PORNOGRAPHY CONSUMPTION AND RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

AMONG MARRIED INDIVIDUALS: A MODERATED MEDIATION MODEL

OF SEXUAL SATISFACTION AND GENDER


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## DECLARATION

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## APPROVAL FORM

This research paper attached hereto, entitled "Pornography Consumption and Relationship Satisfaction among Married Couples: A Moderated Mediation Model of Sexual Satisfaction and Gender" prepared and submitted by Tay Xue Jie and Wong Wei Zhong in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) Psychology is hereby accepted.

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## Abstract

The relationship between pornography consumption, sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction remains contentious, with studies showing mixed results. In Malaysia, there is a lack of studies around this topic as sexuality studies are a culturally sensitive topic. Furthermore, prior research often treats sexual satisfaction as a single variable, neglecting the distinction between personal and perceived partner sexual satisfaction. This prompted the present study, which examines the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction among married individuals in Malaysia, with sexual satisfaction (personal and perceived partner) as mediators and gender as a moderator. A cross-sectional survey was conducted, which included 200 Malaysian married adults who had consumed pornography in the past six months, with 59% male participants (n=118) and 41% female participants (n=82). 95% were Chinese (n=190), and 5% were Malay (n=10). Validated scales measured pornography consumption, personal and perceived sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction. Correlation analysis revealed a significant negative association between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction. Moderated mediation analysis conducted using Hayes' PROCESS Model 59 revealed that personal and perceived partner sexual satisfaction did not significantly mediate the relationship overall but showed significant indirect effects for males, with higher pornography consumption linked to lower sexual satisfaction and, in turn, reduced relationship satisfaction. Gender significantly moderated these pathways, with stronger negative effects in men than women. Findings highlight pornography's detrimental impact on relationship satisfaction through sexual satisfaction among Malaysian men, contributing novel insights into a culturally sensitive topic and informing targeted interventions for marital counselling in conservative contexts.

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SATISFACTION AND GENDER

**Keywords:** Pornography Consumption, Relationship Satisfaction, Married Individuals,

Sexual Satisfaction, Gender

**Subject Area:** HQ450-472 Erotica

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Abbreviations

1.   SEIM        Sexually Explicit Internet Material

2.   PC          Pornography Consumption

3.   RS          Relationship Satisfaction

4.   SS          Sexual Satisfaction

5.   COPS-G      Consumption of Pornography Scale-General

6.   RAS         Relationship Assessment Scale

7.   NSSS        New Sexual Satisfaction Scale

8.   SCT         Social Comparison Theory

9.   SST         Sexual Script Theory

10.  SERC        Scientific and Ethical Review Committee

11.  PSS         Personal Sexual Satisfaction

12.  PPSS        Perceived-Partner Sexual Satisfaction

**Chapter I**

**Introduction**

**1.1 Background of Study**

This study provides a comprehensive context for understanding the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction, focusing on the mediating role of sexual satisfaction and the moderating role of gender. This study addresses a significant knowledge gap, particularly in the Malaysian cultural context, where discussions of pornography and sexuality remain taboo. By situating the study within the broader landscape of existing literature, the background highlights why this topic is important and relevant to marital stability and satisfaction.

Marital satisfaction, defined as an individual's subjective assessment of happiness, fulfillment, and pleasure within their relationship (Hawkins, 1968), is a cornerstone of healthy relationships. However, it is increasingly challenged by factors such as pornography consumption, which has gained attention for its potential to influence relationship dynamics (Hutul et al., 2024). With the growing accessibility of sexually explicit internet material (SEIM) globally, pornography consumption has become widespread, raising questions about its effects on married individuals' relationships (Giordano & Cashwell, 2017; Rissel et al., 2017).

Pornography consumption is a common phenomenon among married individuals, yet its impact on relationship satisfaction remains contentious. Some studies suggest that pornography consumption negatively affects relationships by fostering unrealistic expectations, reducing sexual interest in one's partner, or provoking jealousy (Bridges, 2007; Kara-Yakoubian, 2024; Zillmann & Bryant, 1988). Conversely, other research points to its potential benefits, such as enhancing intimacy, promoting sexual experimentation, and

seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how these variables interact, particularly in

non- increasing relationship satisfaction when consumed consensually (Dwulit & Rzymski,

2019; Willoughby et al., 2021).

Sexual satisfaction is often considered a critical mediator in this relationship, as it

influences both pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction (Quinn-Nilas, 2019).

However, existing studies lack clarity in distinguishing between personal sexual satisfaction

and perceived partner sexual satisfaction (Vowels et al., 2022). Personal sexual satisfaction

refers to an individual's feelings about their own sexual experiences, while perceived partner

sexual satisfaction reflects one's beliefs about their partner's fulfillment and happiness. These

nuances are essential for understanding the varying outcomes of pornography consumption

on marital dynamics.

While most research on this topic has been conducted in Western contexts (Böthe et al.,

2021; Collins, 2021; Kirby, 2021), cultural attitudes toward pornography differ significantly

in Malaysia. In this conservative society, shaped by Islamic and traditional values,

pornography is a sensitive topic (Wong, 2012). These cultural norms contribute to a lack of

research on the subject, making it crucial to investigate how pornography consumption

affects relationship satisfaction within the Malaysian context. Furthermore, societal stigma

and biases in self-reporting highlight the need for careful consideration of the cultural and

religious dynamics at play.

This study is guided by the framework that pornography consumption influences

relationship satisfaction through the mediating role of sexual satisfaction. Gender differences

are also integrated into the model as a moderating factor. This moderated mediation model in

Western, conservative cultural settings. Moreover, this research is also guided by the

theoretical framework of social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) and sexual script theory

(Simon & Gagnon, 2003)

In conclusion, this background offers a detailed and descriptive overview of the topic,

summarizing trends in literature, highlighting gaps in the research, and situating the study

within the broader context of marital satisfaction and cultural dynamics. By examining the

mediating role of sexual satisfaction and the moderating role of gender, this study aims to fill

significant gaps in the literature and provide culturally relevant insights into the relationship

between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction among married individuals

in Malaysia.

**1.2 Problem Statement**

The high divorce rate worldwide has been a concern for decades. In Malaysia, the

divorce rate has been observed to rise rapidly over the years (Nizam, 2023). Studies have

found that divorcing often affects couples negatively in multiple aspects, including emotional

stress, financial challenges, societal stigma, social relationships, and legal consequences

(Cabilar & Yilmaz, 2022; Kreyenfeld & Trappe, 2020; Saeed et al., 2022). In addition, the

negative impacts of divorce were observed not only in married individuals but also in their

offspring (Miralles et al., 2021).

Research suggests that pornography consumption can be one of the factors of divorce

due to its negative effect on relationship satisfaction (Perry & Schleifer, 2017). Following the

rise of the internet, pornography has been widespread, making the consumption of sexually

explicit internet material (SEIM) more common than ever (Bridges & Morokoff, 2010;

Lewczuk et al., 2022). Couples committed to relationships were found to consume

pornography (Muusses et al., 2015) regularly. This creates concern about the prevalence of

pornography consumption on relationship satisfaction, which may lead to divorce among

couples. Potential effects found from studies include acts of infidelity, less intimate

connection, and less trust (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Nikmanesh & Ganjali, 2021;

Wright et al., 2017).

However, there are also studies suggesting the positive effects of pornography use on

couples, such as increased sexual knowledge and satisfaction for couples (Hald & Malamuth,

2007; Kohut et al., 2017; Wright et al., 2017). The mixed results in studies indicated that the

link between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction is not direct and clear-

cut but may potentially be mediated and affected by various factors. One of the potential

mediators that has been widely studied in the context of pornography and romantic

relationships is sexual satisfaction. Sexual satisfaction is found to be associated with both

pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction, and the direction of its causal

relationship with the two variables implies its potential role as a mediator. To add on, the

research regarding pornography consumption with sexual satisfaction and relationship

satisfaction consists of mixed findings (Brown et al., 2016). A possible explanation may be

that studies often did not account for the context of pornography use, differences in use

patterns between partners, and differences in satisfaction on individual or couple levels

(Brown et al., 2016). Most past studies have failed to address the complexity of sexual

satisfaction by only measuring sexual satisfaction as a single factor, without accounting for

the differences in individual sexual satisfaction and couple sexual satisfaction. This leads to

different interpretations of results, such as differences in the type of desensitization and social

comparison or the reason for increased sexual satisfaction, regardless of the result of the

study. This shows the importance and need of addressing the differences in personal sexual

satisfaction, and perceived partner sexual satisfaction.

Apart from that, Malaysia has significantly fewer studies on such topics, making studying the context of Malaysia important to fill the knowledge gap. This is because pornography and sexually related topics have always been taboo and sensitive topics in the Malaysian context due to conservative cultural and religious backgrounds. For Muslims, which is the majority religious group in Malaysia, premarital sex is forbidden and is considered a punishable offence (zina).  (Wong, 2012). Even for non-Muslims, such as Chinese and Indians, sex-related issues are still a sensitive and taboo topic for many in Malaysia (Wong, 2012). The tendency to avoid topics like pornography and related topics may often cause underlying problems regarding the topic being overlooked and ignored. This also makes studies revolving around pornography and sex in Malaysia a generally avoided and challenging topic, which explains why there is a lack of studies on the topic, emphasising the need for such studies in the Malaysian context, to fill the knowledge gap. The challenges, including false reports due to social preference and rejection to participate in the study due to societal stigma, also serve as a reason to focus on married individuals instead of unmarried individuals or couples in general.

In addition, gender differences are found to be significantly consistent in pornography studies (Brown et al., 2016). This is primarily due to the differences in the purpose of pornography consumption. Men use pornography mainly for masturbation, while females view it as part of the sex process (Muusses et al.,2015). It's also been discovered that men place more importance on intrapersonal aspects of sex, and women focus more on interpersonal aspects of sex (Stephenson et al., 2021). Hence, it is crucial to account for gender differences in pornography studies. However, it is not clear whether males and females differ in personal sexual satisfaction and partnered sexual satisfaction, as most studies only measure sexual satisfaction as a single variable. This can potentially explain the

mixed results in studies regarding pornography consumption and sexual satisfaction, with some study results indicating a positive relationship, and others indicating a negative relationship. This serves as the reason to account for two types of sexual satisfaction as mediators of this study, which are personal sexual satisfaction, and perceived partner sexual satisfaction.

In short, the high divorce rate caused by relationship dissatisfaction due to pornography consumption, the complexity of the potential mediating role, mixed findings, societal stigma, and lack of research in Malaysia prompted the current study of the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction, as well as the mediating role of sexual satisfaction (personal and perceived partner) among married individuals in Malaysia. Due to the significance of gender differences in most studies, it is also crucial to account for gender differences in pornography studies.

## 1.3 Research Questions

1. Does pornography consumption negatively affect relationship satisfaction among married individuals?

2. Does sexual satisfaction (personal & perceived partner) mediate the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction among married individuals?

3. Do men and women differ in the influence of pornography consumption on relationship satisfaction, via sexual satisfaction (personal & perceived partner) among married individuals?

## 1.4 Research Objectives

This study seeks to fill the research gaps by addressing the following research objectives:

1. To examine the association between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction among married individuals.

2. To investigate the mediating role of sexual satisfaction in the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction among married individuals.

3. To analyze gender differences in the impact of pornography consumption on relationship satisfaction via sexual satisfaction among married individuals.

