al., 2022), perceived stress (Stark et al., 2022), and age (Shirk et al., 2021). By definition, loneliness refers to a subjective, unpleasant, and distressing experience of an individual related to a deficit in social relationships (Cardoso et al., 2022). According to Butler et al. (2017), when pornography is used, oxytocin will be produced, thus giving out a sense of comfort, connection, and closeness, which would in turn provide temporary relief from the feelings of loneliness, tricking the brain into thinking it is having a real relationship. However, once pornography use is stopped and the oxytocin level goes back to the initial level before pornographyusage, far deeper loneliness than before will be experienced

(Butler et al., 2017). Simultaneously, the study of Shi et al. (2016) showed that loneliness is significantly associated with difficulties in emotional regulation. With a higher level of emotional regulation ability, one would be able to down-regulate stress and negative emotions better as compared to individuals with a lower level of emotional regulation ability (Shi et al., 2016). Furthermore, studies have also suggested that individuals with a lower level of emotional regulation ability are likely to see themselves as being detached from the social world, or, in other words, lonely and excluded (Chatterjee et al., 2013; Koole, 2009, as cited in Shi et al., 2016), thus repeating the cycle of loneliness and problematic pornography use. Additionally, perceived stress is also known to be impactful on the emotion regulation processes (Cardoso et al., 2022), not to mention that perceived stress in daily life is also found to be positively correlated with problematic pornography usage (Stark et al., 2022). Subsequently, the study of Shirk et al. (2021) also mentioned that a younger age is associated with problematic pornography usage, which is in line with the statistics provided by Pornhub (2022), whereby a majority of the website's visitors are young adults aged between 18 to 34 years old.

Noting that pornography is just a portrayal of sexual subject matter for the purpose of sexual arousal, or in other words, to depict a sexual act rather than the act itself, the study by George et al. (2019) mentioned that problematic use of pornography is impactful on the adolescents' social perceptions and their attitude towards reality. Moreover, Rothman (2021) expressed her concerns that being frequently exposed to the bodies shown in sexually explicit materials would distort the perception of beauty. This will therefore cause a skewed beauty standard, thereby leading to issues like body comparison (Kaziga et al., 2021), body dissatisfaction, and distortion of body image. For example, as evident in several studies, problematic pornography use has been shown to be associated with many negative psychological outcomes, such as decreased relationship satisfaction (Floyd et al., 2020), lower relationship

stability (Willoughby et al., 2015), negative perceived body and sexual body image (Paslakis et al., 2020), as well as higher body dissatisfaction (Rothman, 2021). However, most studies on problematic pornography use and body image are conducted based on a western context (Kaziga et al., 2021; Paslakis et al., 2020; Rothman, 2021), and studies on young adults in an Asian context remain scarce.

On the other hand, a discrepancy in results was noticed in terms of the relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction in some studies, claiming that problematic pornography use is positively associated with relationship satisfaction (Kohut et al., 2021; Vaillancourt-Morel et al., 2020). This shows that problematic pornography use does not always cause a decrease in relationship satisfaction. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between problematic pornography use and body image as well as relationship satisfaction among Malaysian young adults who are currently in a romantic relationship in Malaysia.

2.2 Body Image

To date, there is no definite definition on the concept of body image; instead, body image can be considered multidimensional (Paslakis et al., 2020). In 1935, Paul Schilder coined the concept of body image and defined it as one's mental representation that everyone develops in an ongoing process (Thom, 2021). Apart from it, Brazier (2022) defined body image as the way people see and evaluate their own bodies and the feelings associated with their perception. That is to say, in most cases, body image refers to the concern of people about their skin, weight, hair, or the size or shape of a certain body part, which led to the formation of body image.

Aside from that, Johnson (2022) suggested there are four components of body image, i.e., perceptual, affective, cognitive, and behavioural aspects. Somehow, perceptual (Aksu et al., 2019; Burychka et al., 2021; So, 2017; Zaccagni et al., 2020) and affective (Burychka et al., 2021; Hamamoto et al., 2022; Menzel et al., 2011) body images are more frequently included in past studies. Firstly, perceptual body image refers to the way people perceive themselves. Due to perceptual differences, the way people visualise their bodies is not always an accurate picture of how they actually look (Johnson, 2022). In other words, body image is not an objective fact. Meanwhile, Burychka et al. (2021) also indicated that perceptual body image is the estimation of an individual's body weight and size. As people have different estimations of their body weight and size, there is no standard way to estimate them, so perceptual disturbance occurs. Perceptual disturbance refers to an underestimate or overestimation of body size or weight, and it could influence people physically and psychologically (Cornelissen et al., 2013; Dakanalis et al., 2016). On the other hand, affective body image refers to the way people feel about their bodies (Johnson, 2022). In particular, affective body image is the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction people feel about their appearances, such as body shape, skin tone, weight, and height. As mentioned by Johnson (2022), societal consumption is a vital factor that may influence people's feelings. To exemplify, individuals could be influenced by the people around them, it could be the actors they see in the movies, in magazines, on social media, and on TV as well. Therefore, people should make a conscious decision about the media they consume and be mindful on its positive and negative effects on them in order to introduce body diversity into their recognition. However, body diversity should be embraced rationally otherwise affective disturbance may occur, especially when people have body dissatisfaction or overvaluation of their body size and weight (Cornelissen et al., 2013; Dakanalis et al., 2016). Moving on to the third component of body image, , cognitive

body image refers to the way people think and believe about their bodies (Johnson, 2022). A case

in point is that people may spend a lot of time thinking about how much they exercise, what they

eat and how many calories are in the food. As for behavioural body image, it refers to the actions

people take in relation to body image, including destructive behaviours such as excessive exercise

habits (Johnson, 2022).

Conceptually, body image can be generally divided into two dimensions: positive body

image and negative body image. Both positive and negative body image could have an impact on

people's physical and mental health. Positive body image protects people against the onset of

eating disorder symptoms (Linardon, 2021). According to Webb et al. (2015), positive body image

is a complicated concept that may be simply described as an individual's ability to love, accept,

respect, be conscious of, and appreciate their body regardless of its functional competence or

appearance. Although positive body image is considered to be different from negative body image,

the significant inverse relationship suggests that addressing one may have an indirect effect on the

other (Linardon et al., 2022; Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015b). Body appreciation, functionality

appreciation, and body image flexibility are the most commonly researched aspects of positive

body image. According to Tylka and Wood-Barcalow (2015a), body appreciation is defined as the

ability to accept, value, and have good thoughts about one's body, whereas functionality

appreciation indicates a propensity to feel grateful for what one's body is able to do (Alleva et al.,

2017). Both allow individuals to reframe the way they think about their bodies positively, which

keeps the individual from focusing on perceived bodily imperfections (Alleva et al., 2018). As for

negative body image, it can be defined as low body esteem, body dissatisfaction, or body shame,

which has a significant impact on young people's lives because it is associated with low overall

well-being (Campedelli et al., 2022), low self-esteem (Ramadhanty & Hamid, 2021), disordered

eating (Swami, 2017), and depression (Pehlivan et al., 2022). It is consistent with the study (Denny et al., 2013; Gast et al., 2012) that found that negative body image is related to body dissatisfaction and body shame. Furthermore, Tylka & Wood-Barcalow (2015a) revealed that those who have a negative body image are more likely to internalise negative thoughts about themselves. It is notable that those with obesity or who are overweight are more likely to identify their body image negatively (Gillen, 2015).

In addition, body image can be influenced by different characteristics. It is not limited to an individual's physical characteristics, such as body shape, or psychological characteristics, such as low self-esteem and perfectionism, but also the socio-cultural context, including the cultural ideal of beauty and media pressure to achieve it (Cash, 2002; Wertheim & Paxton, 2011). It is supported by Piran and Teall (2012), who suggested that body image is related to how they interact with the environment through their bodies. It showed that socio-cultural factors are a factor that could influence body image. Similarly, Veldhuis et al. (2014) emphasise that social-cultural factors, such as parental, peer, and socio-cultural, particularly media factors, shape an individual's level of satisfaction with their own body. It is notable that research found that social-cultural factors such as partner or personal problematic pornography consumption could influence body image,especially among young people (Laemmle-Ruff et al., 2019).

Body image can influence relationships, self-esteem, and mental health (Laemmle-Ruff et al., 2019). A positive body image is associated with body acceptance and satisfaction, whereas a negative body image is associated with body dissatisfaction and the desire to have a different body from others (Brazier, 2022). Individuals with high body dissatisfaction have a higher risk of developing anxiety and mood disorders (Sharpe et al., 2018). Moreover, research by Woertman

and Van Den Brink (2012) found that body dissatisfaction is associated with sexual dysfunction, which in turn might be associated with problematic pornography use.

Komarnicky et al. (2019), on the other hand, identified sexual body image, or people's perceptions of their own breasts and genitals, as a component of body image that is related to sexual satisfaction and functioning. Specifically, regardless of men or women, this study found that positive genital self-image was associated with a positive feeling towards one's body. Another study by Cranney (2015) also found that body image is associated with problematic pornography use, as its results showed penis size dissatisfaction and breast size satisfaction is associated with problematic pornography use. Due to that, sexual image is considered an aspect of body image in the present study. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the association between problematic pornography use with relationship satisfaction and body image among young adults in Malaysia.

2.3 Relationship Satisfaction

Relationship satisfaction can be defined as the degree to which partners' expectations for their relationships are met by the actual experiences they have within those relationships. People will be happy with their relationships if their expectations are met, but they will be unhappy if their relationships don't match up with what they expected (Carroll et al., 2017). In different studies, they use the term "relationship satisfaction" to refer to an individual's overall evaluation of their romantic relationship, how they feel about their partner, and how attracted they are to their relationship (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022). In addition to this, it was mentioned that high relationship satisfaction is characterised by positive feelings and attitudes toward the relationship partner, and it frequently implies that individuals believe that their partner satisfies their needs

(Bühler et al., 2021; Willoughby et al., 2016). Traditionally, most previous research on the topic of relationship satisfaction has concentrated on heterosexual married couples (marital satisfaction). It's crucial to remember that there are many different kinds of couples in the modern world, from those who are married to those who are in same-sex relationships to those who live together with their significant others but aren't married.

According to the American Psychological Association (APA)(n.d.), companionship, romance, support, sexual satisfaction, and commitment are all things that can be met by a committed romantic relationship, such as marriage. However, many couples find that these benefits diminish over time, and for some, dissatisfaction with the relationship becomes so severe that it leads to its end. It is often believed that dissatisfaction with the relationship is the last common pathway that ultimately results in the failure of the partnership. Marital hardship, separation, and divorce are all linked to a wide range of physical and mental health issues, highlighting the need of maintaining healthy relationships.

We also intend to discuss relationship satisfaction in terms of romantic relationships. Romantic relationships are commonly present in people's lives (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022). According to research, having a fulfilling romantic relationship is indeed very important for one's well-being, health, and lifespan (Bühler et al., 2021). Individuals who are content with their relationships appear to be more inclined to continue in their relationships and, as a result, benefit from the related psychosocial benefits (Maas et al., 2018). Specific aspects of a romantic relationship, such as communication, love, commitment, and intimacy, may have a substantial impact on the evaluation of relational quality (Johnson et al., 2015). Besides, couples who communicate successfully gain immediately in terms of sustaining relationship quality, but

couples that rely on poor communication skills in the face of a loss of quality have higher costs, less relationship success, and more conflict (Johnson et al., 2015).

Relationship satisfaction is also an important factor in relationship sustainability. For both partners' sakes and one's own happiness, it seems crucial that adults in committed relationships feel fulfilled in their partnerships. Furthermore, sexuality has a big impact on relationship satisfaction (Kohut, 2021; Maas et al., 2018). Healthy sexual expression is an essential component of romantic partnerships. Sexual satisfaction is well known to be an important component of relationship fulfillment. Increased sexual desire for one's spouse, for example, has been found to boost one's reported satisfaction with one's relationship (Bühler et al., 2021; Guidry et al., 2019; Maas et al., 2018; Willoughby et al., 2016).

Despite the fact that the majority of individuals want to stay in a loving and satisfying relationship, people's satisfaction with their romantic relationships frequently declines over time (Bühler et al., 2021; Guidry et al., 2019). For instance, according to some studies, people first experience a high level of satisfaction, which then progressively decreases with time. Another study suggested that only a small fraction of couples actually experience this decline; the vast majority see either no change or a very slight one (Bühler et al., 2021).

2.4 Problematic Pornography Use and Body Image

As revised from past studies, several studies indicate that problematic pornography use has an association with body image (Cranney, 2015; Dogan & Yassa, 2018; Laemmle-Ruff et al., 2019; Maheux et al., 2021). However, there are only a few studies that used both males and

females as their target sample (Komarnicky et al., 2019; Maheux et al., 2021; Paslakis et al., 2020). It may be due to the lack of evidence of gender differences because the study by Maheux et al. (2021) highlighted that there is no gender difference in their study findings, which examined the associations between adolescents' problematic pornography consumption, body comparison, and body shame. To illustrate, it found that people's body-related concerns whether they are boys or girls, may make them vulnerable to pornography. In addition, Komarnicky et al. (2019) revealed the perception of individuals on their own breasts and genitals is increasingly acknowledged as an aspect of body image that is related to sexual satisfaction and functioning. In short, regardless of gender, this study discovered that positive genital self-image is associated with a positive attitude toward one's body. Not only that, after reviewing 26 studies, Paslakis et al. (2020) concluded that pornography exposure is associated with negatively perceived body image and sexual body image. In detail, it could be body dissatisfaction, physical self-esteem, body surveillance, the drive for muscularity, or related concepts that were utilized as surrogates for body image.

Some studies focused on female-targeted samples and found an association between problematic pornography use and body image. A case in point is the study by Laemmle-Ruff et al. (2019), which only focused on women and revealed that pornography has a minor negative effect on body image. It could be supported by the finding by Dogan and Yassa (2018) that problematic pornography consumption is significantly related to lower genital self-image and self-esteem. A similar result was found by Maas & Dewey (2018), who found that heterosexual collegiate women who use pornography problematically engage in more body monitoring because their own body perception is negatively affected by pornography. It is notable that the review article by Owens et al. (2012) further shared that data from two European qualitative studies in which female participants revealed that pornography drives the traditional gender

conceptualizations of female body image, such as provoking the idea that females should be large-breasted, skinny, and small. Apart from that, Borgogna et al. (2018) found that problematic pornography use is not related to the male image of women. But women who watch pornography problematically to get away from bad feelings are more likely to have a negative view of their bodies.

In regard to men, Vandenbosch and Eggermont (2013) suggested exposure to sexualizing television and pornographic websites has a direct relationship with the internalization of appearance ideals. According to Cranney (2015), problematic pornography use is related to sexual body image among men, i.e., men who use pornography problematically are dissatisfied with their penis size. Several studies (Corneau and Van der Meulen, 2014; Griffiths et al., 2017; Tylka, 2015) also found similar findings. As evidence, Griffiths (2017) underpinned that males in New Zealand and Australia have greater dissatisfaction with body fat, height, and muscularity when problematic pornography use is increased. Furthermore, Tylka (2015) also found that men's problematic pornography use is positively linked to their muscularity and body fat dissatisfaction, indirectly due to their internalization of the mesomorphic ideal. Particularly, visual problematic pornography use in men is associated with body performance-related cognitive distractions during sexual activity; however, literary pornography use in men is not associated with these variables (Goldsmith et al., 2017).