**1.5 Hypotheses**

$H_1$: Pornography consumption is negatively associated with relationship satisfaction among married individuals.

$H_{2a}$: Personal sexual satisfaction mediates the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction among married individuals, such that increased pornography consumption leads to lower sexual satisfaction, which in turn lowers relationship satisfaction.

$H_{2b}$: Perceived partner sexual satisfaction mediates the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction among married individuals, such that increased pornography consumption leads to lower sexual satisfaction, which in turn lowers relationship satisfaction.

$H_{3a}$: For married men, pornography consumption negatively affects relationship satisfaction through personal sexual satisfaction than for married women.

$H_{3b}$: For married men, pornography consumption negatively affects relationship satisfaction through perceived partner sexual satisfaction than for married women.

**1.6 Significance of the Study**

The current study helps gain more insights into underlying mechanisms behind pornography use, sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction, which help marriage

consultants, couple therapists, counsellors and scholars in designing specific interventions to

help their clients manage marital and couple issues related to said topic. The more specific

details regarding different types of sexual satisfaction (i.e., personal and perceived partner)

make it clearer for a counsellor to understand and interpret their client's situations. This can

indirectly help the decreasing divorce rate, especially in Malaysia.

This study provides further insights into the complex relationship between

pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction, clearing the doubts of some mixed

results from previous studies by assessing sexual satisfaction and explaining the underlying

mechanisms. The examination of two specific mediators, which are personal sexual

satisfaction and perceived partner sexual satisfaction, provides a more accurate interpretation

of results. It also provides empirical data for theories, including social comparison theory and

sexual script theory. In addition, this study also contributed to the knowledge gap in

pornography studies in Malaysia.

## 1.7 Definition of Terms

### 1.7.1 pornography consumption.

***conceptual definition.***

The use or viewing of sexually explicit materials such as images, videos, or literature

that depict sexual activity or nudity for the purpose of sexual arousal (McKee et al., 2019;

Tan et al., 2022).

***operational definition.***

Pornography consumption will be measured using the Consumption of Pornography

Scale-General (COPS-G) developed by Hatch et al. (2023). A higher score on the COPS-G

typically indicates greater frequency or intensity of pornography consumption.

**1.7.2 relationship satisfaction.**

*conceptual definition*

A personal assessment of the quality of a romantic relationship evaluates its positive

and negative aspects (Fallis et al., 2016; Freihart et al., 2023; Lawrance & Byers, 1995).

Similarly, relationship satisfaction is described as an individual's overall assessment of their

relationship, which includes how well their needs, desires for love, and expectations are

fulfilled (Gerlach et al., 2020).

*operational definition*

Relationship satisfaction will be measured using the Relationship Assessment Scale

(RAS) developed by Hendrick (1988). Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction with one's

relationship.

**1.7.3 sexual satisfaction.**

*conceptual definition*

The enjoyment and satisfaction people feel from sexual activities, whether alone or

with a partner, include fantasies or self-stimulation (Werner et al., 2023). Personal sexual

satisfaction is the individual's evaluation of their own sexual experiences. However,

perceived partner sexual satisfaction refers to an individual's perception or belief about their

partner's level of sexual fulfillment and contentment (Vowels et al., 2022). Moreover, it plays

a key role in sexual health and is closely connected to relationship satisfaction (Pascoal et al.,

2014).

*operational definition*

Sexual satisfaction will be measured using the New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS)

developed by Stulhofer et al. (2011).  The scale consists of two subscales: the Ego-Centered

subscale, which measures personal sexual satisfaction, and the Partner/Sexual Activity-

Centered subscale, which measures perceived partner sexual satisfaction. High scores on

Ego-Centered Subscale reflect high levels of personal sexual satisfaction, including positive

perceptions of one's own body, arousal, and overall physical pleasure. Similarly, high scores

on Partner/Sexual Activity-Centered Subscale indicate strong satisfaction with sexual

interactions involving a partner, including emotional connection, communication, and mutual

fulfilment during sexual activities.

**Chapter II**

**Literature Review**

**2.1 Pornography Consumption and Relationship Satisfaction**

The relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction has been studied extensively in different settings and contexts. With multiple studies having contradicting results, it is a complex topic for research. Some studies indicate that pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction are negatively associated, while others found that there are neutral or positive associations between the two.

According to most studies, pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction are found to be negatively related (Barnes, 2017; Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Wright et al., 2017). Pornography consumption causes lower interpersonal satisfaction, which includes relational and sexual satisfaction (Wright et al., 2017). It was revealed that high pornography consumption will lead to lower relationship satisfaction mainly due to comparison with pornography actresses who have better physical appearance and sexual performance than their partner (Wright et al., 2017). Multiple literature states that people who are committed and invested in their partner are satisfied in their relationship, and pornography may lower relational satisfaction by replacing partnered sex through the devaluation of intimate sexual connection, and preference for pornographic over partnered sexual excitement due to upward comparison (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Wright et al., 2017). Pornography use can also lead to a higher chance of behaviour and situations such as secretive use of pornography, perceived infidelity by a partner, and pursuing extramarital relationships (Kohut et al., 2017; Wright et al., 2017; Muusses et al., 2015). This causes reduced trust and emotional intimacy, increased conflict, and more negative feelings towards the partner, which ultimately leads to lower relationship satisfaction (Willoughby et al., 2015; Wright et al., 2017).

In contrast, some studies hold a positive standpoint, stating that pornography consumption can increase relationship satisfaction instead of decreasing it (Maddox et al., 2011; Minarcik et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2017). It was argued that pornography use provides sexual education to users, enhancing their confidence and sex life (Hald & Malamuth, 2007). Another finding stated that shared use of pornography in couples can boost relationship satisfaction by enhancing sexual activity in a romantic relationship (Maddox et al., 2011; Minarcik et al., 2016). However, these studies are heavily dependent on a specific context, including shared use of pornography between couples and partners acceptance, and are highly moderated by factors such as gender and user intention of pornography. The complicated association between numerous specific factors make it difficult to directly conclude that pornography consumption increases relationship satisfaction. A meta-analysis from Wright et al. (2017) stated that regardless of study methods, studies with a lower chance of provoking defensive reactions of participants reported that consuming pornography was associated with lower interpersonal satisfaction, and it is unlikely that increased pornography use will increase satisfaction.

To conclude, the studies on the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction have mixed results, including both negative and positive results significantly. For negative results, there exist differences in explanations, including less intimate sexual connection, infidelity, and so on. For positive results, the difference in explanations included more confidence in sex and more sexual activity. This actively demonstrates the inconsistencies in findings and explanations resulting from research gaps, including cultural context, gender differences, sexual functioning, and motivation for pornography consumption, as most studies often overlook these factors.

**2.2 Pornography Consumption and Sexual Satisfaction**

Pornography consumption and sexual satisfaction on the individual level are found to be negatively related in most studies, with most cited reasons including upward social comparison and expectations (Abdi et al., 2024; Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Brown et al., 2016; Leonhardt & Willoughby, 2019; Nikmanesh & Ganjali, 2021; Willoughby et al., 2015; Willoughby et al., 2020; Wright et al., 2017). Social comparison theory and sexual script theory were often used to explain the effect of reduced sexual satisfaction in related studies (Wright et al., 2017).

### 2.2.1 pornography consumption and personal sexual satisfaction.

Studies on pornography consumption on personal or intrapersonal sexual satisfaction have mixed results, with some findings suggesting that it can cause desensitization, lower body image, sexual compulsion, and guilt, while others suggest that it can boost sexual self-esteem and increase excitement (Cotigă & Dumitrache, 2015; Paslakis et al., 2020; Privara & Bob, 2023).

Due to more exciting stimuli in pornography, repetitive pornography consumption will lead to desensitization as they require more intense content to get aroused. As they spend more time and effort consuming extreme pornography, it can cause negative thoughts and behaviour, including sexual compulsion, addiction, depression, guilt, and psychological distress, which may lead to lower sexual satisfaction (Hutul & Karner-Hutuleac, 2024; Privara & Bob, 2023). Body image and sexual self-esteem also decrease when individuals perceive their bodies and skills to be less attractive and competitive than those of pornography actresses, leading to sexual dissatisfaction.

However, there are also positive correlations stating that pornography can increase sexual satisfaction through the enhancement of knowledge (Hald & Malamuth, 2007). With higher pornography exposure, their sexual self-esteem is increased, which indicates higher sexual satisfaction (Kvalem et al., 2014). However, this view fails to account for the context of pornography use and assumes that people use pornography for learning and love-making purposes. While this may be true for most women, as most women do use pornography for love-making purposes as opposed to most men who use it for masturbatory purposes, this is not generalizable. There exist other results in the opposite direction (Bridges & Morokoff, 2010; Leonhardt & Willoughby, 2019; Muusses et al., 2015; Wright et al., 2017), stating that women use pornography to avoid negative emotions (Abdi et al., 2024; Nikmanesh & Ganjali, 2021). This indicates that pornography only has a positive impact when people use it specifically for love-making purposes by enhancing knowledge and increasing self-esteem, regardless of gender. However, most men use it for masturbatory purposes, and not all women use it for love-making purposes, meaning the results might not be significant across different contexts and groups. From this, we can conclude that past studies which suggested that pornography usage decreases sexual satisfaction are more significant as compared to the opposing view. This is because the adverse effects are more generalizable across different groups, while the positive effects are highly specific and influenced by gender and the purpose of pornography consumption. Even if most females use pornography for learning and love-making purposes, there exist mixed results, and the difference can be due to the lesser consumption of pornography among females compared to males (Blais-Lecours et al., 2016; Peck et al., 2005).

**2.2.2 pornography consumption and partnered sexual satisfaction.**

According to Wright et al. (2017), social comparison theory plays a crucial role when individuals compare their sex life with pornography. Compared to their partners, pornography users find pornography material to be preferable or superior in physical appearance, performance, and enthusiasm, which leads to decreased sexual satisfaction. Sexual script theory, a social construct that addresses what sex is and how sex should unfold for individuals, is influenced by pornography consumption (Wright et al., 2017). As ideally planned and extraordinary sexual encounters and situations depicted in pornography alter one's sexual script, individuals might form unrealistic expectations of their partner, which, when not met, will lead to disappointment and sexual dissatisfaction (Blais-Lecours et al., 2016; Willoughby et al., 2015). A preference for pornographic over paired sexual excitement, a devaluation of intimate sexual communication, a decrease in coupled sex because of masturbatory displacement, and upward comparisons between one's own sex life and sex in pornography are all possible mediators of this relationship (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022). Due to more exciting stimuli in pornography, repetitive pornography consumption can also lead to sexual desensitization in real-life sex, as they are more turned on by pornography's more ideal sexual scripts, causing them to be dissatisfied due to less pleasure (Cotigă & Dumitrache, 2015).

Although shared use of pornography between couples can enhance sexual intimacy and sex life, it is highly dependent on the fact that it is used by couples together to make love (Maddox et al., 2011; Minarcik et al., 2016). Moreover, it is not clear whether the adverse effect of social comparison and sexual script does not apply to this situation. There is also a tendency to falsely report their sexual satisfaction due to social desirability.

From this, we can also see that the adverse effects of pornography use on perceived partner sexual satisfaction outweigh the positive effects, which supports our hypothesis that pornography consumption is negatively related to perceived partner sexual satisfaction.