Most of the studies mentioned above focused on either males or females to examine the association between problematic pornography use and body image. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the association between problematic pornography use and body image among Malaysian young adults in a romantic relationship, regardless of gender differences.

2.5 Problematic Pornography Use and Relationship Satisfaction

The relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction is well established; problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction have a strong correlation, which suggests that problematic use of pornography is associated with lower relationship satisfaction (Willoughby et al., 2015; Matotek et al., 2021; Willoughby et al., 2021). A study by Willoughby et al. (2021) stated that problematic pornography use has a negligible impact on relationship satisfaction. Since the development of the Internet, there has been a rise in the availability of pornography, which has changed the context of couples' sexual experiences. Consequently, as a result, researchers have started to look at how using pornography problematically affects the satisfaction of romantic relationships, and a number of the results show that problematic pornography has a negative effect on relationships (Wright, Tokunaga, Kraus, & Klann, 2017).

According to Willoughby et al. (2021), any investigation into pornographic behaviour in romantic relationships must take into account a number of interrelated factors. Individual partners' perspectives and attitudes, pornographic material, relationship status and duration, procedures unique to couples, and backgrounds were all considered alongside other factors. Besides, relationship issues, inferiority complexes, and low self-esteem have all been linked to pornographic media use, especially in long-term relationships. At the individual level, it has been established that problematic pornography consumptions are connected with higher levels of depression among men, more negative feelings about romantic partners, and engagement in risky sexual behaviours (Sinkovic, Stulhofer, & Bozic, 2012). As such, this research also demonstrates the significance of differences in the frequency of usage between partners. In addition, problems in relationships, at home, and at work arise when one partner spends too much time on pornography (Vaillancourt-Morel et al., 2020). In fact, problematic pornography use has been linked to less

interest in sexual activity between affected partners, especially among men in relationships, and has been said to be a leading cause of divorce and separation (Vaillancourt-Morel et al., 2020).

Research from Willoughby et al. (2015) suggests that the reason behind lower relationship satisfaction is because of script theory. The more a person is exposed to depictions of sexual situations that are, by definition, unusual and non-normative, the more likely they are to start feeling dissatisfied with their current sexual partner or sexual activity. Script theory says that if pornography changes sexual scripts, this could cause each person in a relationship to have different expectations, which could change how they act and talk to each other (Willoughby et al., 2021).

Furthermore, according to a study from Floyd et al., 2020, sexual shame due to accepting sexual thoughts, beliefs, or behaviours can be a major influence on relationship outcomes. There is evidence that people who keep watching pornography even though they know it is wrong do feel more sexual guilt (Volk et al., 2016). Findings suggesting that a propensity to experience shame can lead to insecure romantic partner attachment, less adaptive dyadic interaction, and worse relationship satisfaction provide further evidence for the negative effects of shame on relationships (Johnson, Nguyen, Anderson, Liu, & Vennum, 2015). Also, previous correlational research provides cross-sectional support for a hypothetical sequence in which excessive pornography use among people who morally disapprove of pornography use is linked to higher distress and then a decrease in relationship satisfaction (Guidry et al., 2019).

Some studies on couples have found positive correlations between problematic pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction (Kohut, 2021; Maas et al., 2018). When looked at together, the study found that problematic pornography use was linked to more sexual activity, a willingness to try new sexual behaviours, and less boredom with sexual activity.

Couples who watched porn together reported more open communication about sexual desires and aspirations. Studies have also shown that women who engage in pornography do so within the context of a romantic relationship, rather than as a replacement for sexual intimacy, which may explain why this practise is associated with greater levels of relationship or sexual pleasure (Poulsen, Busby, & Galovan, 2013)**.** However, the idea that people in relationships who aren't as sexually satisfied might try to use pornography with their partner often to either improve their relationship satisfaction or add more pleasurable sexual activities through sexual media is something that isn't well researched yet and needs to be (Maas et al., 2018). Therefore, this study aims to determine the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction among young adults in romantic relationship in Malaysia.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

There are two theories that are used to support the current study, which are Social Comparison Theory and Symbolic Interaction Theory.

*Social Comparison Theory***.** Social Comparison Theory (SCT) was initially proposed by Leon Festinger in 1954 and it states that people have an innate drive to obtain accurate self-evaluation by comparing their own opinions, abilities, attitudes, feelings, physical features, or any other self-aspects to others (Cherry, 2022). According to Crusius et al. (2022), comparison between self and others is the fundamental mechanism of SCT that could influence people's experiences, judgments, and behaviour. In other words, when people obtain information about how others are and what others can or cannot do, it is most likely that people tend to relate this information to

themselves. Through comparison, people can fulfill their own needs by having a better understanding of themselves and being able to determine what their abilities enable them to achieve.

Social comparison can be divided into two levels that are upward social comparison and downward social comparison. Upward social comparison refers to a comparison between individuals and those who they believe are better than them. Upward social comparison serves a self-improvement function as having a comparison with others who outperform is conducted (Nortje, 2022). However, upwards social comparison can also result in negative thoughts and behaviour because people will have an inferior feeling when compared with the unrealistic benchmark (Nortje, 2022). For downward social comparison, it is defined as a comparison between individuals and those who they believe are inferior to them. It is a way for people to enhance their subjective perceptions of well-being (Guyer & Vaughan-Johnston, 2018).

From a problematic pornography viewer perspective, they are given a channel for them to obtain other's body information such as penis size and breast size. Due to this, they have the innate drive to compare their body with the pornography performers who always have ideal body types and subsequently evaluate their bodies. In other words, upward social comparison will be always used by problematic pornography viewers in the comparison process. This process will definitely influence their body image. A case in point is the study by Gleason and Sprankle (2019) claimed that the association between problematic pornography use and body image can be described by SCT because problematic pornography viewers often compare their bodies with the pornography performers. It is consistent with the study by Maheux et al. (2021) also revealed that problematic pornography consumption is associated with body comparison.

Moreover, as mentioned above, the study by Tylka (2015) found that men's problematic pornography use was positively linked to their muscularity and body fat dissatisfaction, indirectly due to their internalization of the mesomorphic ideal. Another study by Goldsmith et al. (2017) also revealed that individuals who have consumed pornography problematically may experience body- and performance-based sexual concerns such as sexual body image. The results of these two studies can be explained by using SCT. The participants in these two studies are problematic pornography viewers, so they have body expectations after viewing the pornography and subsequently compare their bodies with the pornography performers. Due to upward social comparison, their body image is negatively affected, and they have a higher risk of developing anxiety and mood disorders (Sharpe et al., 2018). In short, Social Comparison Theory supports that problematic pornography use is associated with body image dissatisfaction.

*Symbolic Interaction Theory***.** According to symbolic interaction theory (SIT), people live in both natural and symbolic environments (Aksan et al., 2009). SIT proposed that people respond to elements in their environment based on the subjective meanings they have attached to the elements (Nickerson, 2021). In particular, subjective meaning can be created and even modified through the social interaction process in which symbolic communication is involved. In other words, the elements do not have their own meaning; instead, people attach meaning to them through their interactions with social actors. Symbolic interactionism enables people to develop their own sense of self to be socialised in social life. In short, symbolic interaction can be considered the "interpretation of the action" process.

SIT is often used in theoretical paradigms when studying pornographic topics (Newstrom & Harris, 2016), for example, it was used by Shuler (2018) to support the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction. Pornography holds different meanings for everyone. Individual relationship outcomes (Perry 2017; Weinberg et al., 2010; Willoughby et al., 2016) andthe diversity of experiences (Kohut et al., 2017) related to problematic pornography use vary with each individual because most of the studies showed a different result. It may be due to people holding different definitions of pornography. As evidence, Willoughby et al. (2016) discovered that different types of pornography can have different meanings for different people, and that it can change specific couple interaction processes, which in turn influence relationship satisfaction.

From a problematic pornography viewer's perspective, pornography use may have different impacts on them because everyone perceives pornography viewing differently. Some perceive pornography use as a way to empower and liberate their sexual experiences, whereas some perceive it as a kind of moral disapproval. The study by Mass et al. (2018) stated that men who accepted pornography use were associated with increased relationship satisfaction. Individuals who viewed pornography as morally disapproving were associated with viewing pornography use as distressing and compulsive (Volk et al., 2016). Therefore, Symbolic Interaction Theory is used to support the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction.

2.7 Conceptual Framework
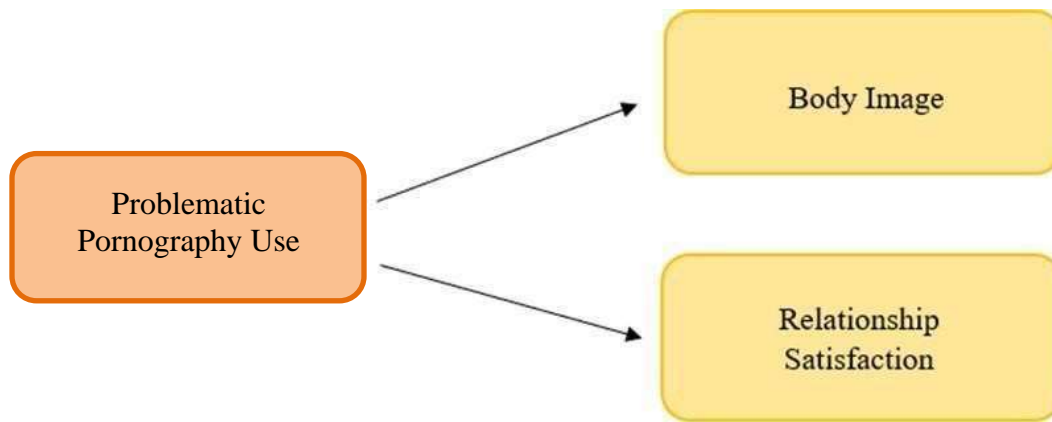
Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework for Examining the Association between Problematic

Pornography Use with Body Image, and Relationship Satisfaction among Malaysian Young

Adults in a Romantic Relationship in Malaysia

Figure 1 above presents the proposed conceptual framework for this study. The aim of this study is to examine the association between problematic pornography use, body image, and relationship satisfaction among Malaysian young adults in a romantic relationship. The conceptual framework is supported by the Social Comparison Theory and Symbolic Interaction Theory.

In the current study, there is one independent variable (problematic pornography use) as well as two dependent variables (body image and relationship satisfaction). Based on the Social Comparison Theory, this study hypothesized that problematic pornography use positively predicts body image among Malaysian young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia. Meanwhile, Symbolic Interaction Theory supports the finding that problematic pornography use positively predicts relationship satisfaction among Malaysian young adults in romantic relationships.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Design/ Framework

Quantitative and descriptive research was employed to collect numerical data (Williamson & Johanson, 2017). Specifically, a cross-sectional research design was adapted to examine the variables, which are problematic pornography use, body image, and relationship satisfaction among Malaysian young adults in romantic relationships. The reason for using a cross-sectional study design is that Setia (2016) indicated cross-sectional research design allows for easy selection of participants based on the study criteria and enables data collection at a single point in time. Apart from that, it had benefits including shorter time consumption, lower cost and more samples could be reached because questionnaires were commonly used for cross-sectional study design instead of interviews (Setia, 2016; Wang & Cheng, 2020). In short, the cross-sectional study was mainly used to estimate the prevalence of behaviour in the population at a given point in time (Cherry, 2022a) and was the most suitable type of study used in the present study.

Additionally, an internet survey-based design was used in this study because it was easier to assess participants as well as provided easier access to a large amount of participants within a short period (Rice et al., 2017). Due to that, a better generalisation could be provided as participants with diverse demographic backgrounds such as gender, location and age could be recruited. In other words, better and generalizable results could be obtained to be generally applied to most people in most contexts most of the time (Frey, 2018). So, the present study applied an internet-survey-based design to collect quantitative data.

3.2 Sampling Procedure

Sampling Method/Technique. In this particular study, the method of purposive sampling was utilised. It is also known as judgement, selective, or subjective sampling, in

which researchers relied on their own discretion to select study participants from the population. In this study, the participants were recruited based on the inclusion criteria of Malaysian young adults aged between 18 to 35 years who were self-identified pornography users that were currently in a romantic relationships. The age range is based on the definition of young adulthood provided by the APA dictionary in the Malaysian context, in which young adults are defined as individuals aged between 18 to 35 years old.

Location of the study. In this study, a web-based operating system called Qualtrics that permits the researchers to create online surveys was utilized to develop an online self-report questionnaire, which were then distributed across several social media platforms, such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook Messenger. Data were collected from young adults in Malaysia who met the inclusion criteria for this study.

Ethical Clearance Approval. The research procedure, along with the questionnaires, were sent to the Scientific and Ethical Review Committee (SERC) of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) to gain ethical clearance approval. To ensure an ethical conduct of the present research, the processes of data gathering were only started after obtaining the required authority's ethical clearance approval. (Re: U/SERC/02/2023)

3.3 Sample Size, Power, and Precision

G*Power software version 3.1 was used to compute the sample size of the present study (Faul et al., 2009). In order to investigate research hypotheses 1 and 2, simple linear regression was applied to investigate the relationship between problematic pornography use with relationship satisfaction and body image. Moreover, the present study includes two dependent variables, namely relationship satisfaction and body image. The target sample size of 53 was determined by the regression analysis using a power input of .95 and an alpha error probability of .05 (see Appendix A). The computed sample size was increased by a total of

80% so that it would take into account both missing data and outliers. In brief, 194 young adults in total were recruited for this study.

3.4 Pre-Test

A pre-test was conducted among 10 young adults. Pre-testing is a vital step to find issue areas, reduce measurement error, ease the load on respondents, find out if respondents are understanding questions correctly, and make sure that the order of questions is not affecting how respondents answer. To be more specific, an interview method was utilized in which people were asked to "think out loud" and probed to determine if the questions were clear and easy to comprehend, if they were difficult for people to respond, and what the underlying issues were. They said just what was on their minds. This can involve paraphrasing, providing retrospective reasoning, or expressing their level of confidence in the meaning of each question.

For instance, participants mentioned in Question 7 from the demographic section, "Have you watched pornography before?" that the word 'before' needed to be removed from the statement because it contained repetitive words. So, the amended version of the question is, "Have you watched pornography?". Another example is Question 8 from the demographic section, "How long have you been in this relationship?", in which the question was not accurate. To make it more precise, the word 'current' was included in the question. The amended question statement is "How long have you been in this current relationship?".

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Inclusion Criteria and Exclusion Criteria. Several criteria of inclusion were applied to recruit respondents for the present study by focusing on the recruitment of only male and female respondents who are Malaysian young adults aged between 18 to 35 years old that are currently in a romantic relationship and currently located in Malaysia and who had watched

pornography. Those who are out of these criteria, such as never watched any pornography, out of the age range of 18 to 35 years old, non-Malaysian, not currently in a romantic relationship, and not currently located in Malaysia are excluded. Screening questions like "Have you watched pornography?" and demographic questions that require the respondents to indicate their age, nationality, current location, and relationship status were asked in the survey to ensure that the respondents fulfilled these inclusion criteria. Furthermore, the inclusion criteria of this study were also mentioned in the description text during online questionnaire distribution as well as written on the first page of the survey itself. Eligibility checkboxes requiring participants to tick all boxes before proceeding to answer the questionnaire were also created on the first page of the questionnaire. By doing so, it ensured that the respondents are aware of their eligibility in participating in the study, and allowed the data cleaning process to be facilitated upon the completion of data collection.