**2.3 Sexual Satisfaction and Relationship Satisfaction**

According to Byers (2005), sexual satisfaction and relationship satisfaction are found to be positively associated. Sexual satisfaction is one of the most crucial factors in relationship satisfaction between married individuals. For both men and women, sexual satisfaction was found to be positively associated with relationship satisfaction (Peck et al., 2005; Sprecher, 2002).

Sexual satisfaction, which is caused by reasons such as devaluation of intimate sexual communication, and upward comparisons between one's own sex life and sex in pornography, also brings adverse effects to relationships, including a decrease in coupled sex which is detrimental to relationships as sex is an important component in a happy relationship (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Park et al., 2023). Low sexual satisfaction motivates the pursuit of sexual alternatives such as masturbatory displacement, cheating, and lying, which is detrimental to relationship satisfaction as it can cause arguments, mistrust, and less intimate communication (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Doran & Price, 2014; Muusses et al., 2015; Poulsen et al., 2013). According to Litzinger and Gordon (2005), sexual satisfaction acts as a mitigating factor of the impact of poor communication on relationship satisfaction. This indirectly implies that high sexual satisfaction can help avoid relationship dissatisfaction through intimacy.  To add on, sexual desensitization in real-life sex, which is one of the causes of sexual dissatisfaction, may cause sexual problems such as premature or delayed ejaculation, lesser passion in real-life sex, and even erectile dysfunction, which is further

decreases sexual dissatisfaction, and are negatively associated with relationship satisfaction

(Abdel-Hamid & Ali, 2017; Cotigă & Dumitrache, 2015).

To conclude, the findings regarding the relationship between sexual satisfaction and

relationship satisfaction are consistent, proving the significant positive effect of sexual

satisfaction on relationship satisfaction. The greater the joy of sexual engagement, the more it

leads to more enjoyable sex, which is crucial for a happy relationship (Park et al., 2023).

**2.4 Sexual Satisfaction as a Mediator**

Sexual satisfaction has been considered as a mediator in numerous studies in the

context of pornography and romantic relationships (Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Meltzer et al.,

2010). It was stated that pornography consumption can increase relationship satisfaction

instead of decreasing it through means of increasing sexual satisfaction (Wright et al., 2017).

Multiple studies have examined the mediating role of sexual satisfaction in correlates of

marital satisfaction (Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Meltzer et al., 2010). Meltzer et al. (2010)

found that sexual satisfaction mediated the relationship between self-perception of sexual

attractiveness and marital satisfaction, which is closely related to the current study. The

potential mediating role of sexual satisfaction between pornography consumption and

relationship satisfaction can be explained using social comparison theory and sexual

satisfaction theory.

Social comparison theory posits that people evaluate themselves, their partners, and

their relationships against those of others (Wright et al., 2017). When people evaluate

themselves, partner, and their relationship by comparing them with the standards of

pornography, they may look into factors such as own body image, partner's sexual

attractiveness, and sexual performance, which are important components relating to self and

perceived partner sexual satisfaction. When they are dissatisfied with these factors due to

upward comparisons, this leads to behaviour such as lesser sex with the partner, displacement

of sex with masturbation, and even infidelity act, which leads to situations, such as less

intimate connection, less trust, and more conflict, leading to relationship dissatisfaction

(Barnes, 2017; Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Willoughby et al., 2015). From this, we can

see that sexual dissatisfaction can be used to explain the relationship between pornography

and relationship satisfaction due to social comparison.

Sexual script theory indicates that higher consumption of pornography makes people

have unrealistic expectations as to how sex should unfold (Wright et al., 2017). These

unrealistic sexual fantasies cause people to expect more from their partner than is unlikely to

be met due to realistic issues such as the partner's comfort or mutual relationship values.

When the actual sexual behaviour does not align with their sexual scripts, it leads to

decreased intimacy, more conflicts, and upward comparisons, which are all causes of

relationship dissatisfaction (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Wright et al., 2017). This shows

that sexual script theory can explain how sexual satisfaction mediates the relationship

between pornography and relationship satisfaction due to social comparison.

Due to the strong predictive nature of sexual satisfaction on relational satisfaction,

any effect of pornography on sexual satisfaction likely affects relationship satisfaction

(Bridges & Morokoff, 2011). It was implied that there is no significant difference in the

association between pornography consumption and sexual satisfaction, and the association

between pornography consumption and relational satisfaction. The direct effects of

pornography on relational satisfaction, as mentioned above, are also in line with the effect of

sexual satisfaction on relationship satisfaction, such as sex displacement by masturbating and

infidelity (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Doran & Price, 2014; Poulsen et al., 2013). From

the review of the literature above, it can be observed that multiple overlapping mechanisms

behind how relationship satisfaction can be affected by pornography consumption and sexual

satisfaction from the lens of social comparison and sexual scripts. pornography consumption

and sexual satisfaction can both cause infidelity, preference for masturbation, dissatisfaction

with sex life, and devaluation of intimate connection, which ultimately leads to relationship

dissatisfaction.

Looking at the direction and association of sexual satisfaction in the relationship

between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction, it is clear that it can serve as

an explanation for their relationship, playing the crucial role of a mediator.

**2.5 Gender as a Moderator**

Past studies have shown that males and females have significant differences in terms

of correlates between pornography consumption, sexual satisfaction, and relationship

satisfaction. Through meta-analysis, Wright et al. (2017) found that gender significantly

moderated the relationship between pornography consumption and interpersonal satisfaction,

which indicates relational and sexual satisfaction. On average, pornography negatively affects

men's sexual and relationship satisfaction, different from women's sexual and relationship

satisfaction, who are less affected (Wright et al., 2017).  In general, women tend to use less

pornography due to social desirability bias, with more shame associated with pornography

use by women compared to men (Blais-Lecours et al., 2016).

Studies showed that men and women generally have different intentions in using

pornography, with men using it for masturbation purposes and women using it for love-

making enhancement. This is because pornography use causes the wife to try new sexual

behaviors which match the husband's internal sexual scripts, increasing relationship

satisfaction for both sides through intimate sexual connection (Brown, 2016).

Sex is a more important factor for men in determining relationship satisfaction. According to Yoo et al. (2013), wives' relationship satisfaction was not associated with their husbands' sexual satisfaction, while husbands tended to report high levels of relationship satisfaction when their wives reported greater sexual satisfaction. From this, we can see that sexual satisfaction can be considered as a more important aspect for men compared to women in relationship satisfaction. It is also reported that female individuals and partnered pornography use both can increase males' sexual satisfaction, as contrary to males. We can see that the negative impact of pornography consumption on sexual and relationship satisfaction is significantly more prominent in males due to the different purposes of pornography use, as discussed earlier.

As such, it is crucial to consider gender as a moderator factor in a study to avoid misinterpretations and confusing results.

## 2.6 Theoretical Framework

The present study's framework is supported by two theories, which include social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) and sexual script theory (Simon & Gagnon, 2003).

***Social Comparison Theory.*** Social comparison theory (SCT) was first proposed by Leon Festinger in 1954. It suggests that individuals evaluate themselves by comparing their attributes, behaviors, and achievements to those of others. This comparison process can shape self-perception, self-esteem, and personal satisfaction. Within the context of pornography consumption among married individuals, SCT offers insight into how exposure to idealized depictions of bodies, sexual performances, and relationship dynamics in pornography may affect relationship satisfaction (i.e., Wright et al., 2021).

When individuals consume pornography, they may subconsciously compare their own bodies, sexual experiences, or relationships with the hyper-sexualized, often unrealistic portrayals they see onscreen (i.e., Gewirtz-Meydan et al., 2024). For example, seeing idealized physical traits or exaggerated sexual performances may lead to dissatisfaction with one's own body, sexual prowess, or partner. This dissatisfaction, driven by comparison, can undermine both sexual satisfaction and overall relationship satisfaction, as individuals feel they or their relationship does not "measure up."

Furthermore, SCT helps explain why these effects might be affected by gender. Research indicates that men and women often respond differently to comparison-based cues in media, with men generally focusing on performance and physical expectations and women often feeling pressure to meet certain beauty or desirability standards (i.e., Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Hald, 2006). Consequently, gender could influence how pornography consumption impacts satisfaction through social comparison, with men and women experiencing different pressures and resulting impacts on self-esteem, sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction.

***Sexual Script Theory.*** Sexual Script Theory, originally introduced by Simon and Gagnon in 2003, proposes that individuals' sexual behaviors and attitudes are shaped by culturally transmitted "scripts" that dictate expectations about how sexual encounters should unfold. These scripts include societal beliefs about gender roles, relationship dynamics, and what constitutes acceptable sexual behavior. Within the context of pornography consumption, Sexual Script Theory suggests that pornography serves as a source of sexual scripts, teaching viewers norms and expectations about sexuality, intimacy, and attraction.

Sexual scripts are gender-specific, with differing expectations for sexual behavior between men and women (Sakaluk et al., 2014; Tan et al., 2022). Pornography often portrays

stereotyped gender roles, with men depicted as dominant and assertive, while women are often shown as submissive and eager to please. These portrayals reinforce certain sexual scripts that viewers may internalize, consciously or subconsciously, as norms or ideals. For married individuals, these internalized scripts can shape expectations around sexual experiences, influencing what they believe is "normal" or desirable within their relationship. If these expectations are based on unrealistic or exaggerated pornographic depictions, individuals may experience frustration or dissatisfaction when their real-life experiences do not align with these scripts.

Sexual Script Theory also provides insight into how sexual satisfaction might mediate the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction (i.e., Stulhofer et al., 2007). If individuals adopt scripts from pornography that create unrealistic expectations, they may experience dissatisfaction with the quality or frequency of sex in their marriage, leading to lower sexual satisfaction. Gender may influence this effect, as men and women are often socialized to adopt different sexual scripts. Men may feel pressure to meet performance standards, while women may feel the need to align with attractiveness and desirability standards depicted in pornography, both of which could lead to dissatisfaction if these scripts clash with reality.

**2.7 Conceptual Framework**

The moderated double mediation model is presented in Figure 1. Specifically, Sexual satisfaction (i.e., personal and perceived partner) is hypothesized to mediate the direction association between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction. Meanwhile, gender acts as a moderator across the hypothetical mediation model.

**Figure 1**

*Moderated Multiple Mediation Model of Sexual Satisfaction and Gender*
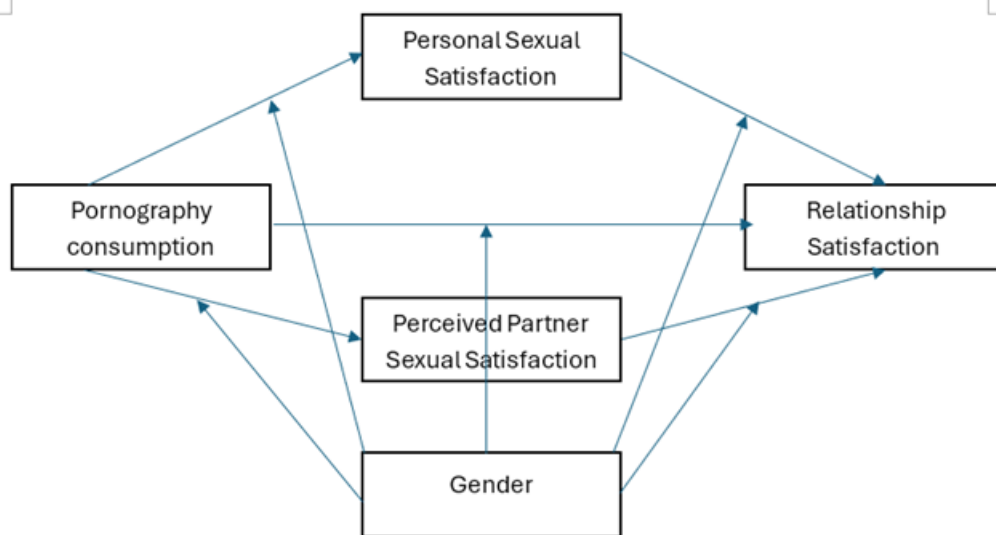
## Chapter III

## Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

This study investigated the relationship between pornography consumption and

relationship satisfaction among married individuals, incorporating a moderated mediation

model. Sexual satisfaction was posited as a mediator in the relationship between pornography

consumption and relationship satisfaction, while gender was considered a potential

moderating variable. The research aimed to explore how pornography consumption impacted

relationship satisfaction indirectly through sexual satisfaction and whether these effects

differed by gender. This model provided a nuanced understanding of how individual and

relational dynamics interacted to influence marital satisfaction.