Procedures of Obtaining Consent. Prior to answering the questionnaire, informed consent and personal data protection statement were presented to the respondents on the first two pages of the questionnaire. Information such as the research topic, a brief introduction to the research background, the aim of the research, confidentiality, procedures, breakdown of the questionnaire, the expected time needed for completion, criteria of inclusion, and eligibility checkboxes were included on the first page of the survey while the potential risk, confidentiality concerns, researchers' contact details, and acknowledgment of notice were included in the second page. Only the respondents that have agreed to provide total consent to take part in the study will carry on to answer the questionnaire.

Description of Data Collection Procedure. First, an online questionnaire was constructed through the Qualtrics online survey platform. Pre-test was conducted upon the completion of the first online questionnaire draft, and amendments were made accordingly

based on the feedback from the pre-test. After the amendments, the questionnaires were shared out to Malaysian young adults from different states in Malaysia who are currently in a romantic relationship by sharing the link and QR code with the respondents via online platforms and social media such as Microsoft Team, Messenger, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, WeChat, Telegram, Discord, and Email. In order to reach out to more potential respondents who fulfill the inclusion criteria of this study, respondents were also urged to share the QR code and survey link with their friends. Before answering the survey, respondents were provided with short briefings on the purpose of the study. Informed consent was also attached to the first two pages of the online survey. The entire process of data collection took fifteen days, from 18 February 2023 to 4 March 2023. Subsequently, upon the removal of incomplete data and responses outside of the inclusion criteria, data analysis was conducted through the administration of the SPSS software.

3.6 Instruments/ Questionnaire

In this study, self-report questionnaires were adapted as the measurement in collecting data. The questionnaire began with informed consent, "Personal Data Protection Statement", and succeeded by Section A to Section D. There are 12 demographic questions in Section A, such as age, gender, race, nationality, the current state located, pornography use, relationship status, relationship length, and so on. The purpose of collecting such demographic information is to allow filtration of responses during the data cleaning procedure and to allow a clearer understanding of student researchers of the characteristics of the respondents. Section B, C, and D involves the three relevant scales in this study, namely the Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale (18 items), the Body Image Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-5 (5 items), and the Relationship Assessment Scale (7 items).

Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale (PPCS). The Problematic

Pornography Consumption Scale (PPCS) developed by Bőthe et al. (2017), is an instrument

used to examine problematic pornography consumption using Griffiths's (2005) six-

component addiction model which consisted of salience, mood modification, conflict,

tolerance, relapse, and withdrawal. These six components remained in PPCS, with each

component consisting of 3 items, thus giving PPCS a total of 18 items, which were created

based on previous problematic pornography use instruments, for example, in the studies of

Andreassen et al., (2012); Orosz et al. (2016) (as cited in Bőthe et al., 2017), and on the

definitions of the factors of Griffiths' model.

PPCS utilizes a 7-point scale that ranged from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*all the time*) based on

self-reporting methods. The example of questions asked in PPCS includes "I felt that porn is

an important part of my life" from the salience component; " I used porn to restore the

tranquility of my feelings" from the mood modification component; "I felt porn caused

problems in my sexual life" from the conflict component; "I felt that I had to watch more and

more porn for satisfaction" from the tolerance component; "I unsuccessfully tried to reduce

the amount of porn I watch" from the relapse component; and " I became stressed when

something prevented me from watching porn" from the withdrawal component.

There are no reverse-scoring items in this scale, scoring method is based on summing

up the total score for each item for all six components. In terms of cut-off points, a total score

of 76 points or more indicates possible problematic pornography use. PPCS was reported to

have good reliability for all the subscales. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed

on the selected items due to the well-established theoretical model. The results showed that

PPCS had a satisfactory fit (CFI = .977, TLI = .973, RMSEA = .064 [90% CI .059-.070]).

Factor loadings were high (ranging from .69 to .96) and the six components loaded strongly on the general factor (ranging from .83 to .92).

Body Image-Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-5 (BI-AAQ-5). The Body Image Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-5 (BI-AAQ-5) was developed by Basarkod et al. (2018) to assess body image inflexibility which was developed through a genetic algorithm-based method. It was a short version scale that consists of 5 items. The short form performed in accordance with the long form in terms of its factor structure and correlations with theoretically relevant constructs, like body image dissatisfaction, stigma, internalization of societal norms of appearance, self-compassion, and poor mental health.

BI-AAQ-5 utilizes a 7-point scale that ranged from 1 (*never true*) to 7 (*always true*) based on self-reporting methods. There are no reverse-scoring items in this scale, scoring method is based on the summation of the total score for each item. The higher the total score indicates the higher the body image dissatisfaction. Questions like "Worrying about my weight makes it difficult for me to live a life that I value", "I shut down when I feel bad about my body shape or weight", and "My thoughts and feelings about my body weight and shape must change before I can take important steps in my life" were asked in this questionnaire. This scale shows high internal consistency ($\alpha = .96$) and has previously been used and validated in samples consisting of both males and females (Sandoz et al., 2013 as cited in Basarkod et al., 2018).

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS). The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) is developed by Hendrick (1988) to measure general relationship satisfaction. It consists of 7 items in total and each item is graded using a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (*low satisfaction*) to 5 (*high satisfaction*) based on self-reporting methods. The higher the score, the more satisfied the respondent is with his/her relationship.

Items 4 and 7 are reverse-scored in this scale, the scoring method is based on summing up the total score for each item. Questions such as "How well does your partner meet your needs?", "In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?", and "How good is your relationship compared to most?" were asked in the questionnaire. The internal consistency of the RAS was high (Cronbach's alpha = 0.828) and all inter-item correlations as well as item-total correlations were in an acceptable range. The CFA results supported the unidimensionality of RAS ($\chi2/df = 2.39$; CFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.074 and SRMR = 0.038). The RAS score was significantly correlated with CSI-4, KMSS, HADS-anxiety, and HADS-depression, demonstrating convergent validity (Hendrick et al., 1998). Furthermore, this instrument has been well-validated with reliable psychometric properties in a variety of research settings (Fülöp et al., 2020; González-Rivera, 2020; Maroufizadeh et al., 2018).

Chapter 4

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Demographic Characteristics

Table 4.1 displayed the demographic information of the sample used in the present study. The sample consisted of 194 respondents, who ranged in age from 18 to 32 years, and the mean age of the sample was 20.93 years *(SD = 2.252)*. There were 87 males (44.8%) and 107 females (55.2%). Furthermore, the sample consisted of 93.3% ($n = 181$) of Chinese, 6.2% ($n = 12$) of Indians, and 0.5% ($n = 1$) of Sikhs. There was 5.7% ($n = 11$) currently located in Johor, followed by 2.1% ($n = 4$) in Kedah, 0.5% ($n = 1$) in Kelantan, 1.0% ($n = 2$) in Melaka, 1.0% ($n = 2$) in Negeri Sembilan, 1.5% ($n = 3$) in Pahang, 7.2% ($n = 14$) in Penang, 64.4% ($n = 125$) in Perak, 0.5% ($n = 1$) in Perlis, 0.5% ($n = 1$) in Sabah, 2.6% ($n = 5$) in Sarawak, 8.2% ($n = 16$) in Selangor, 4.1% ($n = 8$) in WP Kuala Lumpur, and 0.5% ($n = 1$) in WP Labuan. Besides, there were 194 participants rated themselves as watched pornography. Participants also stated their current relationship status in which 88.7% ($n =172$) participants were in a relationship with the opposite sex, 10.8% ($n = 21$) were in a relationship with the same sex, and 0.5% ($n = 1$) participant was married. The mean duration of their relationship in months was 15.0 ($SD = 26.035$), with a minimum of 0 months and a maximum of 300 months.

Not only that, 5.2% ($n = 10$) of participants reported engaging with pornography every day or almost every day in the past month, followed by 14.4% ($n = 28$) a few times a week, 22.2% ($n = 43$) once a week, 32.5% ($n = 63$) once or a few times, and 25.8% ($n = 50$) not at all. The mean of the average amount of time (minutes) that the respondents spent consuming pornography each time over the past month was 25.51 ($SD = 32.225$).

Table 4.1
Demographic Information of Research Sample (n = 194)

		N	%	Min	Max	M	SD
Age				18	32	20.93	2.252
	18	14	7.2				
	19	48	24.7				
	20	33	17.0				
	21	31	16.0				
	22	35	18.0				
	23	13	6.7				
	24	6	3.1				
	25	6	3.1				
	26	3	1.5				
	28	4	2.1				
	32	1	.5				
Sex				1	2	1.55	.499
	Male	87	44.8				
	Female	107	55.2				
Races				2	4	2.07	.279
	Malay	0					
	Chinese	181	93.3				
	Indian	12	6.2				
	Others	1	.5				
Nationality				1	1	1.00	.000
	Malaysian	194	100				
Current State				1	15	7.98	2.719
	Johor	11	5.7				
	Kedah	4	2.1				
	Kelantan	1	.5				
	Melaka	2	1.0				
	Negeri Sembilan	2	1.0				
	Pahang	3	1.5				
	Penang	14	7.2				
	Perak	125	64.4				
	Perlis	1	.5				
	Sabah	1	.5				
	Sarawak	5	2.6				
	Selangor	16	8.2				
	WP Kuala Lumpur	8	4.1				
	WP Labuan	1	.5				

Note. n = number of cases; % = percentage; M = mean; SD = standard deviation; Min = minimum value; Max = maximum value

Table 4.1 (Cont')

Demographic Information of Research Sample (n = 194)

	n	%	Min	Max	M	SD
Watched Pornography?			2	2	2.00	.000
Yes	194					
No	0					
Current relationship status			2	4	2.90	.321
In relationship with same sex	21	10.8				
In relationship with opposite sex	172	88.7				
Married	1	.5				
How long have you been in this current relationship? (Months)	194		0	300	15.07	26.035

Note. n = number of cases; % = percentage; M = mean; SD = standard deviation; Min = minimum value; Max = maximum value

Table 4.1 (Cont')

Demographic Information of Research Sample (n = 194)

	n	%	Min	Max	M	SD
How often have you engaged with pornography in the past month?			1	5	2.41	1.167
Not at all	50	25.8				
Once or a few times	63	32.5				
Once a week	43	22.2				
A few times a week	28	14.4				
Every day or almost every day	10	5.2				

What is the average amount of time that you spent consuming pornography each time over the past month? (Minutes)	194	0	300	25.51	32.225

Note. n = number of cases; % = percentage; M = mean; SD = standard deviation; Min = minimum value; Max = maximum value

Topic Specific Characteristics

Table 4.2 showed the frequency distribution for different variables, including problematic pornography use, body image, and relationship satisfaction. All of the means of the variables as well as their standard deviations were computed with the assistance of IBM SPSS Statistics 24. The mean score for problematic pornography use was 2.52 (*SD* = 1.401). Besides, the mean score for body image was 3.07 (*SD* = 1.438), while the mean score for relationship satisfaction was 3.51 (*SD* =.776).

Table 4.2

Frequency Distribution of Topic Specific Characteristics: Problematic Pornography Use, Body Image, and Relationship Satisfaction. (N=194)

	Min	**Max**	**Mean**	**SD**
Problematic Pornography Use	1	7	2.52	1.401
Body Image	1	7	3.07	1.438
Relationship Satisfaction	2	5	3.51	.776

Note. n = M = mean; SD = standard deviation; Min = minimum value; Max = maximum value

Data Diagnostic and Missing Data

Frequency and Percentages of Missing Data

After excluding 164 missing data using SPSS software, the total number of participants available for further analysis was 194, which met the minimum sample size of 53 predicted by G*Power software.

Criteria for Post Data-Collection Exclusion of Participants

After reviewing the collected responses, it was determined that they all met the inclusion criteria established by the researchers (see section Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria). As a result, no responses were eliminated.

Assumptions of Normality

In this study, all variables, including problematic pornography use, body image, and relationship satisfaction, were subjected to normality testing. The tests consisted of the histogram, the P-P plot, the skewness and kurtosis tests, and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test.

Histogram. According to Figures 2.1 and 2.3, the variables "problematic pornography use" and "body image" were positively skewed, whereas the variable "relationship satisfaction" was normally distributed, forming a bell-shaped curve. However, two variables, pornography consumption and body image, did not violate the histogram's normality indicator.

Q-Q Plot. Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 demonstrated that three research variables were well-normalized, as the observed values did not differ significantly from the diagonal line reflecting the expected values. As a result, the Q-Q plot's normality indicator is not violated.

Skewness and Kurtosis. In accordance with Gretter & Wallnau (2014) and George & Mallery (2010), acceptable skewness and kurtosis values range between -2 and +2. The skewness result indicated that no variables violated the normality assumption, since all variables fell within the acceptable range.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) Test. Based the table 4.4, it can be concluded that none of the three variables—problematic pornography use, D (194) = .15, p = .000, body image, D (194) = .08, p = .002 and relationship satisfaction, D (194) = .09, p = .001 met this assumption of normality because all of the study variables were evaluated at less than .001.

Hence, none of the three variables in this study satisfied the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test's assumptions of normality.

Conclusion for the normality test. The three variables of the present study—problematic pornography use, body image, and relationship satisfaction—satisfied the four normality indicators, which were the histogram, Q-Q plot, skewness, and kurtosis. As for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, all three variables did not meet the criteria. We can assume that our data are normally distributed because our study variables have passed the majority of normality tests.

Table 4.3

Skewness and Kurtosis

	Skewness	Kurtosis
Problematic Pornography Use	.955	.409
Body Image	.509	-.258
Relationship Satisfaction	-.111	-.959

Table 4.4

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Problematic Pornography Use	.145	194	.000	.901	194	.000
Body Image	.083	194	.002	.959	194	.000
Relationship Satisfaction	.089	194	.001	.965	194	.000

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Defining and Processing Outliers

The statistical outliers were identified using the boxplot that was produced by the normality tests carried out using the SPSS software. In the variable of problematic pornography use, there were two outliers (Cases 110, 93) that were recorded. In contrast, no outlier was discovered for the relationship satisfaction or body image variables. Overall, after deleting these two outliers, there were 194 valid data in the statistical analysis.

Assumptions of Simple Linear Regression

Test on Normality and Linearity of Residuals and Homoscedasticity. Based on the scatter plot of problematic pornography use and body image, the relationship between the two variables is linear and positive. The relationship between problematic pornography use and the mean of body image and relationship satisfaction are linear. Data along the regression line have the same distribution and are not cone-shaped or curved. Hence, the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were met.

Test on Independence of Errors. To establish an independent correlation between residuals, the premise of independent errors must be satisfied. In the current investigation, Durbin Watson was used to assess this presumption. As claimed by Field (2009), values < 1 or > 3 are regarded as violating the assumption. Based on Table 4.5, it can be inferred that the assumption of error independence was not violated, given the values obtained of 1.753 and 1.417.

Test on Outliers. The assumption on outliers will be tested using standardized residuals. According to Mood (2010), when the minimum value is equal to or less than -3.29 or the maximum value is equal to or more than 3.29, the dataset is deemed to include outliers. The standardized residuals for problematic pornography use and body image are minimum -2.075 and maximum 2.959, and the standardized residuals for problematic pornography use

and relationship satisfaction are minimum -1.888 and maximum 2.046. Hence, there were no

outliers.

Conclusion on Assumptions of Simple Linear Regression. The normality and

linearity, and homoscedasticity are met. On the other hand, there are no potential outliers and

dependence of errors. Thus, the assumption test for simple linear regression was satisfactory.

Table 4.5

Independence of Errors Test

Model	Durbin Watson
Body Image	1.753
Relationship Satisfaction	1.417

Note. Independent variable = Problematic pornography Use

Data Transformation

Among the three instruments, the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) was the only

instrument that had negative items (items 4 and 7). Consequently, the ratings obtained for

these negative items were inverted using a five-point Likert scale with a range of 1 (*low*

satisfaction) to 5 (*high satisfaction*). To further illustrate, the response of 1 was reversed to 5,

the response of 2 to 4, the response of 3 to 3, the response of 4 to 2, and the response of 5 to

1. Following the completion of these data transformations, the researchers moved on to the

next step of computing the total score for additional statistical analysis.

Statistical Analyses

There were two research hypotheses to be examined in this study. In accordance with

each hypothesis, the outcomes will be discussed.

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

In this study, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was conducted to measure the strength of the linear relationship between the variables. Table 4.6 showed that problematic pornography use was positively correlated with body image, $r(192) = .357$, $p < .001$, and relationship satisfaction $r(192) = .111$, $p < .001$. Body Image was positively correlated with relationship satisfaction, $r(194) = .277$, $p < .001$.

Table 4.6
Pearson's Correlation Coefficients of Variables (N=194)

Variables	1	2	3
1. Problematic Pornography Use	1		
2. Body Image	.357**	1	
3. Relationship Satisfaction	.111	.271**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

H_{1a}: There is a significant association between problematic pornography use and body image among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia.

Simple Linear Regression was carried out to test whether there was a significant association between problematic pornography use and body image. Refer to the table 4.7, the result of simple linear regression was statistically significant, $F(1, 192) = 28.060$, $p = .000$ with 12.8% of the variance. The association between problematic pornography use ($\beta = .357$, $p = .000$) and body image is significant. Thus, our alternative hypothesis, H_{1a} is supported.

Table 4.7

Simple Linear Regression on Problematic Pornography use and Body Image (n = 194)

Variables	Unstd. β	Std. Error	Std. β	t	Sig.	Adj. R^2
Constant	2.145	.199		10.753	.000	.123

Problematic pornography Use	.366	.069	.357	5.297	.000

Note. Unstd. β = unstandardized coefficient; Std. Error = Standard error; Std. β = standardized coefficient; Sig = significant value; Adj. R^2 = adjusted R^2

***H1b*: There is a significant association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia.**

Simple Linear Regression was utilized to test whether there was a significant association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction. Refer to the table 4.8, the result of simple linear regression was statistically insignificant, $F (1, 192) =$ 2.390, $p = .124$ with 1.2% of the variance. The association between the problematic pornography use ($\beta = .111$, $p = .124$) and relationship satisfaction is not significant. Thus, our alternative hypothesis, ***H1b*** is not supported.

Table 4.8

Simple Linear Regression on Problematic Pornography Use and Relationship Satisfaction (n = 194)

Variables	Unstd. β	Std. Error	Std. β	t	Sig.	Adj. R^2
Constant	3.357	.115		29.312	.000	.007
Problematic pornography Use	.061	.040	.111	1.546	.124	

Note. Unstd. β = unstandardized coefficient; Std. Error = Standard error; Std. β = standardized coefficient; Sig = significant value; Adj. R^2 = adjusted R^2

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study examined the relationship between problematic pornography use, body image, and relationship satisfaction among Malaysian young adults. Based on the statistical analyses, H_{1a} was supported whereas H_{1b} was rejected.

Problematic Pornography Use and Body Image

The H_{1a}, which hypothesised that there is a significant relationship between problematic pornography use and body image among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia, was supported. Notably, the relationship between problematic pornography use and body image among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia was found to be positively correlated, whereby a higher problematic pornography use was found to be associated with higher body image dissatisfaction.

This finding is in line with various past studies (Owens et al., 2012; Corneau and Van der Meulen, 2014; Cranney, 2015; Tylka, 2015; Griffiths et al., 2017; Dogan & Yassa, 2018; Maas & Dewey, 2018; Laemmle-Ruff et al., 2019; Paslakis et al., 2020) which claimed that problematic pornography use and body image dissatisfaction share a positive relationship. According to Paslakis et al. (2020), the negative impact of problematic pornography use on body image might occur due to the increase of one's desire to make modifications to their body due to dissatisfaction with their current body upon the comparison of their body image with the body image displayed the actors in pornography. This phenomenon could be explained by upward social comparison based on the Social Comparison Theory, whereby an individual would compare themselves with other individuals whom they perceive to have better resources than them or outperform them thus resulting in the formation of more negative thoughts and behaviour such as feeling inferior and wanting to make modifications

to make themselves more competitive advantaged when compared with the unrealistic standards (Nortje, 2022).

Considering that many pornographic materials have been promoting unrealistic images of beauty as well as unrealistically exaggerated sexual performance, upward comparisons may be made by the users thus leading to a lower level of self-esteem as well as causing them to have unrealistic expectations as a result of decreased body image satisfaction (Villines, 2020). To illustrate, pornography often tends to demonstrate an unrealistically prolonged duration of erections sustainability and greater genital size in men, as well as easier orgasms experiences, unrealistic body curves, and genital images in women as compared to the encounters in reality (Goldsmith et al., 2017). Consequently, this further contributes to issues such as sexual distractions related to body parts or performance, and poor genital self-image in both genders (Goldsmith et al., 2017) as norms that were presented in pornography being internalized by the users.

Notably, considering that pornography and sex-related issues have always been taboo in Malaysia due to the conservativeness of the society that was mainly caused by religious factors (Yunos & Althabhawi, 2021), this sensitive issue had barely been discussed, and its related knowledge had also been barely educated among Malaysian. As a result, pornography has been commonly utilized as a source of sex education due to its easy accessibility (Rogers, 2016) as well as its extremely detailed demonstration of sexual intercourse, which in a way serves a modelling effect on pornography users. According to the American Psychological Association (n.d.-c) and Lee et al. (2021), modelling is a learning process that occurs when an individual unconsciously imitates a behaviour upon the observation or copy of another's behaviour that was seen to be rewarding. Moreover, as evident in the study of Burtăverde et al. (2021), the usage of pornography was also reported to be attributed to the purpose of increasing one's sexual knowledge and performance. However, bearing in mind that the main

intention of pornography was to depict sexual arousal rather than provide realistic sexual education Tan et al. (2022), the sexual-related knowledge that was obtained from pornography would be misleading for pornography users due to the formation of unrealistic expectations in them upon being influenced by the unrealistic standards as demonstrated in most pornography.

As a consequence, the unrealistic expectations that pornography users obtained from pornography would create a distorted view of what an ideal body should look like and how sexual behaviour should go on (Goldsmith et al., 2017). Subsequently, the discrepancy between expectations and reality after the comparisons of their own body with the unrealistic body standards displayed by the actors in pornography would then lead to body image dissatisfaction (Tylka, 2015). Additionally, studies (Woertman & Van Den Brink, 2012; Kirby, 2021) also indicated that a dependent use of pornography could possibly lead to sexual dysfunction due to the unmet expectations of the partner's body or personal adequacy as a result of unrealistic expectations. In other words, with problematic use of pornography, users would be dependent on the elicits of sexual arousal brought by the unrealistic portrayal of body images which leads to a skewed beauty standard, thereby causing a decrease in body image attributed to body comparison (Rothman, 2021). This is in line with what the present study has found, whereby there is a positive relationship between problematic pornography use with body image dissatisfaction.

Problematic Pornography Use and Relationship Satisfaction

The *H1b*, which hypothesised that there is a significant relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia, was rejected. This finding is accordant with past studies (Conner, 2014; Vaillancourt-Morel et al. 2019) which claim that there is no significant association

between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction, while some other studies (Matotek et al., 2021; Willoughby et al., 2015, 2021) demonstrated a strong association between both variables.

Despite H_{1b} being rejected due to the lack of significance, a weak positive relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction is still found in present study, which is accordant with the research of Borgogna et al. (2018). This weak association indicates that relationship satisfaction might not be directly related to problematic pornography use. Noting that the impact of problematic pornography use on relationship satisfaction could be affected by various other factors such as level of moral disapproval (Floyd et al., 2020), and personality and attachment styles (Ferron et al., 2017), problematic pornography use itself might be insufficient to explain its impact on relationship satisfaction, in fact, the presence of moderators might be able to explain the relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction better (Allen, 2017).

To illustrate, the study of Floyd et al. (2020) found that the indirect relationship between problematic pornography use and decreased relationship satisfaction was moderated by the level of moral disapproval of the users in a way such that those who engage in problematic pornography use despite being morally disapproved of problematic pornography use might experience increased levels of sexual shame, which contributes to a decreased level of sexual satisfaction thus leading to a decreased level of relationship satisfaction, vice versa for those who engage in problematic pornography use without having any moral disapproval of pornography use. Additionally, the indirect relationship between problematic pornography use and decreased relationship satisfaction was also found to be moderated by personality and attachment styles in the study of Ferron et al. (2017). For example, in the context of problematic pornography users with an anxious attachment style, individuals tend to engage in problematic pornography use due to their desire for virtual emotional and sexual

experiences to fulfill their need for love, which in turn decreases their relationship satisfaction as they seek fulfillment of emotional and sexual experience from pornography that was lacking in their current relationship. These further demonstrated that, through the inclusion of moderators during the investigation of associations, extra information on the association between two variables in quantitative research could be provided by explaining what are the possible features that can contribute to a stronger, weaker, or even disappeared association between variables (Allen, 2017). Unfortunately, moderators were not included in the present study, thus it is suggested that future research could consider including moderators when testing the relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction in the future.

Moreover, the positive relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction is consistent with the findings of several past studies (Kohut, 2021; Maas et al., 2018; Willoughby et al., 2021) despite being inconsistent with the majority of past studies (Bühler et al., 2021; Guidry et al., 2019; Johnson et al, 2015; Sinkovic et al., 2012; Volk et al., 2016; Willoughby et al., 2015, 2016; Wright et al., 2017). According to Vaillancourt-Morel et al. (2020), not all problematic pornography usage is bad for relationships, in fact, it is the context of usage that determines whether the relationship is negatively or positively impacted. Similarly, the study of Poulsen et al. (2013) found that relationship satisfaction is positively related to problematic pornography use in the context of being engaged in a romantic relationship, rather than as a replacement for sexual intimacy. Furthermore, the study of Kohut et al. (2017) has also mentioned that problematic pornography use is also related to benefits that could improve relationship satisfaction such as enhanced sexual communication, increased sexual experimentation, and elevated sexual comfort.

Nevertheless, problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction could also share a positive relationship especially when the pornography is watched together with the respective partner. According to the study by Kohut et al. (2021), the use of pornography with a romantic partner tends to promote higher relationship satisfaction as compared to partners who did not use pornography together. This may be because by having a shared consumption, the couple unintentionally spends time together. Similar to watching romance movies in the cinema, exposure to romantic media could actually elicit romantic thoughts and feelings for the viewers, which in turn provides a better relationship and communication quality (Ray, 2022). Pornography, which also contains elements of romance serves the same ability to elicit romantic thoughts and feelings among its viewers too. Subsequently, when relationship and communication quality is improved, couples can communicate their needs and ideals with each other, thus contributing to a better mutual understanding and a better fulfillment of expectations that could further contribute to higher relationship satisfaction. As evidence, the study of Lavner et al. (2016) has found that quality communication could positively predict relationship satisfaction.

Additionally, the positive relationship between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction could also be explained by the Symbolic Interaction Theory. According to the Symbolic Interaction Theory, it was claimed that pornography users tend to hold symbolic internal meanings about relationships after viewing pornography, which in turn influences their behaviour (Brown et al., 2016). In other words, the way pornography users perceive the meaning of pornography has a great impact on whether or not their relationship satisfaction is improved after watching pornography. For instance, if a pornography user perceives that their pornography use could empower and liberate their sexual experience with their partner which could therefore improve their relationship satisfaction as a whole, then eventually this user would have an increase in relationship

satisfaction. As evidence, in the study by Mass et al. (2018), it was mentioned that individuals who accepted pornography use were associated with increased relationship satisfaction, whereas individuals who viewed pornography as morally disapproving on the other hand, were associated with emotional distress as well as decreased relationship satisfaction (Volk et al., 2016).

Implications

Theoretical Implications

As the majority of prior studies were carried out in other cultural contexts, the present study which aimed to examine the association among problematic pornography use, body image, and relationship satisfaction could contribute to the existing literature within the context of Malaysia. Particularly, majority of the past studies were Western country based, including the United States (Borgogna et al., 2018; Guidry et al. 2019; Kohut et al. 2021; Maas et al. 2018), Canada (Goldsmith et al. 2017) and Australia (Laemmle-Ruff et al. 2019). However, there were some past studies were based in the Asia context, such as China (Johnson et al, 2015) and Pakistan (Awan et al., 2021; Bibi et al., 2022). Nonetheless, there are limited studies (Ali et al., 2021; Tan et al. 2022) that were based on the Malaysian context. Therefore, the present study shed new insight by revealing the significant relationship between problematic pornography use and body image, and the non-significant association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction in the Malaysian context.

Moreover, the current study addressed the research gap by focusing on young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia, to examine the association between problematic pornography use and body image. This contribution is crucial because research insight into young adults in romantic relationships is still inadequate. Specifically, the majority of

previous studies that examine the association between problematic pornography use and body image focused on other targeted groups instead, including sexual minority men (Gleason & Sprankle, 2019; Griffiths et al., 2017; Whitfield et al., 2018) and adolescent (Doornwaard et al., 2014; Maheux et al., 2021; Owens et al., 2012). Moreover, it is notable that prior studies (Komarnicky et al., 2019; Maheux et al., 2021; Paslakis et al., 2020) revealed that there is no gender difference in their studies which examined the association between problematic pornography use and body image. As the present study focused on young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia, it could provide new research insight because most of the past studies focused on either male participants (Cranney, 2015; Griffiths et al., 2017; Tylka, 2015; Vandenbosch and Eggermont, 2013) or female participants (Borgogna et al., 2018; Dogan and Yassa, 2018; Laemmle-Ruff et al., 2019; Maas & Dewey, 2018). Thus, the present research could expand the database of the existing literature by providing new insights into the significant association between problem pornography use and body image among young adults in romantic relationships in Malaysia.

Not only that, but the present study also revealed an unexpected finding regarding the positive but non-significant association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction, which contradicted previous studies (Guidry et al., 2019; Kohut, 2021; Matotek et al., 2021; Vaillancourt-Morel et al., 2020; Willoughby et al., 2021). It might be due to gender differences because a recent meta-analysis by Bennett-Brown and Wright (2022) found that problematic pornography consumption is negatively related to sexual and relationship satisfaction, but it is for men only. In other words, problematic pornography consumption is negatively related to sexual and relationship satisfaction for women. It is supported by Willoughby et al. (2021) who revealed that men rather than women drive the associations between pornography use and relationship stability. Furthermore, several past studies (Ferron et al., 2017; Floyd et al., 2020) have also indicated that variables such as level

of moral disapproval, and personality and attachment styles are related to the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction. Hence, this study offered a new perspective by uncovering that there could be other moderators such as gender, level of moral disapproval, personality and attachment styles about pornography that influence the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction in order to obtain a deeper understanding.