The study utilized a quantitative approach to examine the relationships among

pornography consumption, sexual satisfaction, relationship satisfaction, and gender.

Quantitative methods allowed for the precise measurement of variables and the use of

statistical modelling to test the moderated mediation hypothesis.

Moreover, a cross-sectional design was employed, collecting data from participants at a

single point in time (Wang & Cheng, 2020). This design was well-suited for identifying

relationships and interactions between variables, though causation cannot be inferred.

The research was correlational. It referred to a statistical measure that described the

degree to which two variables were related to each other (Rodgers, 1959). This research

focused on identifying the associations between pornography consumption, sexual

satisfaction, relationship satisfaction, and gender.

Data were gathered using an online survey. Participants completed validated

instruments for measurement. Recruitment occurred through social media platforms, marital

forums, and community mailing lists. The survey was hosted on a secure, anonymous

platform to encourage candid responses on sensitive topics. Participants provided

informed consent and were screened to ensure eligibility (e.g., currently married).

## 3.2 Sampling Procedures

This study targeted Malaysian married individuals. Inclusion criteria for participants

included Malaysian nationality, being officially legally married, having consumed

pornography during the past 6 months, and having had sexual experience with their current

partner for the past 6 months. Participants were excluded if they did not consent to the study,

were not officially married, or had not had sexual experience with their partner in the past 6

months. Participants of all age ranges and cultures were included.

Purposive and snowball sampling were used to recruit participants through an online

survey distributed on platforms such as WhatsApp and Instagram, as these methods were

suitable for reaching the specific demographic requirements of the study. Purposive sampling

allowed the researchers to directly target married Malaysian couples who met the inclusion

criteria, while snowball sampling encouraged participants to share the survey link within their

own networks, further broadening the reach. The study was conducted in Malaysia to address

the existing knowledge gap within this context.

## 3.3 Sample Size, Power, and Precision

200 valid responses were collected in total, which met the required target sample size of

200. This target sample size of 200 is calculated using a method of simulation created by

Schoemann et al. (2017) via Monte Carlo analysis (Refer Appendix A). The model was based

on two parallel mediators, with the goal of achieving a statistical power of at least .80. The

number of power analysis replications was set to 10,000, and the confidence level was set to

95%. The correlations between variables and the standard deviation of variables were

obtained through multiple articles, as there was no related study that used a similar model to this study. The correlation between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction ($r=-.26, p<.01$) used was obtained from Barnes (2017). The correlation between pornography consumption and personal and perceived partner sexual satisfaction ($r=-.364, p<.001; r=223, p<.001$) was found in a study from Wright et al. (2017). The correlation between both personal sexual satisfaction and partnered sexual satisfaction with relationship satisfaction ($r=.46, p<.01$) was reported by Peck et al. (2005) and McNulty et al. (2014). The correlation between personal sexual satisfaction and partner sexual satisfaction ($r=.10, p<.05$) was obtained from McNulty et al. (2014). The standard deviation of pornography consumption (SD=9.81), both sexual satisfaction (SD=4.1), and relationship satisfaction (SD=4.3) were also obtained from relevant studies (Barnes, 2017; Peck et al., 2005).

**3.4 Data Collection Procedures**

Prior to data collection, ethical clearance approval was obtained from the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Scientific and Ethical Review Committee (SERC), with the reference number **U/SERC/78-415/2024** (refer to Appendix B).

At the beginning of the questionnaire, an online consent form was presented to participants. This form outlined the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality, and participants' right to withdraw at any time, ensuring that informed consent was obtained from all respondents. The questionnaire itself was created and hosted on Qualtrics, an online survey platform.

Participants were recruited through social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram**,** and others. Recruitment materials included posters and messages that explained the purpose of the study, eligibility criteria, estimated completion time, ethical clearance, and available incentives (refer to Appendix C). To maximize accessibility, the

recruitment materials provided both a direct survey link and a QR code, allowing participants
to conveniently access the questionnaire.

Data collection was conducted and completed by the end of June 2025. Following
data collection, the dataset was cleaned and screened to confirm the number of valid
responses eligible for analysis.

To support the study, a final-year project grant of RM500 was obtained from
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. As part of the appreciation token, a lucky draw was carried
out on 9 August 2025, in which 50 participants were randomly selected to receive RM10
each as rewards.

**3.5 Instruments**

**3.5.1 Consumption of Pornography Scale-General (COPS-G).**

Pornography consumption was measured using the Consumption of Pornography Scale-
General (COPS-G) developed by Hatch et al. (2023). This scale consisted of six items
adapted from the original 34-item instrument and focused on the frequency and duration of
pornography consumption among married individuals. The scale used a 6-point Likert scale,
with response options ranging from 1 (Less than 5 minutes) to 6 (46 minutes or more) for
duration-related items and corresponding options for frequency items (e.g., daily, weekly,
monthly). The scale was unidimensional, as it specifically captured exposure patterns,
including frequency and duration, rather than exploring multiple facets such as attitudes or
consequences of use. There were no negatively worded items in the subset used for this study.
Scoring involved calculating the mean score across the six items, with higher scores
indicating greater frequency and duration of pornography exposure. For example, one item
asked, *"Please indicate how often you viewed pornography in the past 30 days."* The original
COPS-G demonstrated good reliability, with a reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 for the

frequency and duration subscales. Content validity had been established through expert review, and construct validity was supported by significant correlations with related constructs, such as sexual attitudes and relationship satisfaction. However, no psychometric studies specific to the Malaysian context were available.

### 3.5.2 Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS).

Relationship satisfaction was measured using the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) developed by Hendrick (1988). This scale consisted of 7 items and assessed general satisfaction within a romantic relationship. Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, with options ranging from 1 (low satisfaction) to 5 (high satisfaction) based on participants' self-reports. The scale was unidimensional, focusing on overall relationship satisfaction without dividing into multiple subdomains. It included negatively worded items, specifically items four and seven. The total score was calculated by summing the responses for all seven items, with possible scores ranging from 7 to 35. Higher scores indicated greater relationship satisfaction, whereas lower scores suggested dissatisfaction or concerns within the relationship. Alternatively, the mean score could be used for interpretation. For instance, one item asked, *"How well does your partner meet your needs?"* The RAS was found to have strong psychometric properties. In its original validation, it demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86, indicating high internal consistency.

### 3.5.3 New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS).

Sexual satisfaction was measured using the New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS) developed by Stulhofer et al. (2011). This scale consisted of 20 items and was designed to assess sexual satisfaction in both clinical and non-clinical populations. The scale used a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 (Not at all satisfied) to 5 (Extremely satisfied). The NSSS was multidimensional and comprised two subscales. The first subscale

was the Ego-Centered Subscale (10 items), which focused on personal sexual satisfaction,

including self-perception and physical pleasure. The second subscale was the Partner/Sexual

Activity-Centered Subscale (10 items), which captured satisfaction derived from interactions

with a partner and shared sexual activities. Moreover, there were no negatively worded items

in the scale, which made it simple for respondents to complete. The total score was obtained

by summing the responses across all 20 items, with higher scores reflecting greater overall

sexual satisfaction. Scores could also be calculated separately for the two subscales. Higher

scores on the Ego-Centered subscale indicated self-focused sexual satisfaction, whereas

higher scores on the Partner/Sexual Activity-Centered subscale indicated greater satisfaction

in partner-related sexual experiences. In simple interpretation, low scores indicated

dissatisfaction or challenges in sexual satisfaction, while high scores reflected greater

satisfaction, either personally or in the context of partner dynamics. For example, items

included *"The way my body responds to sexual arousal and stimulation"* and *"My partner's*

*emotional involvement during sexual activity."* The NSSS was a reliable and valid measure.

Test-retest reliability was reported as .81, and internal consistency across subscales was

strong, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .85 to .92 in various samples. Construct validity

was supported through significant correlations with related constructs, such as with sexual

functioning and relationship satisfaction.

### 3.6 Reliability

#### 3.6.1 pilot study.

Connelly et al. (2008) suggested that the number of participants in a pilot study

should be 10% of the targeted sample size. Hence, with the targeted sample size of 200, a

pilot study of 20 respondents was done before the actual study questionnaire was distributed.

The objective of the pilot study is to determine the clarity of the questionnaire, ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, identify potential issues earlier, and assess the effectiveness of the recruitment process. The poster was posted online to recruit participants for a physical session of interviewer-assisted questionnaire administration. During the recruitment process, the demographic information of participants, including age, gender, ethnicity, religion, relationship status, employment status, length of the current relationship, and number of children, was collected. The information was confirmed and verified during the questionnaire administration to assess the accuracy of online demographic information collected in the study. The method of data collection was not modified as there was no false or inaccurate information found or detected based on the 20 respondents.

The reliability for each scale was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. According to Prabhakar et al. (2020), Cronbach's alpha with a threshold of $\alpha > .70$ is considered acceptable. The result of the pilot study indicates that each scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency. Consumption of Pornography Scale-General (COPS-G) demonstrated Cronbach's alpha of .71 (n=20); New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS-Personal) demonstrated Cronbach's alpha of .97 (n=20); New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS-Perceived Partner) demonstrated Cronbach's alpha of .98 (n=20); Relationship Assessment scale (RAS) demonstrated Cronbach's alpha of .90 (n=20) One thing to note is that item 3 from COPS-G, "How often have you viewed pornography for the past 7 days?" when removed, increased Cronbach alpa significantly from .71 to .93 (refer to Appendix E).

The results of the pilot study are evaluated, from the procedure of the assessment to the adequacy of the sample size and the questionnaire. No modification of the research procedure and questionnaire is required.

### 3.6.2 actual study.

All scales demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, with the Consumption of

Pornography Scale-General (COPS-G) having Cronbach's alpha of .73 (n=200); New Sexual

Satisfaction Scale (NSSS-Personal) having Cronbach's alpha of .89 (n=200); New Sexual

Satisfaction Scale (NSSS-Perceived Partner) having Cronbach's alpha of .97 (n=200);

Relationship Assessment scale (RAS) having Cronbach's alpha of .97 (n=200) (refer to

Appendix F).

### 3.7 Analysis Plan

IBM SPSS Statistics Version 23 was used to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics about

demographics, including age, gender, ethnicity, religion, relationship status, employment

status, length of the current relationship, sexual activity status, and number of children, were

calculated. The descriptive statistics included the mean, standard deviation, minimum value,

maximum value, and range.

For inferential statistics, Pearson's correlation analysis was used to analyze the data to

find out the relationship between of each variable. Afterwards, the data were analysed

through moderated mediation analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics. Moderated mediation

model analysis was conducted with Hayes' SPSS Macro PROCESS, Model 59.

## Chapter IV

## Results

### 4.1 Missing Data

A total of 223 responses were collected. 23 data were removed due to incomplete

surveys attended. All participants fulfilled the criteria of survey participation, including age

above 18 years old, married, and consuming pornography. No straight-line data were found.

After cleaning, 200 responses were valid and used for analysis, representing 89.7% of the

total sample.

### 4.2 Normality

#### 4.2.1 histogram.

No violation of normality was observed in the histogram for all variables, including

pornography consumption, personal sexual satisfaction, perceived partner sexual satisfaction,

and relationship satisfaction. (refer to Appendix G).

#### 4.2.2 Q-Q plot.

There is no violation of normality in the Q-Q plot for pornography consumption,

personal sexual satisfaction, perceived partner sexual satisfaction, and relationship

satisfaction which were good as the observed values are not deviated from the diagonal line

of the expected values (refer to Appendix H).

#### 4.2.3 skewness and kurtosis.

According to Gravetter and Wallnau (2014), the acceptable range for skewness and

kurtosis is +2 to -2. Since the skewness and kurtosis values of the 4 variables are within the

acceptable range of skewness and kurtosis values, which are ±2, there is no violation of the

skewness and kurtosis indicators among the variables (refer to Appendix I).

### 4.2.4 Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

The outcome Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicated violation of normality in all 4 of the variables: pornography consumption, $D(200) = .000$, $p<.001$; personal sexual satisfaction, $D(200)= .000$, $p<.001$; perceived partner sexual satisfaction, $D(200) =.000$, $p<.001$; and relationship satisfaction, $D(200) =.000$, $p<.001$. All the variables showed significant difference from a normal distribution, having p-values smaller than .05, therefore violating the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test's normality indicator. (refer to Appendix J).

### 4.2.5 conclusion for assumptions of normality.

All the variables (pornography consumption, personal sexual satisfaction, perceived partner sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction) met the assumptions of normality in histogram, Q-Q plot, skewness and kurtosis. For Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, none of the variables passed the test. Assumption of normality is achieved since at least 3 of the normality tests are not violated.

## 4.3 Descriptive Statistics

### 4.3.1 demographic information.

In the study, the final sample included 200 participants between the ages of 22 to 76 (M=42.92, SD=12.21).  There are 59% (n=118) males and 41% (n=82) females in the sample data. Among 200 participants, 95% were Chinese (n=190), and 5% were Malay (n=10).  As for religion, 80% were Buddhist (n=190), 15% were Christian (n=10), and 5% were Muslim (n=10). The mean number of children is 2.13 (SD = 1.67). (refer to Appendix K).

**Table 1**

*Demographic Information (n = 200)*

|  | n | % | M | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 118 | 59 |  |  |
| Female | 82 | 41 |  |  |
| **Race** |  |  |  |  |
| Malay | 10 | 5 |  |  |
| Chinese | 190 | 95 |  |  |
| **Religion** |  |  |  |  |
| Islam | 10 | 5 |  |  |
| Buddhism | 160 | 85 |  |  |
| Christianity | 30 | 10 |  |  |
| **Number of children** |  |  | 2.13 | 1.67 |
| **Age** |  |  | 42.92 | 12.21 |

*Note*. M= mean; SD= Standard deviation

**4.3.2 gender differences in study variables.**

According to Table 2, males, on average, have slightly higher pornography consumption, slightly lower personal and perceived partner sexual satisfaction, and lower relationship satisfaction as compared to females (Refer to Table 4.4.2). We can see that most people consume a lesser to moderate amount of pornography (M=2.44, SD= .99), considering the highest obtainable score for the scale is 6, and the lowest obtainable score is 1. Next, the relationship satisfaction scale (RAS) has an obtainable score ranging from 7 to 35. Taking the

midpoint of the score of 21 as average, both male and female have relationship satisfaction

scored slightly higher than average (M=24.16, SD=.99). Lastly, both personal and perceived

partner sexual satisfaction scales have an obtainable score ranging from 10 to 50. Again,

taking the midpoint of the score of 30 as average, both male and female have personal sexual

satisfaction scored slightly higher than average (M=32.41, SD= 8.97). However, perceived

partner sexual satisfaction had a slightly less than average score (M=29.89, SD= 8.65). Males

have a slightly less than average score in terms of perceived partner sexual satisfaction

(M=28.75, SD= 8.64), unlike females, who are slightly higher than average (M=31.51, SD=

8.46).

**Table 2**

*Frequency Distribution of Study Variables*

|  | N | % | M | SD | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pornography consumption** | 200 | 100 | 2.44 | .99 | 1.00 | 5.80 |
| Male | 118 | 59 | 2.47 | .83 | 1.00 | 5.80 |
| Female | 82 | 41 | 2.38 | 1.18 | 1.00 | 5.80 |
| **Relationship Satisfaction** | 200 | 100 | 24.16 | 6.34 | 9.00 | 35.00 |

| | N | % | M | SD | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 118 | 59 | 22.78 | 6.18 | 9.00 | 35.00 |
| Female | 82 | 41 | 26.13 | 6.07 | 9.00 | 35.00 |
| **Personal Sexual Satisfaction** | 200 | 100 | 32.41 | 8.97 | 10.00 | 50.00 |
| Male | 118 | 59 | 31.40 | 8.73 | 10.00 | 49.00 |
| Female | 82 | 41 | 33.87 | 9.17 | 20.00 | 50.00 |
| **Perceived-Partner Sexual Satisfaction** | 200 | 100 | 29.89 | 8.65 | 14.00 | 46.00 |
| Male | 118 | 59 | 28.75 | 8.64 | 14.00 | 46.00 |
| Female | 82 | 41 | 31.51 | 8.46 | 20.00 | 46.00 |

### 4.4 Correlation Analysis

Bivariate correlation was done using Pearson correlation analysis to examine the

association between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction (RO1). It was

hypothesized that pornography consumption is negatively associated with relationship

satisfaction among married individuals ($H_1$). Table 3 shows the correlation for all study

variables and demographic variables, including pornography consumption and relationship

satisfaction. The interpretation of relationship was measured following Guilford's (1956) rule

of thumb, which states that a Pearson correlation coefficient value ($r$) of less than .20

indicates a negligible association; values between .20 and .40 indicates a weak association;

values between .40 and .70 indicate a moderate association; and values between .70 and

above indicates a strong relationship between the variables.

**Table 3**

*Pearson Correlation Coefficient Between Each Variable*

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. PC** | 1 | | | | | | | |
| **2. RS** | -.238*** | 1 | | | | | | |
| **3. PSS** | -.144* | .791*** | 1 | | | | | |
| **4. PPSS** | -.122* | .704*** | .622*** | 1 | | | | |
| **5. Age** | -123* | -.106 | -.099 | -.142* | 1 | | | |
| **6. Gender** | .044 | -.261*** | -.136* | -.157* | .174** | 1 | | |
| **7. LOR** | -.184** | -.050 | -.019 | -.131* | .784*** | .147* | 1 | |
| **8. NOC** | -.260*** | -.209** | -.208** | -.267*** | .525*** | .026 | .413*** | 1 |

Note: PC = pornography consumption; RS = relationship satisfaction; PSS = personal sexual

satisfaction; PPSS = Perceived-partner sexual satisfaction; LOR = Length of relationship;

NOF= number of children

*** indicates significance at the .001 level ($p < .001$), one-tailed; ** indicates significance at

the .01 level ($p < .01$), one-tailed; * indicates significance at the .05 level ($p < .05$), one-tailed


Pearson correlation coefficient between pornography consumption and relationship

satisfaction was found to be significant ($r(198) = -.238, p< .001$), indicating a weak

association. This supports the hypothesis of it being negatively associated with relationship

satisfaction among married individuals ($H_1$). Thus, $H_1$ is supported.

Additionally, the number of children has a significant relationship with all 4 of the

study variables, including pornography consumption ($r(198) = -.260, p< .001$), personal

sexual satisfaction ($r(198) = -.208, p =.003$), perceived partner sexual satisfaction ($r(198) =$

$-.267, p< .001$), and relationship satisfaction ($r(198) = -.209, p =.003$), indicating a weak

relationship with all of them (Refer to Table 3). Hence, it was controlled as a covariate for the

following moderated mediation analysis.

### 4.5 Moderated Mediation Analysis

Moderated mediation analysis was performed using PROCESS macro-Model 59

(Hayes, 2017), where pornography consumption acted as an independent variable, personal

and perceived partner sexual satisfaction were accounted as mediators, relationship

satisfaction as a dependent variable, and gender as a moderator. As mentioned above, the

number of children is controlled as a covariate, as it was significantly and negatively

associated with all 4 of the study variables. The analysis was done to address the effect of

pornography consumption on relationship satisfaction was hypothesised to be mediated by

personal sexual satisfaction and perceived partner sexual satisfaction, such that the negative

effect of pornography consumption on relationship satisfaction through personal and

perceived partner sexual satisfaction is more significant in married men than in married

women ($H_{2a}$ & $H_{2b}$). In addition, we hypothesised that gender moderated the effects.

**4.5.1 personal sexual satisfaction as a mediator.**

For personal sexual satisfaction, the data indicate no significant interaction between

pornography consumption and gender for the $a^1$-path (from pornography consumption to

personal sexual satisfaction), $b$ = -2.07, $p$ = .097, 95% percentile CI [-4.52, .38], $\Delta R^2$ = .01.

Although data showed a significant $b^1$-path (from personal sexual satisfaction to relationship

satisfaction), $b$ = .33, $p$<.001, 95% percentile CI [.19, .46], there was no significant

interaction between personal sexual satisfaction and gender for the $b^1$-path, $b$ = .09, $p$ = .245,

95% percentile CI [-.07, .25], $\Delta R^2$ = .00. Index for moderated mediation is not significant, $b$ =

-.97, 95% percentile CI [-2.30, .39], providing no evidence for a moderated mediation.

However, it is observed that the negative conditional indirect effect (pornography

consumption --> personal sexual satisfaction --> relationship satisfaction) for males is

significantly stronger, $b$ = -1.30, 95% percentile CI [-2.52, -.25], as opposed to females, $b$ =

-.33, 95% percentile CI [-1.21, .24], which is insignificant and weaker. All results were

controlled for the covariate, which is the number of children.

To conclude, personal sexual satisfaction was found to be an insignificant mediator of

the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction, rejecting the

hypothesis ($H_{2a}$). Nevertheless, an interesting finding to note is that although the hypothesis

($H_{2a}$) was rejected overall, when looking into male individually (disregarding female), the

mediating effect of personal sexual satisfaction and is actually significant ($b$ = -1.30, 95%

percentile CI [-2.52, -.25]), such that increased pornography consumption in male leads to

lower personal sexual satisfaction in male, which in turn lowers relationship satisfaction in
males. This means that disregarding females, the overall model of personal sexual satisfaction
as a moderated mediator is considered a significant model for males only, partially supporting
the hypothesis ($H_{2a}$).