Practical Implications

The present study found that problematic pornography use is associated with body image dissatisfaction. Therefore, counsellors and therapists may consider this empirical finding in identifying and assisting young adults in romantic relationships who have high body image dissatisfaction. It is critical because some studies found that high body image dissatisfaction is associated with low overall well-being (Campedelli et al., 2022), low self-esteem (Ramadhanty & Hamid, 2021), disordered eating (Swami, 2017), and depression (Pehlivan et al., 2022). As the problematic pornography use is positively correlated to body image dissatisfaction was found by the present study, it underscored the importance of the type of social comparison that used by young adults romantic relationships to compare their body with the actor's bodies. It is because several past studies found that downward comparison had positive effects on human images (Laker & Waller, 2022a) and upward comparison had negative effects on body images (Laker & Waller, 2022b). Particularly, upward social comparison may lead to negative thoughts and behaviours as people may feel inferior when comparing themselves to an unrealistic standard, as stated by Nortje (2022). For example, pornography viewers may compare themselves to performers who have ideal body types, which sets an unrealistic benchmark. Therefore, counsellors and therapists could consider the type of social comparison used by those who have a high body image

dissatisfaction when planning and implementing an intervention. In short, the present study is intended to help counsellors and therapists better understand their clients' body image, which is determined not only by bio-social factors such as opportunities for health education and socioeconomic status (Shin & Nam, 2015), and behavioural factors such as physical activity and eating patterns (Tur et al., 2013) but also by environment factor including problematic pornography use.

Furthermore, the present study could grab public attention and raise public awareness of problematic pornography use as the present study found that problematic pornography use is positively correlated to body image and relationship satisfaction. However, it is notable that problematic pornography use is not significantly associated with relationship satisfaction. Nonetheless, policymakers and practitioners may use this finding as a framework to design awareness campaigns that increase public understanding of the correlation between problematic pornography use, body image, and relationship satisfaction. It may help the public to decide either to increase or decrease their problematic pornography use due to higher awareness of it. Moreover, the public may also change from an upward social comparison to a downward comparison when comparing their body image with the actors. It is because this study found that problematic pornography use is positively correlated with body image dissatisfaction. With it, they are aware that they should change their type of comparison in order to develop a positive body image. Aside from that, this study may allow participants to do a reflection. Specifically, it could be a channel for them to think about and reflect on their relationship satisfaction and body image by having problematic pornography use while answering the questionnaire. With this reflection, participants could take action to change their behaviour of problematic pornography consumption. Therefore, the present study could provide a framework for policymakers and practitioners to develop an awareness

campaign to raise public awareness of the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction.

Limitations of the Study

First, the limitation of the present study is the utilization of purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique because it might lead to poor generalisation of findings. Particularly, only participants who met the inclusion criteria were included in this study. In other words, the researcher's selection of the research sample is subjective and biased, preventing them from concluding the population (Etikan et al., 2016). This assertion finds support in the research by Wisniowski et al. (2020), who reported that samples obtained through non-probability sampling methods may not accurately reflect the characteristics of the larger population, making it less representative. Therefore, the generalizability of the current study's findings may be limited due to this constraint, as it may be susceptible to researcher bias.

Second, collecting data from respondents through an internet-based self-report questionnaire could be a limitation because response biases might be involved, which influence the accuracy of the findings. Specifically, social desirability bias could happen because participants tend to respond in a way that they feel is more appropriate and is socially accepted by others rather than reflect their actual situation, which results in biased data (Doduo & Winter, 2014; Latkin et al., 2017). For instance, respondents were required to answer the third item in the 6-Item Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale (PPCS-6) that asked them to rate to what extent they neglected other leisure activities as a result of watching porn. However, some respondents may have provided inaccurate responses because they felt that agreeing with this item is less socially accepted by others and they might be perceived as a person who have a weak ability to regulate themselves.

Third, the language barrier may be one of the limitations of the present study, as the majority of respondents were Chinese (93.3%) and English is not their native language. It is owing to the abstruse words that were used in some of the questions in the questionnaires. A case in point is the question of 'When I vowed not to watch porn anymore, I could do it only for a short period of time'. Individuals with lower proficiency in English may find it difficult to understand the word 'vowed', which could lead to a misunderstanding of its meaning or even the meaning of the question in which it appears. Thus, the accuracy of the results may be affected due to the low reliability of the received response.

Recommendations for Future Research

First, future research is recommended to use the probability sampling method as Acharya et al. (2013) underlined that probability sampling can decrease researcher bias and increase the generalizability of findings because each sample has an equal chance to be selected from the population. To illustrate, future research can apply the stratified sampling method by dividing the young adults who are in a romantic relationship into subgroups by race, like Malay, Chinese, Indian, and others. Next, a proportional number of people from each race group are randomly selected. Therefore, the representation of all race groups in the target population is allowed. It is supported by Taherdoost (2016) who indicated that using the stratified sampling technique enables researchers to obtain a sample that accurately represents the population and its characteristics. Consequently, the research outcomes can be generalized to the population with a greater confidence level.

Second, future research is suggested to decrease social desirability bias by ensuring respondents fully understand their anonymity and confidentiality. Many respondents were apprehensive about participating in the online survey due to concerns regarding their confidentiality, despite a consent form being attached to the front page. It showed that many

respondents may have overlooked the introduction and consent form on the first page and second pages. To address this, two columns could be set up on the second page, requiring respondents to tick boxes indicating that they are aware their participation will remain anonymous and that the information provided by them will solely be utilized for academic purposes. If the respondents do not tick these two columns, then they are unable to proceed to the next page. This approach would help ensure that respondents fully understand the survey's anonymity and confidentiality, resulting in answers based on their actual situation thereby reducing social desirability bias.

Third, it is suggested that future research employ simpler and more accessible terminology in the questionnaire to address the limitation posed by language barriers. For instance, the word 'vowed' could be substituted with 'promised'. Additionally, providing explanations or definitions for difficult words in the questionnaire could also benefit participants who have limited proficiency in English proficiency to provide more accurate responses. However, future researchers need to conduct a validity and reliability test of the modified version with simplified words to ensure compatibility with the original version. Furthermore, if the Chinese version of the questionnaire is available and its reliability and validity have been tested, both the English and Chinese versions of the questionnaire can be included in future studies. It can improve the comprehension of respondents with lower English proficiency, resulting in more accurate responses.

Fourth, future research is recommended to include moderators when investigating the association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction. This is because based on the findings of the present study, a positive but not significant association was found between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction. This weak association between problematic pornography use and relationship satisfaction might indicate

that there is an indirect relationship between the two variables. Including moderators during

the investigation of associations would provide the researchers with extra information about

the association between two variables in quantitative research by explaining what are the

possible features that can cause a stronger, weaker, or even no association between variables

(Allen, 2017). For instance, the study by Floyd et al. (2020) indicated that the association

between pornography use and negative outcomes in both intra- and interpersonal domains is

moderated by the extent to which pornography users hold moral disapproval towards their

own use. Specifically, individuals who use pornography despite their moral disapproval are

more likely to experience increased sexual shame, which can lead to lower levels of sexual

satisfaction followed by lower relationship satisfaction. Therefore, moderating effect is

clearly highlighted to be impactful on the association between variables.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Sample Size Calculation

1) Pornography use and Body Image

$$f^2 = \frac{(0.37)}{1 - (0.37)}$$

$$= 0.5873$$

2) Pornography use and Relationship satisfaction

$$f^2 = \frac{(-0.19)^2}{1 - (-0.19)^2}$$

$$= 0.03745$$

3) Total:

$$f^2 = \frac{0.5873 + 0.03745}{2}$$

$$= 0.312$$

Central and noncentral distributions | Protocol of power analyses

critical F = 3.18261

Test family

F tests

Statistical test

Linear multiple regression: Fixed model, R^2 deviation from zero

Type of power analysis

A priori: Compute required sample size – given α, power, and effect size

Input Parameters

Determine =>	Effect size f^2	0.312
	α err prob	0.05
	Power (1−β err prob)	0.95
	Number of predictors	2

Output Parameters

Noncentrality parameter λ	16.5360000
Critical F	3.1826099
Numerator df	2
Denominator df	50
Total sample size	53
Actual power	0.9514537

Appendix B: Online Survey Form

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Problematic Pornography Use, Body Image and Relationship Satisfaction

Introduction
The present study is conducted to explore problematic pornography use, body image, and relationship satisfaction among young Malaysian adults.

Procedures
Your participation will involve answering 5 sections.
Section A: Demographic Information
Section B: Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale (PPCS-6)
Section C: Body Image-Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-5 (BI-AAQ-5)
Section D: Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)
Section E: Satisfaction With Sex Life Scale (SWSLS)
The amount of time required for your participation will be approximately 5 to 10 minutes.

Confidentiality of information and voluntary participation
All of the personal information you have provided will be remained anonymous and confidential. The information will not be disclosed to any unauthorized party, apart from the researchers. Participation in the current study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time with no penalty. Your responses will be recorded only for research analysis purposes. The findings will be documented in a final-year thesis but all efforts will be made to de-identify participants. Your participation is much appreciated.

Declaration
The eligibility criteria for our study are stated below. Kindly check the boxes below to ensure your eligibility.

☐ I am a Malaysian.

☐ I am currently located in Malaysia.

☐ I am between 18 to 35 years old.

☐ I am in a romantic relationship.

☐ I have watched pornography.

Survey Completion
0% ———————————— 100%

Next

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Personal Data Protection Statement

Please be informed that in accordance with Personal Data Protection Act 2010 ("PDPA") which came into force on 15 November 2013, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman ("UTAR") is hereby bound to make notice and require consent in relation to collection, recording, storage, usage, and retention of personal information.

Notice:

1. The purposes for which your personal data may be used are inclusive but not limited to:-
• For assessment of any application to UTAR
• For processing any benefits and services
• For communication purposes
• For advertorial and news
• For general administration and record purposes
• For enhancing the value of education
• For educational and related purposes consequential to UTAR
• For the purpose of our corporate governance
• For consideration as a guarantor for UTAR staff/ student applying for his/her scholarship/ study loan

2. Your personal data may be transferred and/or disclosed to third party and/or UTAR collaborative partners including but not limited to the respective and appointed outsourcing agents for purpose of fulfilling our obligations to you in respect of the purposes and all such other purposes that are related to the purposes and also in providing integrated services, maintaining and storing records. Your data may be shared when required by laws and when disclosure is necessary to comply with applicable laws.

3. Any personal information retained by UTAR shall be destroyed and/or deleted in accordance with our retention policy applicable for us in the event such information is no longer required.

4. UTAR is committed in ensuring the confidentiality, protection, security and accuracy of your personal information made available to us and it has been our ongoing strict policy to ensure that your personal information is accurate, complete, not misleading and updated. UTAR would also ensure that your personal data shall not be used for political and commercial purposes.

Consent:

1. By submitting this form you hereby authorise and consent to us processing (including disclosing) your personal data and any updates of your information, for the purposes and/or for any other purposes related to the purpose.

2. If you do not consent or subsequently withdraw your consent to the processing and disclosure of your personal data, UTAR will not be able to fulfill our obligations or to contact you or to assist you in respect of the purposes and/or for any other purposes related to the purpose.

3. You may access and update your personal data by writing to us at:
- Hen Zi Wei (michellehenziwei@1utar.my)
- Teeba Suriya a/p Kumar (teebasuriya@1utar.my)
- Wong Wan Ching (wanchingwong0@1utar.my)

Acknowledgment of Notice

○ I, hereby give my full consent to participate in this research study and I understand my personal information will be kept confidential.

○ I **DO NOT** agree to participate in and I wish to leave this research study.

Survey Completion
0% —————————————— 100%

Next

Section A: Demographic Information

What is your gender?

○ Male

○ Female

○ Other (please specify)

[   ]

What is your age?

[   ]

What is your race?

○ Malay

○ Chinese

○ Indian

○ Others (please specify)

[   ]

What is your nationality?

○ Malaysian

○ Non-Malaysian (please specify)

[   ]

Which state are you currently located in?

○ Johor

○ Kedah

○ Kelantan

○ Melaka

○ Negeri Sembilan

○ Pahang

○ Penang

○ Perak

○ Perlis

○ Sabah

○ Sarawak

○ Selangor

○ Terengganu

○ WP Kuala Lumpur

○ WP Labuan

○ WP Putrajaya

Have you watched pornography?

○ No

○ Yes

What is your current relationship status?

○ Single

○ In relationship with same sex

○ In relationship with opposite sex

○ Married

○ Other: Please state

How long have you been in this current relationship? _____months

Months

Are you currently engaging in sexual intercourse with your current partner?

○ Yes

○ No

How often have you engage with pornography in the past month? Select from below:

○ Not at all

○ Once or a few times

○ Once a week

○ A few times a week

○ Every day or almost every day

What is the average amount of time that you spent consuming pornography each time over the past month?

Minutes

Do you think you are addicted to pornography?

○ No. I am not addicted

○ Yes, I am slightly addicted

○ Yes, I am moderately addicted

○ Yes, I am strongly addicted

○ I am not sure

Survey Completion
0% — 100%

Next

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Section B: Problematic Pornography Consumption Scale (PPCS-6)

"Pornography is defined as material (text, picture, video, etc.) that (1) creates or elicits sexual feelings or thoughts and (2) contains explicit exposure or descriptions of sexual acts involving the genitals, such as vaginal or anal intercourse, oral sex, or masturbation."

Instructions: Please think back to the past six months and indicate on the following 7-points scale how often or to what extent the statements apply to you. There is no right or wrong answer. Please indicate the answer that most applies to you.

1 - Never
2 - Rarely
3 - Occasionally
4 - Sometimes
5 - Often
6 - Very often
7 - All the time

	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Occasionally	4 Sometimes	5 Often	6 Very Often	7 All the time
1. I felt that porn is an important part of my life.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
2. I released my tension by watching porn.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
3. I neglected other leisure activities as a result of watching porn.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
4. I felt that I had to watch more and more porn for satisafction.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
5. When I vowed not to watch porn anymore, I could do it only for a short period of time.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
6. I became stressed when something prevented me from watching porn.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Survey Completion
0% ———————————— 100%

Next

Section C: Body Image-Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-5 (BI-AAQ-5)

Instructions: There are 5 items in this scale. Please indicate the degree of trueness for each item using the 1-7 scale, by clicking/tapping on the appropriate number option. The 7 options are as follows:

1 - Never True
2 - Very Seldom True
3 - Seldom True
4 - Sometimes True
5 - Frequently True
6 - Almost Always True
7 - Always True

	1 Never True	2 Very Seldom True	3 Seldom True	4 Sometimes True	5 Frequently True	6 Almost Always True	7 Always True
1. Worrying about my weight makes it difficult for me to live a life that I value.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
2. I shut down when I feel bad about my body shape or weight.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
3. My thoughts and feelings about my body weight and shape must change before I can take important steps in my life.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
4. I will have better control over my life if I can control my negative thoughts about my body.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
5. Feeling fat causes problems in my life.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Survey Completion
0% —————————— 100%

Next

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Section D: Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)

Instructions: A 7-item scale designed to measure general relationship satisfaction. Respondents answer each item using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (low satisfaction) to 5 (high satisfaction).