It can also be observed that males showed a higher effect than females in all direct
effect pathways ($a^1$, $b^1$, c'). The fact that males act as a stronger moderator for all three
pathways (direct & indirect effect) as compared to females, which is weaker, supports the
hypothesis that pornography consumption negatively affects relationship satisfaction through
personal sexual satisfaction more in married men than in married women ($H_{3a}$). Thus, ($H_{2a}$)
fails to be supported, ($H_{3a}$) is supported.

**Table 4**

*Regression Results for a1 Path From PC to PSS and for the b1/c'-path From PSS/PC to RS*

| Variable | Model $a^1$ path | | | | | Model $b^1$/c' path | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *b* | *SE* | *p* | LLCI | ULCI | *b* | *SE* | *p* | LLCI | ULCI |
| PC | -1.01 | .82 | .219 | -2.63 | .61 | -.58 | .33 | .084 | -1.23 | .08 |
| PC × gender | -2.07 | 1.24 | .097 | -4.52 | .38 | -.61 | .51 | .234 | -1.62 | .40 |
| PSS | | | | | | .33** | .07 | <.001 | .19 | .46 |
| PSS × gender | | | | | | .09 | .08 | .245 | -.07 | .25 |
| NOC | -1.40** | .38 | <.001 | -2.14 | -.66 | -.19 | .16 | .232 | -.51 | .123 |

Note: PC = pornography consumption; RS = relationship satisfaction; PSS = personal sexual
satisfaction; PPSS = Perceived-partner sexual satisfaction; NOF= number of children

** indicates significance at the .01 level ($p < .01$); * indicates significance at the .05 level ($p
< .05$).

**4.5.2 perceived partner sexual satisfaction as a mediator.**

For perceived partner sexual satisfaction, the data showed significant interaction between pornography consumption and gender for the $a^2$-path (from pornography consumption to perceived partner sexual satisfaction), $b = -2.89$, $p = .014$, 95% percentile CI [-5.20, -.59], $\Delta R^2 = .03$. The negative conditional effect from pornography consumption on perceived partner sexual satisfaction was the significant and higher for male, $b = -3.42$, $p < .001$, 95% percentile CI [-5.21, -1.63], as compared to female, $b = -.53$, $p = .494$, 95% percentile CI [-2.05, .99], which is insignificant. Although data showed a significant $b^2$-path (from perceived partner sexual satisfaction to relationship satisfaction), $b = .24$, $p<.005$, 95% percentile CI [.09, .39], there was no significant interaction between perceived partner sexual satisfaction and gender for the $b^2$-path, $b = -.04$, $p = .667$, 95% percentile CI [-.21, .13], $\Delta R^2 = .00$. Index for moderated mediation is not significant, $b = -.56$, 95% percentile CI [-1.33, .15], providing no evidence for a moderated mediation. However, it is observed that the negative conditional indirect effect (pornography consumption --> perceived partner sexual satisfaction --> relationship satisfaction) for males is significantly stronger, $b = -.69$, 95% percentile CI [-1.37, -.18], as opposed to female, $b = -.13$, 95% percentile CI [-.64, .23], which is insignificant and weaker. All results were controlled for the covariate, which is the number of children.

To conclude, perceived partner sexual satisfaction was found to be an insignificant mediator of the relationship between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction, rejecting the hypotheses (H$_{2b}$). However, similar with personal sexual satisfaction, although the hypothesis (H$_{2b}$) was rejected overall, when looking into male individually (disregarding female), the mediating effect of perceived partner sexual satisfaction and is actually significant ($b = -.69$, 95% percentile CI [-1.37, -.18]), such that increased pornography

consumption in male leads to lower perceived partner sexual satisfaction in male, which in

turn lowers relationship satisfaction in males. This means that disregarding females, the

overall model of perceived partner sexual satisfaction as a moderated mediator is considered

a significant model for males only, partially supporting the hypothesis (H$_{2b}$).

According to Table 5, gender is shown to be a significant moderator for path a$^2$. It can

also be observed that males in particular showed a higher effect than females in two of the

direct effect pathways (a$^2$ & c') (Refer to Figure 2 & Figure 3). Although Figure 4 shows that

females have a slightly stronger effect than males in path b$^2$, the effect refers to positive

effect, which implies that males are less likely to be affected by the positive effect of

perceived partner sexual satisfaction on relationship satisfaction compared to females. The

fact that males act as a stronger moderator for two pathways (direct & indirect effect) as

compared to females, which is weaker, supports the hypothesis that pornography

consumption negatively affects relationship satisfaction through perceived partner sexual

satisfaction more in married men than in married women (H$_{3b}$). Thus, (H$_{2b}$) fails to be

supported, and (H$_{3b}$) is supported.

**Table 5**

*Regression Results for a$^2$ Path From PC to PPSS and for the b$^2$/c'-path From PPSS/PC to RS*

| Variable | Model a$^2$ path | | | | | Model b$^2$/c' path | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *b* | *SE* | *p* | LLCI | ULCI | *b* | *SE* | *p* | LLCI | ULCI |
| PC | -.53 | .77 | .494 | -2.05 | .99 | -.58 | .33 | .084 | -1.23 | .08 |
| PC × gender | -2.89* | 1.17 | .014 | -5.20 | -.59 | -.61 | .51 | .234 | -1.62 | .40 |
| PPSS | | | | | | .24** | .07 | .001 | .09 | .39 |
| PPSS × gender | | | | | | -.04 | .09 | .667 | -.21 | .13 |
| NOC | -1.65** | .35 | <.001 | -2.34 | -.95 | -.19 | .16 | .232 | -.51 | .123 |

Note: PC = pornography consumption; RS = relationship satisfaction; PSS = personal sexual

satisfaction; PPSS = Perceived-partner sexual satisfaction; NOF= number of children

** indicates significance at the .01 level ($p < .01$); * indicates significance at the .05 level ($p$

$< .05$).

**Figure 2**

*Gender Difference in Effect of Pornography Consumption on Perceived Partner Sexual*
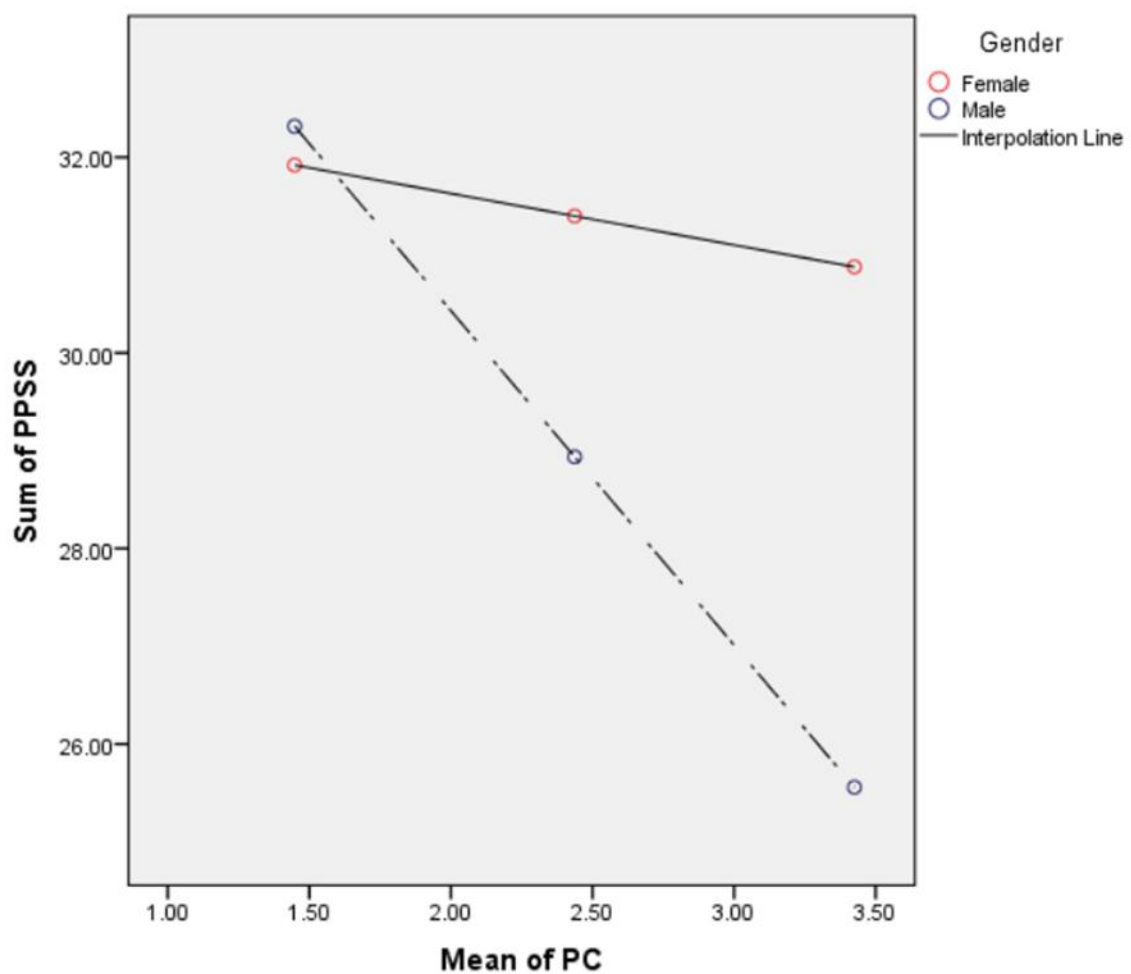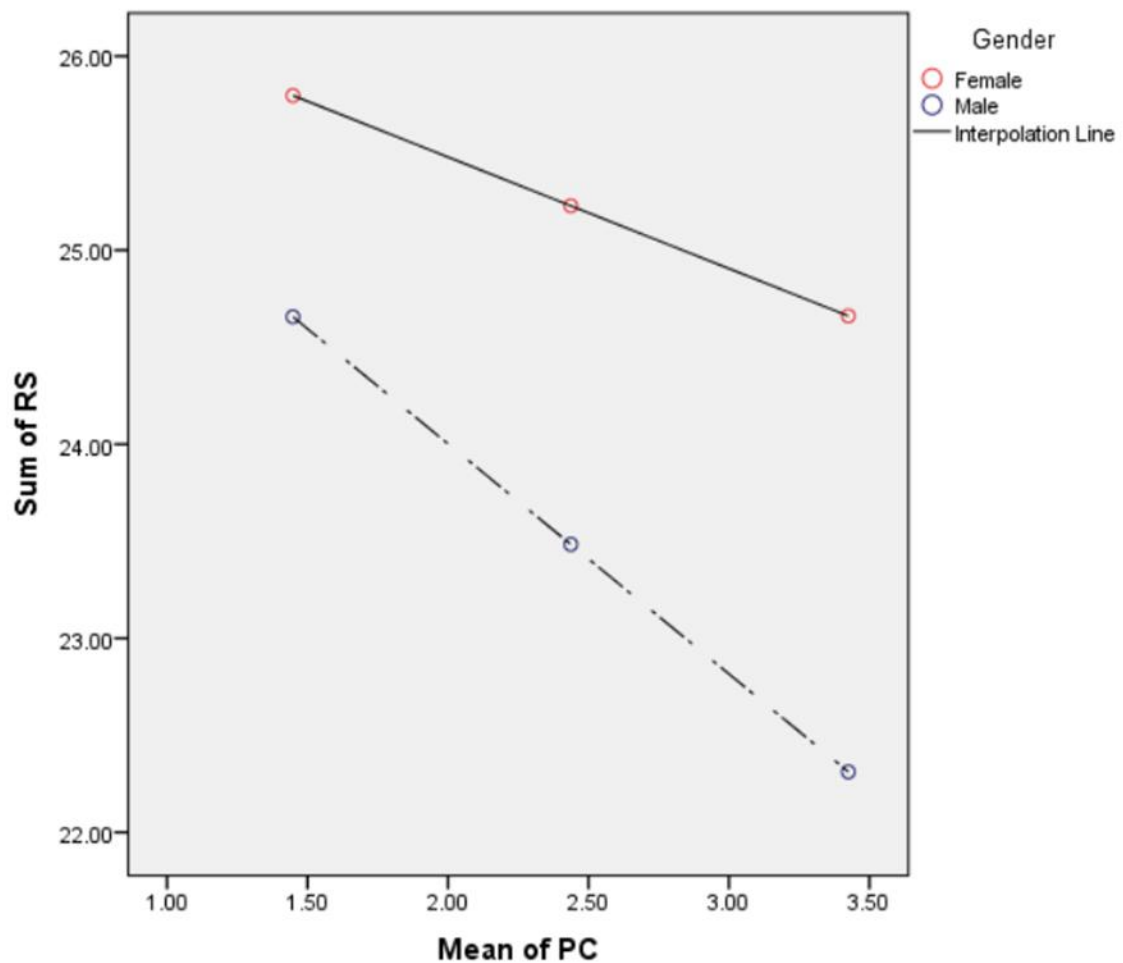
*Satisfaction*

**Figure 3**

*Gender Difference in Effect of Pornography Consumption on Relationship Satisfaction*

**Figure 4**

*Gender Difference in Effect of Perceived Partner Sexual Satisfaction on Relationship*
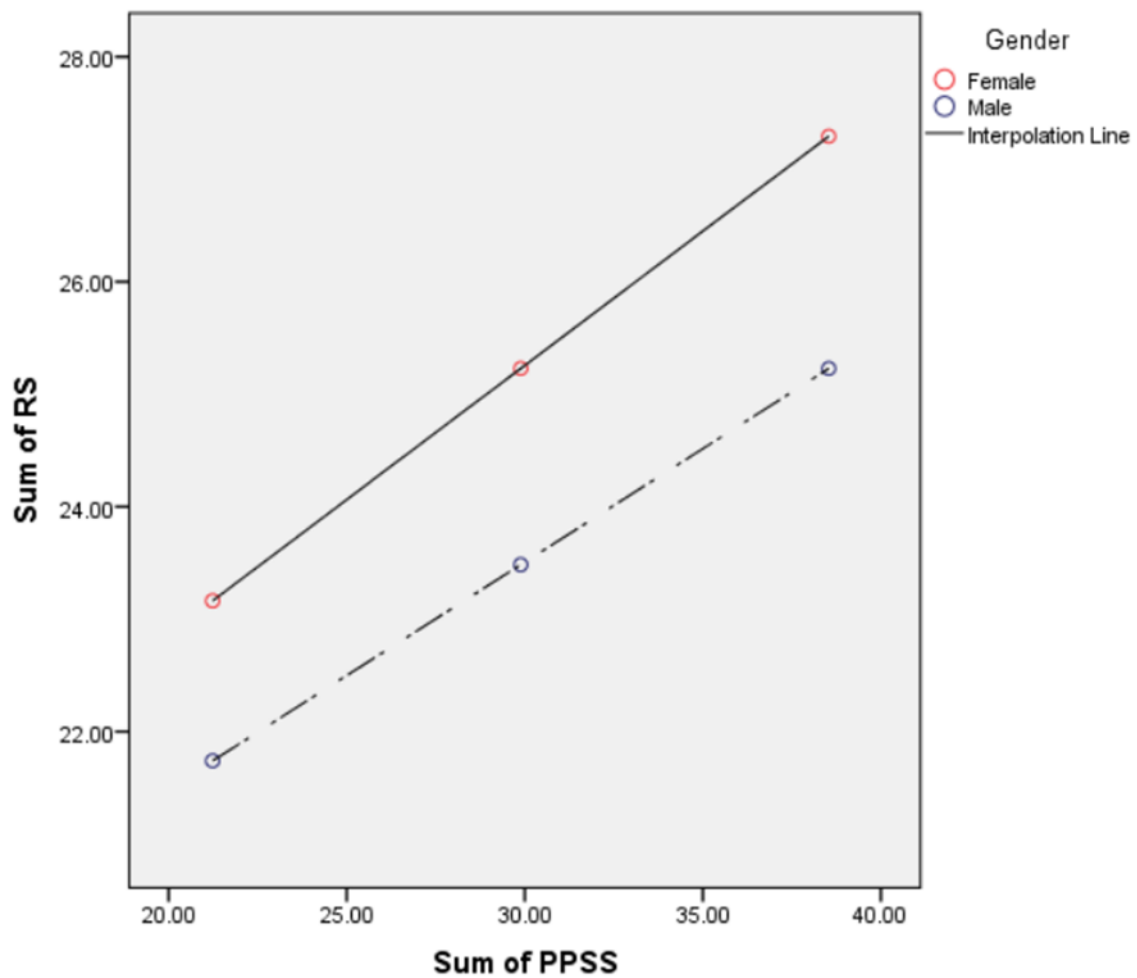
*satisfaction*

### 4.5.3 Direct effect of pornography consumption on relationship satisfaction.

The direct effect for path c' (from pornography consumption to relationship satisfaction) was not significant, $b = -.61$, $p = .234$, 95% percentile $CI$ [-1.62, .40], $\Delta R^2 = .00$. Although not moderated by gender in an overview, it is observed that the effect is significant when accounting for male alone ($b = -1.19$, $p < .005$, 95% percentile $CI$ [-1.99, -.38]). Since significance in the direct effect of pornography consumption on relationship satisfaction was only found in males, this partially supports the hypothesis of pornography consumption negatively affecting relationship satisfaction through personal and perceived partner sexual satisfaction more in married men than in married women ($H_{3a}$ & $H_{3b}$). Thus, ($H_{3a}$ & $H_{3b}$) is supported.

**Figure 5**

*Regression Result of Moderated Multiple Mediation Model of Sexual Satisfaction and Gender*
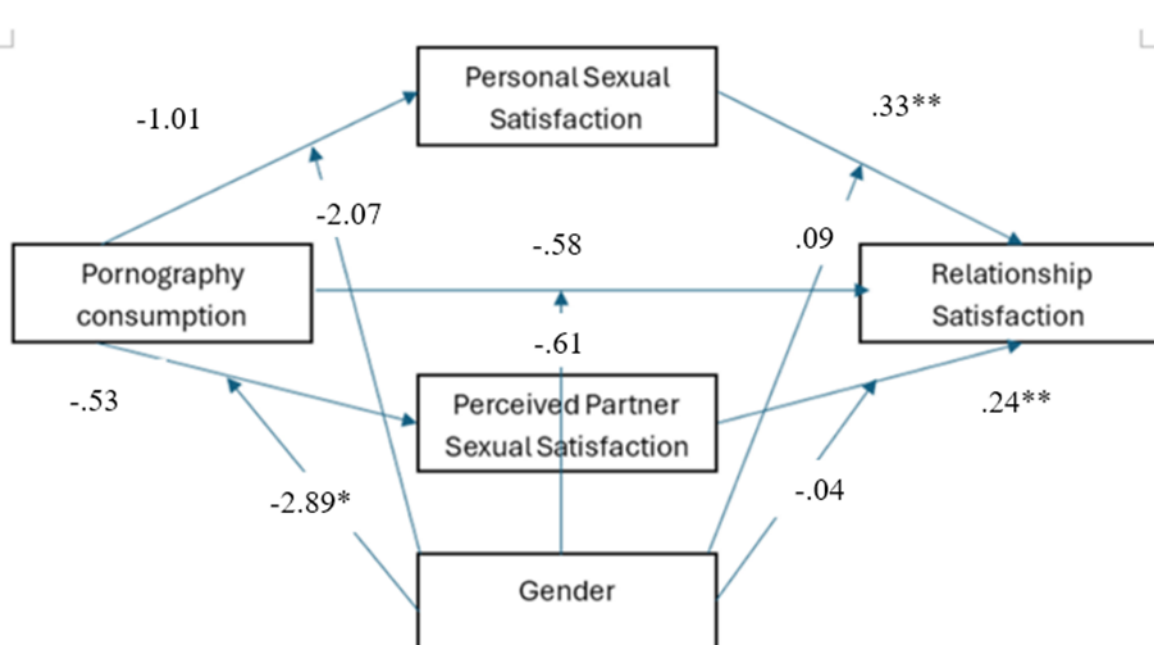
## Chapter V

## Discussion and Conclusion

### 5.1 Constructive Discussion of Findings

#### 5.1.1 pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction among married individuals.

The present study found that pornography use is significantly and negatively linked to relationship satisfaction among married individuals. This supports Hypothesis 1 and is consistent with many previous studies that suggest a negative association between pornography use and relationship satisfaction. Multiple studies emphasised the negative outcomes, such as reduced intimacy, unrealistic expectations, and jealousy. (Barnes, 2017; Wright et al., 2017). For example, Nikmanesh and Ganjali (2021) reported that frequent pornography use is often employed as an escape or to avoid negative emotions, which in turn reduces sexual satisfaction among married individuals. Similarly, Willoughby et al. (2021) found that higher levels of pornography use were associated with lower relationship satisfaction.

This finding can be explained by Social Comparison Theory (SCT; Festinger, 1954), which explains that people judge themselves and others by using reference points. Pornography provides unrealistic standards of intimacy, and it can create distorted sexual expectations (Kuan et al., 2022; Wright et al., 2021). This causes their partners to seem less adequate, not because of real problems, but because of distorted comparisons between real-life scenarios and exaggerated portrayals of looks, sexual behavior, or frequency of sex in pornographic materials. Individuals may engage in upward comparisons between their partner and the idealized, often unrealistic, portrayals in pornography (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Wright et al., 2017). Over time, this can create chronic dissatisfaction and

weaken trust in relationships. In the Malaysian context, where discussions of sexuality are generally avoided, these comparisons may occur in a private setting within individuals, lacking corrective communication, which leads to intensified dissatisfaction, frustration, and emotional distance. This finding challenges the "sexual enhancement" perspective (Hald & Malamuth, 2007) and suggests that in a conservative cultural environment, the compensatory or secretive use of pornography outweighs any potential benefits. The stigmatisation of pornography may also potentially amplify secretive use and relational strain, leading to further dissatisfaction.

Another explanation for the finding is the compensatory use of pornography. Some research suggests that people may turn to pornography to cope with unmet sexual or emotional needs, or stressful events in the relationship (Huțul & Karner-Huțuleac, 2024; Testa et al., 2024). From this view, pornography use might not directly cause dissatisfaction but instead reflect existing relationship problems among married individuals. In this way, the link could go both ways — pornography might worsen dissatisfaction, or dissatisfaction might lead to pornography use. However, not all studies agree. Some research shows that when couples consume pornography together, it may open up communication about sexual preferences and even improve intimacy (Willoughby et al., 2020). But in Malaysia, where pornography is culturally and religiously forbidden, shared use is uncommon and socially unacceptable. As a result, secrecy and guilt surrounding pornography use may strengthen the negative effects, reducing trust and honesty in marriage.