	1 Low	2	3	4	5 High
1. How well does your partner meet your needs?	○	○	○	○	○
2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?	○	○	○	○	○
3. How good is your relationship compared to most?	○	○	○	○	○
4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?	○	○	○	○	○
5. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?	○	○	○	○	○
6. How much do you love your partner?	○	○	○	○	○
7. How many problems are there in your relationship?	○	○	○	○	○

Survey Completion
0% ████████ 100%

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Section E: Satisfaction With Sex Life Scale (SWSLS)

Instructions: Below are 5 statements about your sexual life, with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responses.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. In most ways my sex life is close to my ideal.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
2. The conditions of my sex life are excellent.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
3. I am satisfied with my sex life.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in sex life.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
5. If I could live my sex life over, I would change almost nothing.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Survey Completion
0% ————————————— 100%

Next

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We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

Survey Completion
0% —————————————— 100%

Appendix C: Histogram

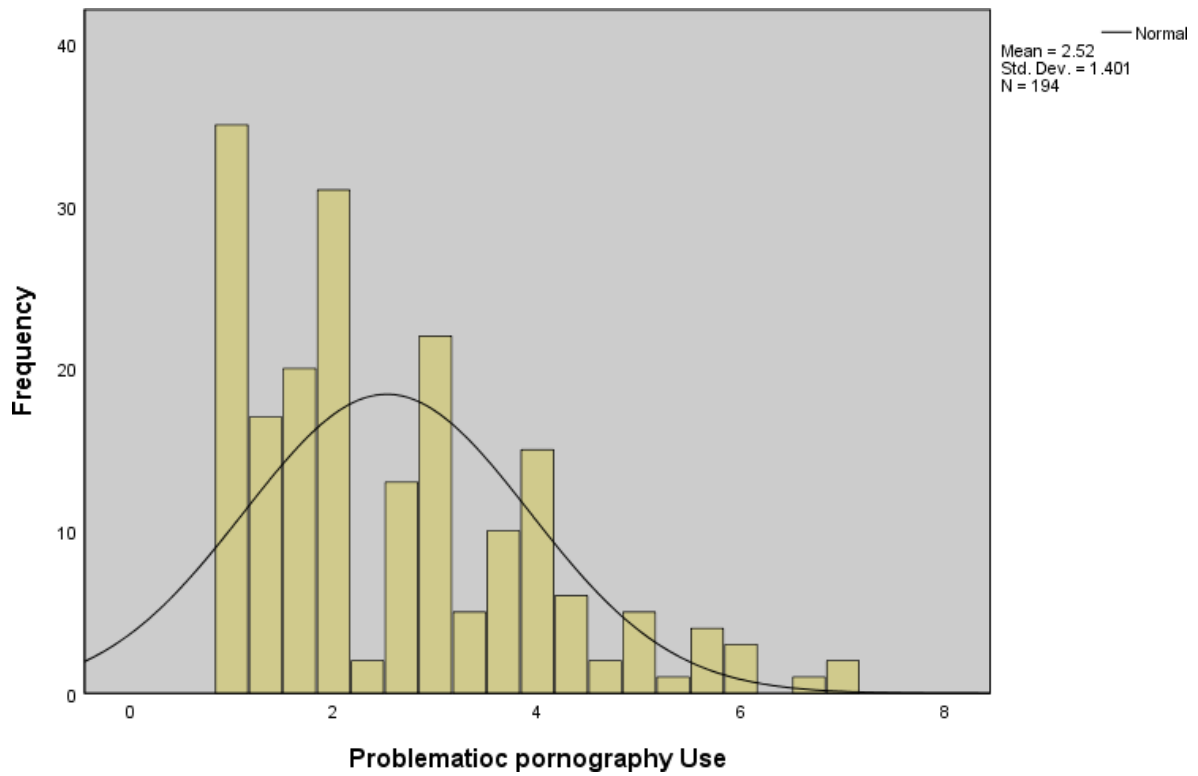**Figure 2.1 Histogram (Problematic pornography Use)**
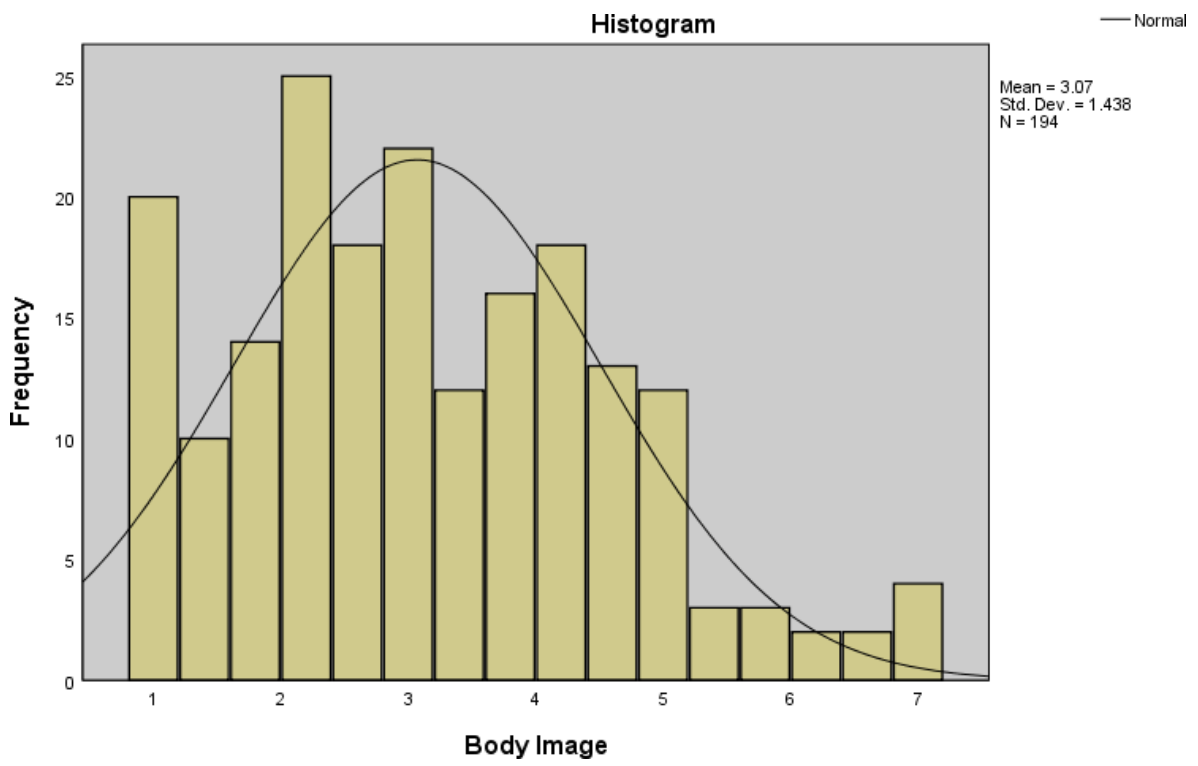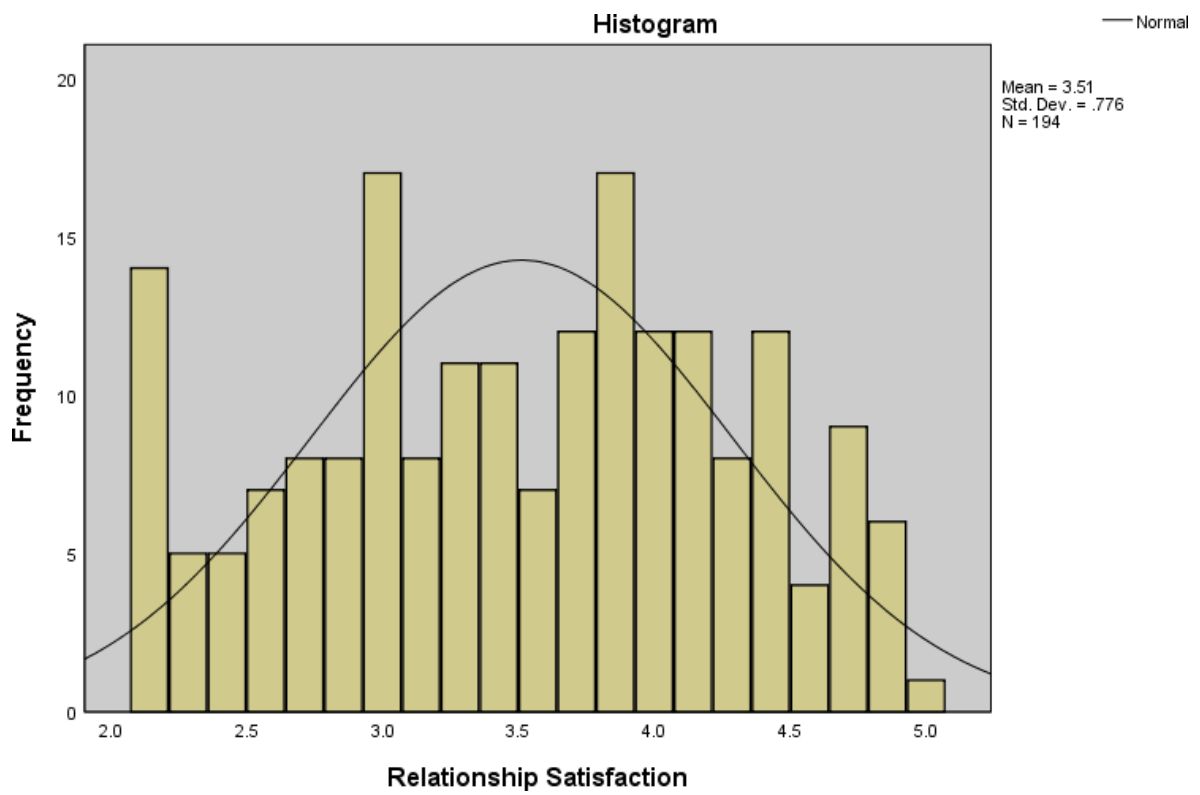
Figure 2.2 Histogram (Body Image)

Figure 2.3 Histogram (Relationship Satisfaction)

Appendix D: Q-Q Plot

Figure 3.1 Q-Q Plot (Problematic Pornography Use)

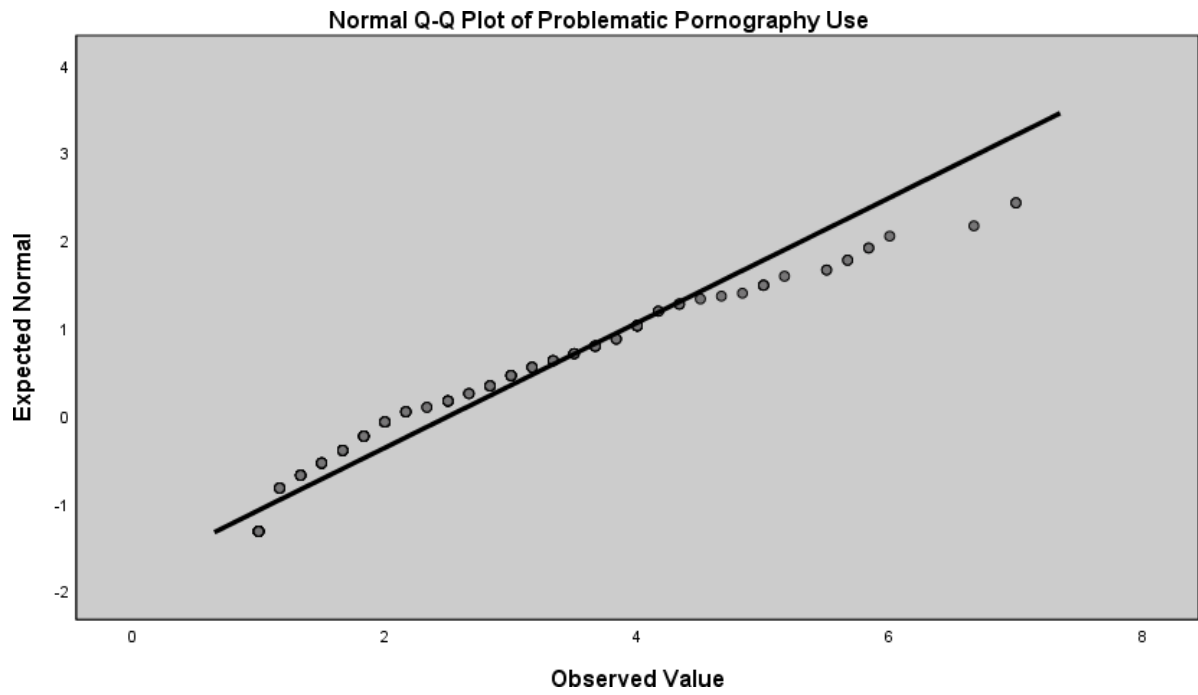Normal Q-Q Plot of Problematic Pornography Use

Figure 3.2 Q-Q Plot (Body Image)

Normal Q-Q Plot of Body Image
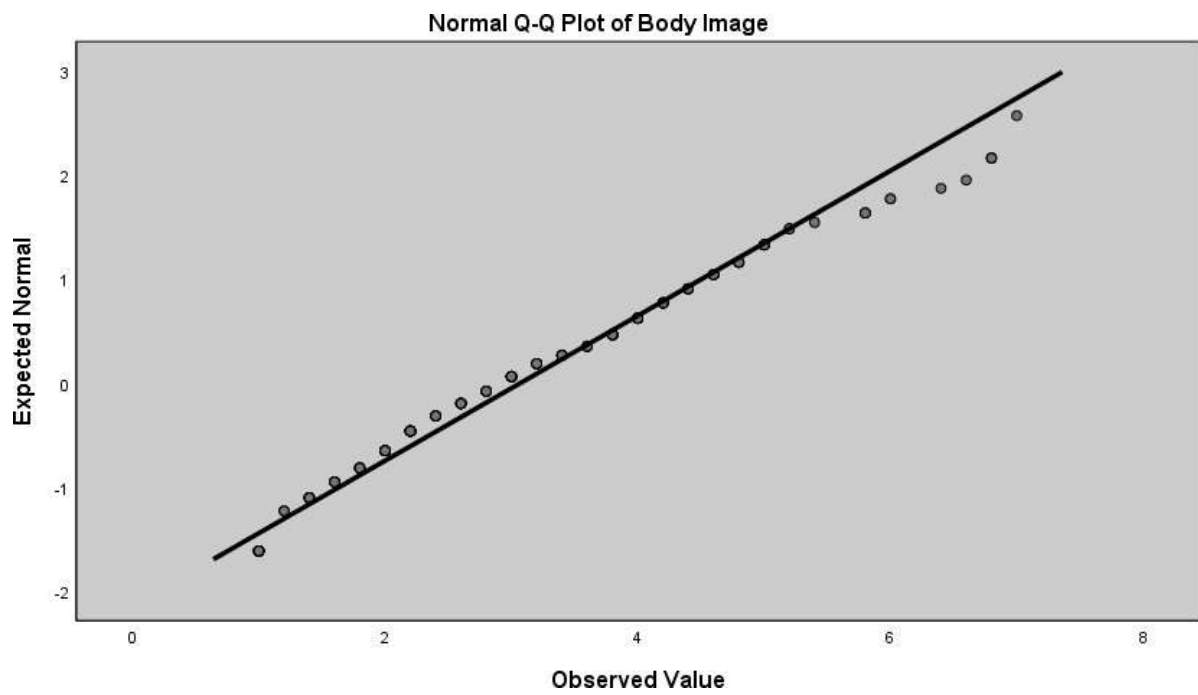
Figure 3.3 Q-Q Plot (Relationship Satisfaction)

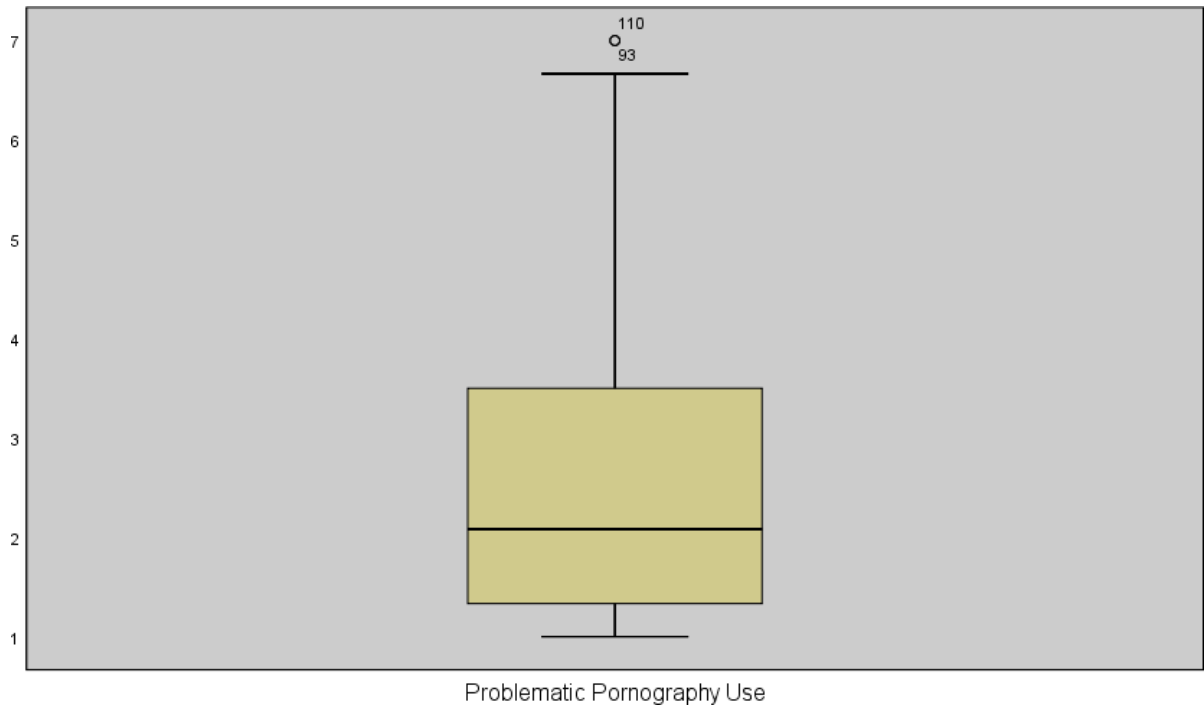Normal Q-Q Plot of Relationship Satisfaction
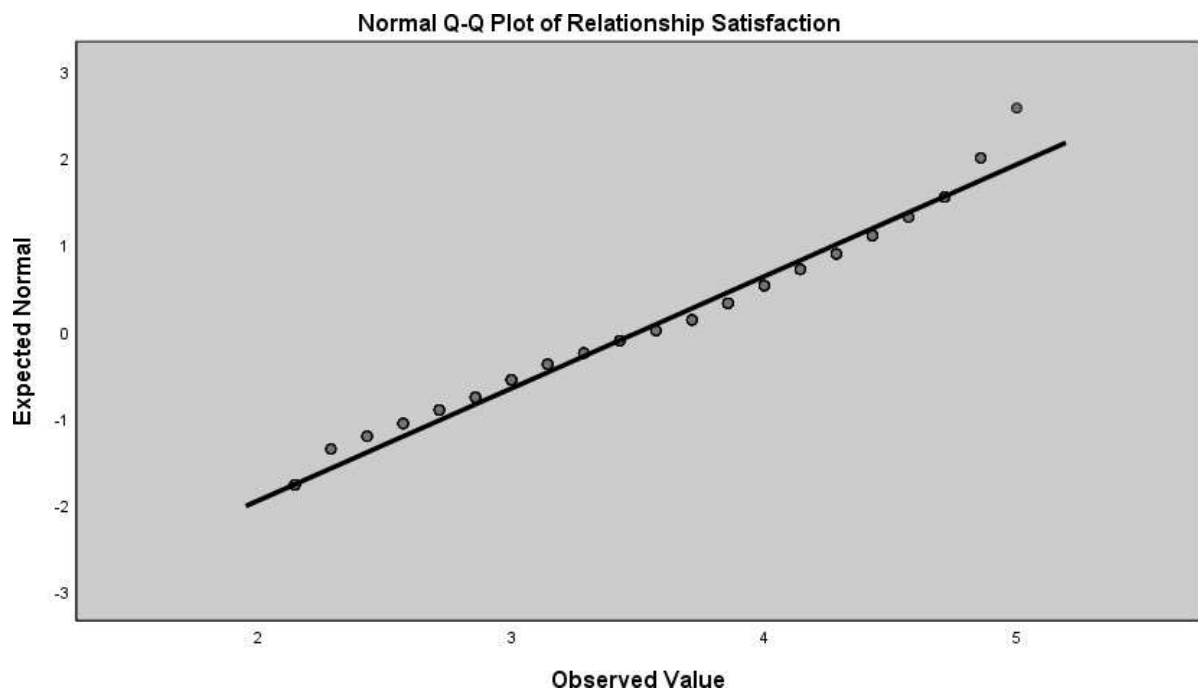
Appendix E: Boxplot

Boxplot (Problematic Pornography Use)

Problematic Pornography Use

Boxplot (Body Image)

Body Image

Boxplot (Relationship Satisfaction)
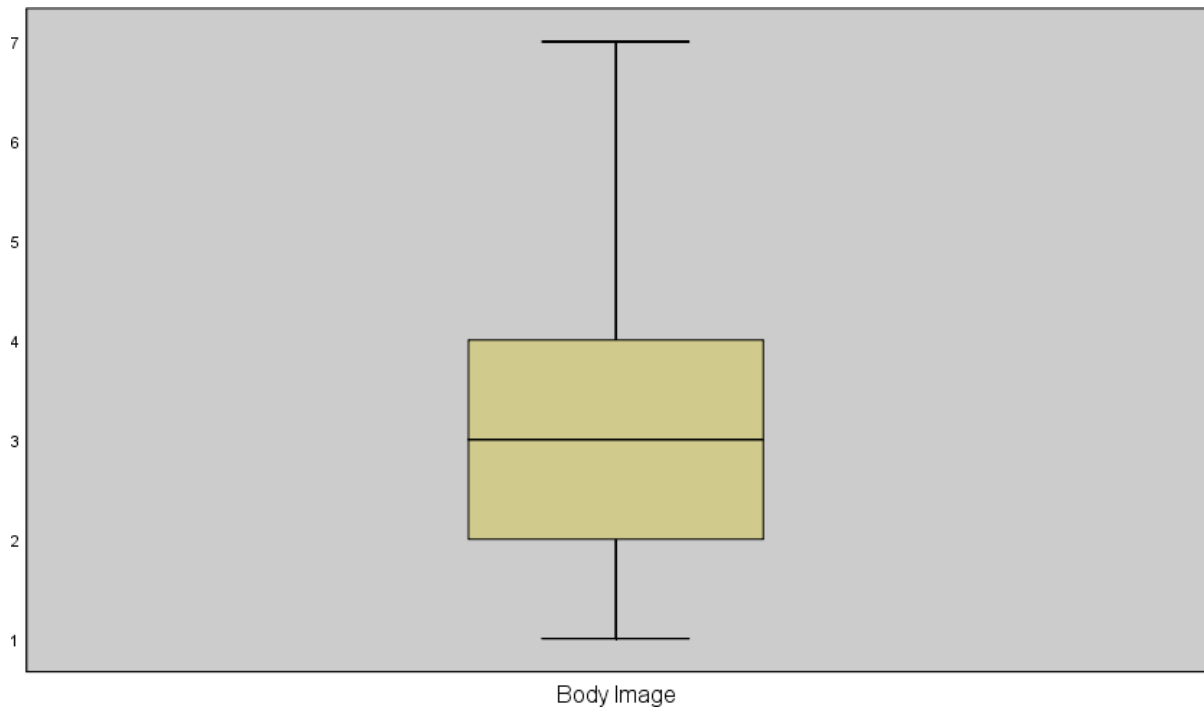
Relationship Satisfaction

Appendix F: Scatterplot

Scatterplot
Dependent Variable: Body Image

Scatterplot

Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction
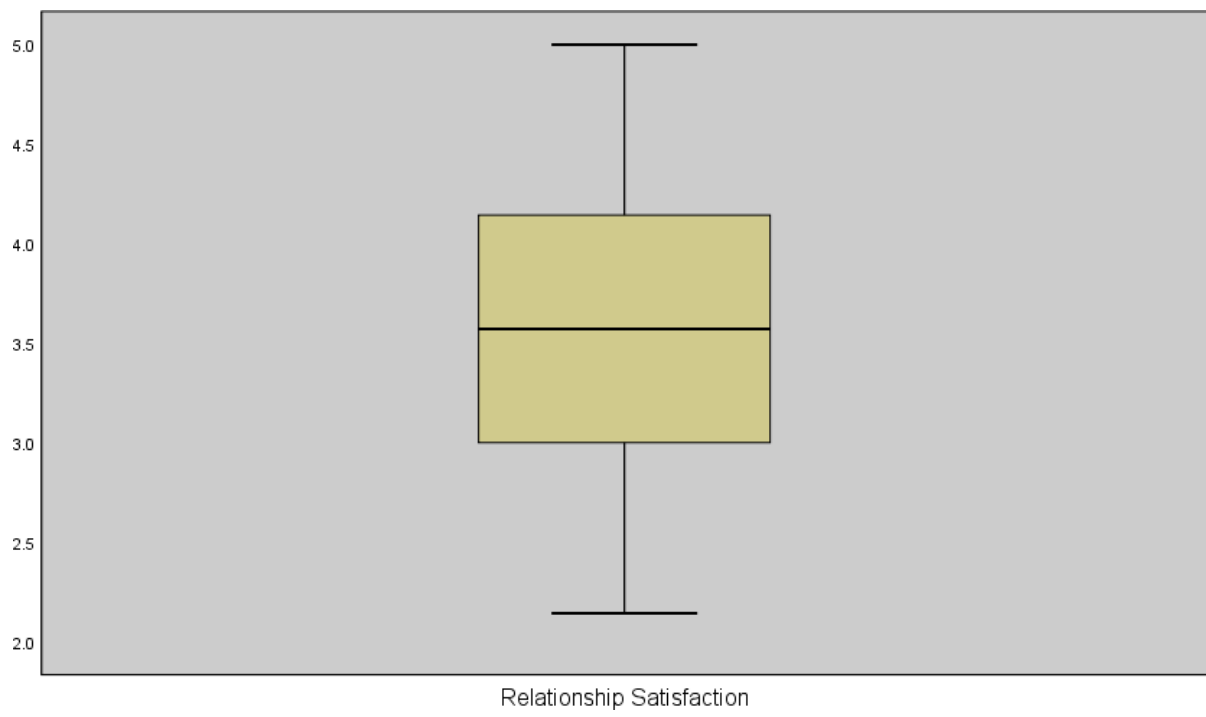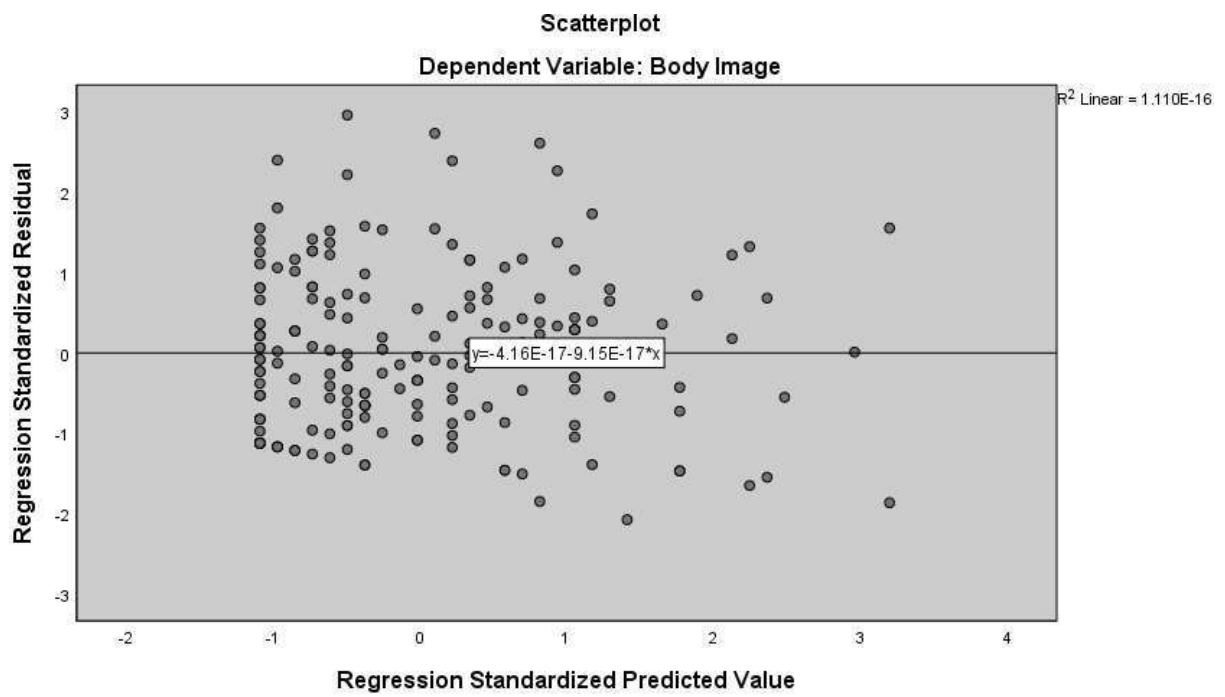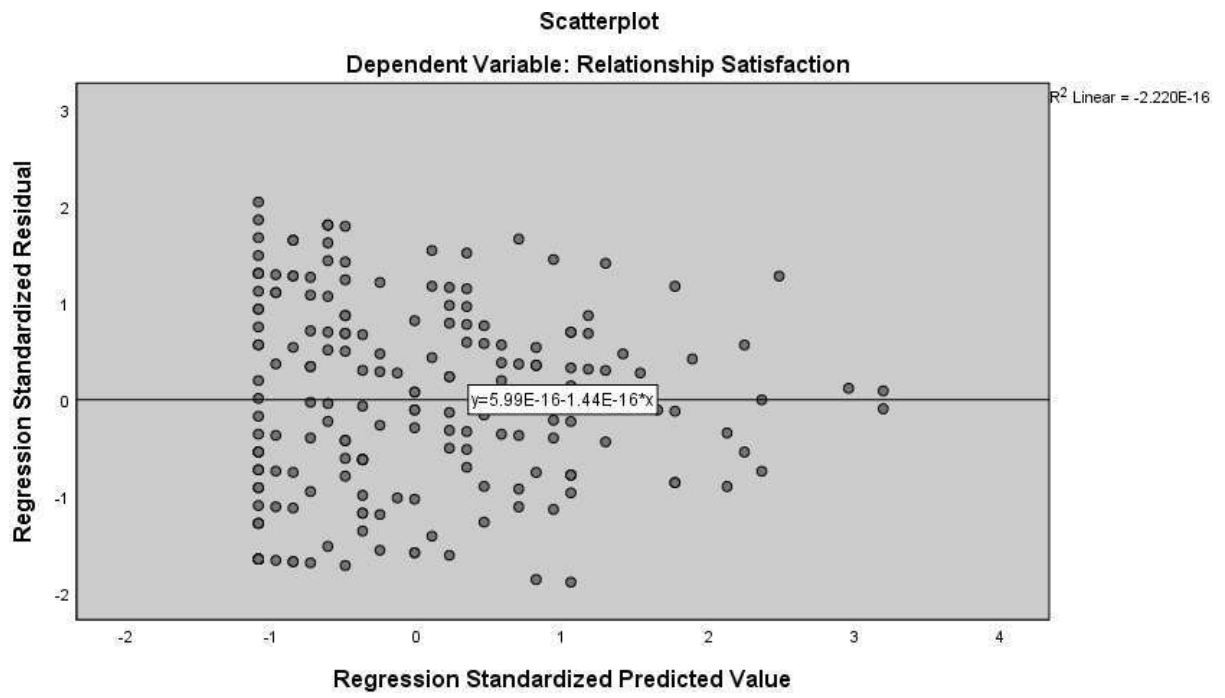
Appendix G: SPSS Output for Normality Assumption Testing

Skewness and Kurtosis

Descriptives

			Statistic	Std. Error
Problematic Pornography Use	Mean		2.52	.101
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	2.32	
		Upper Bound	2.72	
	5% Trimmed Mean		2.41	
	Median		2.08	
	Variance		1.963	
	Std. Deviation		1.401	
	Minimum		1	
	Maximum		7	
	Range		6	
	Interquartile Range		2	
	Skewness		.955	.175
	Kurtosis		.409	.347
Body Image	Mean		3.07	.103
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	2.87	
		Upper Bound	3.27	
	5% Trimmed Mean		3.00	
	Median		3.00	
	Variance		2.067	
	Std. Deviation		1.438	
	Minimum		1	
	Maximum		7	
	Range		6	
	Interquartile Range		2	
	Skewness		.509	.175
	Kurtosis		-.258	.347
Relationship Satisfaction	Mean		3.51	.056
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.40	
		Upper Bound	3.62	
	5% Trimmed Mean		3.51	
	Median		3.57	
	Variance		.602	
	Std. Deviation		.776	
	Minimum		2	
	Maximum		5	
	Range		3	
	Interquartile Range		1	
	Skewness		-.111	.175
	Kurtosis		-.959	.347

Appendix H: SPSS Output for Assumption Testing of Simple Linear Regression

Pearson Correlation

		Problematic Pornography Use	Body Image	Relationship Satisfaction
Problematic Pornography Use	Pearson Correlation	1	.357**	.111
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.124
	N	194	194	194
Body Image	Pearson Correlation	.357**	1	.271**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	194	194	194
Relationship Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.111	.271**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.124	.000	
	N	194	194	194

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Appendix I: SPSS Output for Simple Linear Regression

Problematic Pornography Use and Body Image

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.357[a]	.128	.123	1.346

a. Predictors: (Constant), Problematic Pornography Use

b. Dependent Variable: Body Image

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	50.861	1	50.861	28.060	.000[b]
	Residual	348.014	192	1.813		
	Total	398.874	193			

a. Dependent Variable: Body Image

b. Predictors: (Constant), Problematic Pornography Use

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.145	.199		10.753	.000
	Problematic Pornography Use	.366	.069	.357	5.297	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Body Image

Problematic Pornography Use and Relationship Satisfaction

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.111[a]	.012	.007	.773

c. Predictors: (Constant), Problematic Pornography Use

d. Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.428	1	1.428	2.390	.124[b]
	Residual	114.718	192	.597		
	Total	116.147	193			

c. Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction

d. Predictors: (Constant), Problematic Pornography Use

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.357	.115		29.312	.000
	Problematic Pornography Use	.061	.040	.111	1.546	.124

a. Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction

Appendix J: Ethical Approval for Research Project/Protocol

UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN DU012(A)
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Re: U/SERC/02/2023

10 January 2023

Dr Pung Pit Wan
Head, Department of Psychology and Counselling
Faculty of Arts and Social Science
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
Jalan Universiti, Bandar Baru Barat
31900 Kampar, Perak.

Dear Dr Pung,

Ethical Approval For Research Project/Protocol

We refer to the application for ethical approval for your students' research project from Bachelor of Social Science (Honours) Psychology programme enrolled in course UAPZ3013/UAPZ3023. We are pleased to inform you that the application has been approved under Expedited Review.

The details of the research projects are as follows:

No	Research Title	Student's Name	Supervisor's Name	Approval Validity
1.	Personality Traits and Masculinity as Predictors of Homophobia Among Malaysian Young Men	1. Chiew Yee Kuan 2. Esther Ching Qian Han 3. Ling Chui Hong		
2.	Social Media Use and Self-esteem as Predictors of the Risk of Experimentation with e-cigarettes Among University Students in Malaysia: Peer Influence as Mediator	1. The Xin Rou 2. Tam Jing Yi Evelyn 3. Yap Xue Li	Dr Chie Qiu Ting	
3.	"The Soft Things That We Hold Onto" – A Study on the Association Between Attachment Styles, Presence of Transitional Objects and Psychological Security Among Malaysian Young Adults	1. Poon Ying Ying 2. Chow Yu Ying 3. Sam Hei Man		
4.	The Predicting Effects of Attitudes, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioral Control on the Intention Towards Food Waste Reduction Behavior Among Malaysian Young Adults	1. Chan Hooi Mui 2. Shirley Lok Xiao Rui 3. Tee Hui Lin		10 January 2023 – 9 January 2024
5.	Parent-Child Relationship, Perceived Social Support, and Perceived Discrimination as Predictors of Well-Being Among LGBTQ Emerging Adults in Malaysia	1. Haw Ying Huei 2. Lee Nie 3. Yashnevathy a/p Govindasamy	Dr Gan Su Wan	
6.	Personal Growth Initiative, Self-efficacy and Social Support as Predictors of Life Satisfaction Among Undergraduate Students in Malaysia	1. Diu Jia Suan 2. Chow Wen Chung 3. Tneh Sin Lin		
7.	Self-esteem, Locus of Control and Hopelessness as Predictors of Depression Among University Students in Malaysia	1. Cheang Yen Thing 2. Chuah Yue Xuan 3. Kelvin Goh Wei Jin	Dr T'ng Soo Ting	

MQA

No	Research Title	Student's Name	Supervisor's Name	Approval Validity
8.	Personality Traits and Masculinity as Predictors of Homophobia Among Malaysian Young Man	1. Chiew Yee Kuan 2. Esther Ching Qian Han 3. Ling Chui Hong	Dr Chie Qiu Ting	
9.	Determinants of Psychological Well-being Among Single Young Adults in Malaysia: Attitudes Towards Singlehood, Stereotypes and Social Support	1. Kan Vivian 2. Ngo Da Long 3. Wong Jia Man		
10.	Self-control, Chronotype, and Future Time Perspective as Predictors of Bedtime Procrastination Among Malaysian Young Adults	1. Isaac Lai Lik Jun 2. Leong Syn Jieh 3. Tan Hor Yinn	Dr Nurul Iman Binti Abdul Jalil	
11.	Perceived Stress, Resilience, Self-esteem as Predictors of Life Satisfaction Among University Students in Malaysia	1. Chueh Di-An 2. Hen Cavin 3. Lim Ya Xuan		
12.	The Relationship Between Smartphone Addiction, Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD), and Sleeping Problem (Insomnia) Among Young Undergraduate Students in Malaysia	1. Leong Lerk Yung 2. Liew Yee Hang 3. Shin Bin Shyen		
13.	Pornography Use, Body Image, and Relationship Satisfaction Among Malaysian Young Adults	1. Wong Wan Ching 2. Hen Zi Wei 3. Teeba Suriya a/p Kumar	Dr Ooh Seow Ling	
14.	Anxiety, Social Support and the Association with Psychological Well-Being Among Undergraduate Students	1. Sherine Divya a/p Pabalan 2. Nisa a/p Jothi		
15.	Loneliness and Perceived Social Support as the Predictor of Internet Addiction Among Undergraduates in Malaysia	1. Tan Jia Chyi 2. Tan Tong Yen 3. Vong Yang Yi		
16.	Depression and Self-efficacy as Predictor to Academic Procrastination Among Undergraduate Students in Malaysia	1. Ricken Chung Li Ken 2. Tay Chong Leng 3. Joel Lee Xin Wei	Dr Pung Pit Wan	10 January 2023 – 9 January 2024
17.	Parenting Style as Predictors of Prosocial Behaviours Among Undergraduates in Malaysia	1. Wendy Tan Syn Yao 2. Liong Chu Lam		
18.	Relationship Among Self-control, Grit and Academic Procrastination Among Undergraduates in Malaysia	1. Cheow Pui Kei 2. Lim Jo Yee 3. Yap Yee Qi		
19.	Dark Triad Personality and Moral Disengagement as the Predictors of Cyberbullying Among Undergraduate Students in Malaysia	1. Li Xin Yan 2. Hew Hui Teng 3. Loh Shao Heng	Dr Siah Poh Chua	
20.	The Relationship Between Self-control, Coping Strategy and Online Game Addiction Among Undergraduate Students in Malaysia	1. Lim Chia Huey 2. Lim Shu Yee 3. Tan Shi Wei		
21.	Does Being Angry Dismiss Me from Moral Norm-keeping? An Experimental Study on the Mediating Relationship of Moral Disengagement on Anger and Cyberbullying Intention	1. Chen Win Chuan 2. Tanreet Kaur a/p Sukwinder Singh 3. Wong Puy Lyng		
22.	The Relationship Between Autonomy, Subjective Socioeconomic Status, and Exposure to Alternative Partners on Social Media and Attitude Towards Singlehood Among Adults in Malaysia	1. Chong Yoke Sun 2. Denisha a/p Vislnasan 3. Lahvaanya a/p Pannir Selvem	Dr Tan Chee Seng	
23.	Intimate Partner Violence and Psychological Distress Among Couples in Malaysia: The Role of Stockholm Syndrome	1. Samantha Ng Hui Li 2. Juliana Hoo Ju Yun		
24.	The Mediating Role of Stress Between the Relationship of Perfectionism & Mental Well Being Among Undergraduates in Malaysia	1. Renukaa a/p Siva Kumar 2. Shabeena Yohanes a/p Stevenraj 3. Yugesh a/p Santara Sheeran	Mr Tan Soon Aun	
25.	The Relationship Between Mental Health Literacy, Help-seeking Behaviour, and Socioeconomic Status Among Young Adults in Malaysia	1. Ang Yu Lun 2. Ch'ng Wei Sheng 3. Chua Leewen	Mr Tay Kok Wai	

No	Research Title	Student's Name	Supervisor's Name	Approval Validity
26.	Sex Addiction is Associated with Personality, Social Circles, and Mental Health Issues	1. Loke Win Yi 2. Ng Zhen Le 3. Tey Cre Ying	Mr Tay Kok Wai	
27.	The Relationship Between Body Mass Index (BMI), Social Media Intensity and Body Image on Anxiety Among Youths in Malaysia	1. Angelina Gin Ger Ong 2. Kumetni a/p Gobi 3. Sharley Jesslynna a/p Jeyaseelan		
28.	Family Functioning, Childhood Trauma, and Self-esteem as the Predictors of Social Anxiety Among Malaysian University Students	1. Jivithan a/l Sasidaran 2. Merlena Ann Mariasoosai 3. Sela a/p Sobin Mondal		
29.	Relationship Between Vocal Fatigue, Emotion, and Motivation with Mask-wearing Among Kampar UTAR Educators	1. Celine Tan Si Min 2. Chong Yueen Cheng 3. Loo Xin Yan	Ms Lee Wan Ying	
30.	The Relationship Between Gender Role Attitudes, Attitudes Toward Childbearing, Family Functioning and Attitudes Toward Marriage Among Young Adults in Malaysia	1. Choo May Yan 2. Chloe Ng Chu Yin 3. Claryce Cheong Yong Qing		
31.	A Study on Materialism, Anxiety and Gender Differences in Compulsive Buying Behaviors Among Young Adults in Malaysia	1. Lim Shi Yuan 2. Lim Yit Han 3. Loh Carmen		
32.	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as The Predictor of Emotional Well-being and Resilience Among Undergraduate Students During the COVID-19 Outbreak	1. Darshinee a/p Arudkanth 2. Divya Tharshini a/p Puanthuran 3. Nivethah a/p Kalaiyarasan	Ms Liza Hartini Binti Rusdi	10 January 2023 – 9 January 2024
33.	The Relationship Between Living Standard and Mental Health Literacy Among Youth in Malaysia	1. Su Kailun 2. Chew Weng Kit 3. Vinnosha a/p K Jeyaseelan		
34.	Relationship Between Loneliness, Self-esteem and Binge Eating Among Undergraduates in Malaysia	1. Ong Ting Wei 2. Ng Chien Yi 3. Lim Wei Fang		
35.	The Influence of Job Stress and Resilience on Job Satisfaction Mediated by Work-life Balance Among Lecturers in Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman	1. Lee Jun Kang 2. Foong Wei How 3. Luo Wen	Ms Sanggari a/p Krishnan	
36.	Mindfulness, Resilience, and Work-Family Conflict Predict Job Performance Among Working Adults	1. Teoh Yi Wen 2. Cheah Jie Min 3. Lott Sin Yee		
37.	Compulsive Internet Use, Self-esteem, Self-efficacy as Predictors of Academic Procrastination Among Undergraduate Student	1. Lin Xingyi 2. Wong Xin Lynn 3. Zhan Shuwei	Ms Teoh Xi Yao	
38.	Relationship Between Self-esteem, Loneliness, Stress and Excessive Use of Social Media Among Undergraduate Students in Malaysia	1. Lee Hao Yan 2. Daniel Chow Weng Kin 3. Fong Zhen Yann		
39.	An Exploratory Study on the Impacts of Social Media on Malaysian Young Adults' Psychological Wellbeing	1. Rae Oon El Jin 2. Kelvin Lim Zhi Jian 3. Huang Jing Fei	Pn Wirawahida Binti Kamarul Zaman	
40.	A Case Study: Parenting Practices of Millennial Single Fathers and Its Effects on Children	1. Chua Ng Gie 2. Paige Chee Hui Min 3. Pearl Lee Yi Yao		

The conduct of this research is subject to the following:

(1) The participants' informed consent be obtained prior to the commencement of the research;

(2) Confidentiality of participants' personal data must be maintained; and

(3) Compliance with procedures set out in related policies of UTAR such as the UTAR Research Ethics and Code of Conduct, Code of Practice for Research Involving Humans and other related policies/guidelines.

(4) Written consent be obtained from the institution(s)/company(ies) in which the physical or/and online survey will be carried out, prior to the commencement of the research.

Should the students collect personal data of participants in their studies, please have the participants sign the attached Personal Data Protection Statement for records.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Ts Dr Faidz bin Abd Rahman
Chairman
UTAR Scientific and Ethical Review Committee

c.c   Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Science
       Director, Institute of Postgraduate Studies and Research

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