Lastly, the weak association can be explained by the mean pornography consumption score (M = 2.44 on a 1-6 scale), which indicates moderately low use. This explains the weak association between pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction ($r$(198) = -.238, $p$< .001), as it has been noted in other studies where low-to-moderate use of pornography

shows a weaker association with relationship satisfaction than high use (Willoughby et al., 2021). This small magnitude suggests that pornography use might not be a key factor affecting sexual satisfaction (Willoughby et al., 2021).

**5.1.2 sexual satisfaction as a mediating role.**

The present study also examined whether the effect of pornography use on relationship satisfaction among married individuals can be explained by levels of sexual satisfaction. Two types of sexual satisfaction were tested: personal sexual satisfaction and perceived partner sexual satisfaction. The results indicated that both personal and perceived partner sexual satisfaction did not significantly mediate the relationship overall, contrary to past studies that highlight the central role of sexual satisfaction in maintaining a healthy relationship (López et al., 2024; Ziaee et al., 2014). This means that the proposed hypotheses $H_{2a}$ and $H_{2b}$ both failed to be supported.

**5.1.3 personal sexual satisfaction as a mediating factor**.

The model is found to be significant for males specifically, which is supported by a study from López et al. (2024), who reported that pornography consumption negatively impacts sexual satisfaction and subsequently relationship satisfaction more strongly in men due to higher usage and masturbatory purposes (Muusses et al., 2015). The significant male-specific effect is justified by higher male consumption and alignment with sexual script theory (Simon & Gagnon, 2003), where men internalize performance-oriented scripts, leading to desensitization and dissatisfaction (Leonhardt & Willoughby, 2019). A study by Böthe et al. (2021), supports this, finding that frequent pornography use in men correlates with reduced arousal in partnered sex, impacting personal satisfaction. While past studies highlight mixed results on personal sexual satisfaction, with some studies noting negative effects like desensitization and lower self-esteem (Cotigă & Dumitrache, 2015; Privara &

Bob, 2023), while others suggest positive effects through enhanced sexual knowledge (Hald & Malamuth, 2007). The male-specific effect in this study supports the former, aligning with social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), where men compare themselves to idealized pornography standards, reducing personal sexual satisfaction.

Contradictory findings of past studies, such as studies like Kvalem et al. (2014), which found pornography use increased sexual self-esteem and satisfaction in some individuals, may be caused by context-specific factors, such as Malaysia's conservative norms discouraging open sexual exploration (Wong, 2012), which may suppress potential positive effects. As such, positive effects, which are often context-dependent, are less applicable in Malaysia due to cultural stigma.

The insignificant overall mediation may result from cultural suppression of sexual discussions in Malaysia, leading to underreporting of pornography use and personal sexual satisfaction, reducing variability and statistical power. Additionally, the sample size (n = 200) was calculated for .80 power but may be insufficient for detecting small mediation effects in a moderated model with covariates (Schoemann et al., 2017).

**5.1.4 perceived partner sexual satisfaction as a mediating factor.**

The model is found to be significant for males specifically. The significant a2-path interaction for males suggests that men's higher consumption and focus on intrapersonal sexual aspects (Stephenson et al., 2021) amplify comparisons to pornography's idealized scripts, lowering perceived partner satisfaction. This aligns with sexual script theory, where pornography alters expectations of partner performance (Wright et al., 2017). Just like personal sexual satisfaction, the significant male-specific effect of perceived partner sexual satisfaction as mediator is justified by higher male consumption and alignment with sexual script theory (Simon & Gagnon, 2003), which leads to desensitization and dissatisfaction

(Leonhardt & Willoughby, 2019). Reduced arousal in partner sex also impacts sexual satisfaction negatively (Böthe et al., 2021). It also aligns with the findings that pornography use fosters upward comparisons, reducing perceived partner satisfaction (Bennett-Brown & Wright, 2022; Wright et al., 2017). This result is also supported by Willoughby et al. (2015), who noted that pornography users perceive partners as less sexually fulfilling due to idealized portrayals, impacting relationship satisfaction.

The lack of overall mediation may stem from social desirability bias, as participants may hesitate to report negative perceptions of their partner's satisfaction in a conservative context, reducing score variability. Cultural factors in Malaysia, where sexual topics are taboo (Wong, 2012), may explain this, as participants may underreport partner dissatisfaction to avoid social stigma, leading to a mean perceived partner satisfaction score nearing the midpoint.

**5.1.5 gender as a moderating role.**

The stronger negative effects for males ($H_{3a}$ and $H_{3b}$) are supported and similar to the literature that (e.g., Brown et al., 2016; Stephenson et al., 2021). Men reported slightly higher pornography consumption, and conditional effects were significant only for them, aligning with meta-analytic evidence that pornography negatively impacts men's satisfaction more robustly (Wright et al., 2017). This can be justified by the fact that men often use pornography for masturbation, fostering desensitization and comparisons (Leonhardt & Willoughby, 2019), while women may use it relationally (Muusses et al., 2015). In Malaysia, traditional norms may exacerbate male effects due to stricter expectations on male sexual performance (Wong, 2012). In Malaysia, Islamic traditional norms may exacerbate male effects due to stricter expectations on male sexual performance (Wong, 2012). The non-significant female effect of perceived partner sexual satisfaction may reflect lower

consumption and relational use patterns (Muusses et al., 2015), diluted by cultural pressures to maintain marital harmony.

### 5.1.6 the number of children was a significant covariate

The number of children was a significant covariate, showing significant negative associations with personal sexual satisfaction and perceived partner sexual satisfaction. The negative associations with sexual satisfaction align with research indicating that parenting demands can reduce sexual frequency and satisfaction due to time constraints, fatigue, and stress. For instance, Twenge et al. (2003) found that couples with children, particularly young ones, report lower sexual satisfaction due to reduced opportunities for intimacy. Similarly, a study by Agrawal and Dubey (2025) noted that the presence of children and parenting negatively impacts sexual satisfaction by shifting focus from couple intimacy to parental roles, especially in cultures emphasizing family obligations.

The significant negative correlations between the number of children and both personal ($r = -.208$) and perceived partner sexual satisfaction ($r = -.267$) may be explained by the practical and emotional burdens of parenting in Malaysia, where collectivist cultural norms prioritize family roles over individual or couple needs (Ali et al., 2025). Increased parenting responsibilities may limit time and energy for sexual activities, lowering personal sexual satisfaction and perceived partner sexual satisfaction. This aligns with social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), as couples may compare their current sexual experiences to pre-parenting levels or idealized standards, leading to dissatisfaction. The weaker association with relationship satisfaction suggests that while children impact sexual dynamics, their effect on overall relationship satisfaction is less pronounced, possibly due to cultural values emphasizing marital stability (Wong, 2012).

The covariate's inclusion in the analysis was justified by its significant correlations with all study variables, ensuring that the moderated mediation model accounted for its influence. A study by Leavitt et al. (2017) supports this, finding that parenting stress negatively affects sexual satisfaction, which indirectly influences relationship outcomes in collectivist settings. The moderate family size in this sample may reflect a balance where children strain sexual satisfaction but do not overwhelmingly disrupt relationship satisfaction, consistent with Malaysia's collectivist emphasis on family unity.

**5.2 Implication of the Study**

**5.2.1 theoretical implications.**

This study offers several important implications. First, it contributes to the relatively limited research on pornography consumption and relationship satisfaction among married individuals in Malaysia, where such issues are often underexplored due to cultural sensitivities. By incorporating sexual satisfaction, both personal sexual satisfaction and perceived partner sexual satisfaction, as mediators, the study demonstrates that pornography use does not simply have a direct impact on relationship satisfaction but rather exerts its influence through the quality of sexual experiences within the relationship.

Secondly, this study advances the literature by establishing gender as a significant moderator in the relationship between pornography use and relationship satisfaction among married individuals. The findings reveal that men are more strongly affected by pornography consumption, experiencing greater declines in both personal and perceived partner sexual satisfaction, which in turn reduces relationship satisfaction. This highlights the theoretical importance of recognizing gendered pathways in relational satisfaction, suggesting that men's higher engagement with pornography may create greater discrepancies between sexual expectations shaped by pornography and the realities of relationship satisfaction. By contrast,

women appear less directly impacted, though their relationship satisfaction may still be
influenced indirectly through perceptions of their partner's sexual satisfaction. Taken
together, the findings strongly support both Social Comparison Theory (SCT) and Sexual
Script Theory (SST) as helpful ways to understand how pornography use affects
relationships. The results show that when people compare themselves or their relationships to
unrealistic images in pornography, or when they adopt the sexual expectations shown in
pornography, they may feel less satisfied with their sex life and their relationship. This means
the outcomes of the present study fit well with what these two theories suggest. Future
research should refine and extend this framework by considering how gender interacts with
other contextual factors, such as communication patterns, to provide a more comprehensive
understanding of the gendered consequences of pornography consumption within marriage.

### 5.2.2 practical implications.

From a practical perspective, the findings provide important guidance for counsellors,
educators, and policymakers. That is because the results show that pornography affects
relationship satisfaction among married individuals mainly through its impact on sexual
satisfaction, which means that helping married individuals who are pornography users,
especially male users, to improve their sexual satisfaction is crucial for protecting
relationship satisfaction. Therefore, in counselling, practitioners can use these insights to
design programs that encourage open conversations about pornography, reduce
misunderstandings between partners, and build stronger intimacy and trust. For example,
interventions could focus on helping married individuals manage differences in sexual
expectations, strengthen emotional closeness, and promote mutual respect in sexual
relationships.

At a broader level, this study highlights the importance of promoting sexual health literacy and creating safe spaces for culturally sensitive discussions about sexual satisfaction. In societies like Malaysia, where sex is often a taboo topic, individual may avoid talking about pornography and sexual concerns, which can leave problems unresolved and weaken their relationship over time. By improving sexual health literacy, individuals gain accurate knowledge about sexuality, learn to separate myths from facts, and develop healthier expectations about sexual satisfaction. Creating safe and culturally sensitive spaces allows these conversations to happen without shame or fear of judgment, making it easier for partners to share their experiences and negotiate differences. This openness reduces misunderstandings, builds trust, and strengthens relationship satisfaction. When scaled up, such initiatives can reduce stigma in the wider community and contribute to stronger relationship satisfaction among married individuals.

**5.3 Limitations of the Study**

Firstly, the sensitive nature of the research topic may have influenced the **honesty and accuracy of participants' responses**. Pornography consumption and sexual satisfaction are highly private matters and are often shaped by cultural norms, religious teachings, and social taboos in Malaysia. As a result, participants may have underreported their behaviors or provided socially desirable responses to present themselves in a more acceptable manner. Although anonymity and confidentiality were emphasized, the possibility of social desirability bias cannot be fully ruled out. This limitation may have reduced the accuracy of the findings, particularly regarding the true prevalence and patterns of pornography consumption.

Secondly, the study relied solely on a **quantitative design**. This means the research was based on numbers, ratings, and statistical tests, which are useful for showing patterns and

relationships between variables but cannot capture the richness of people's personal

experiences. While the results showed how pornography use, sexual satisfaction, gender, and

relationship satisfaction among married individuals are connected, they do not explain the

personal stories or meanings behind those connections. For instance, the data cannot tell us

what motivates a person to watch pornography, how cultural or religious values shape their

views about it, or how these experiences play out differently in the daily lives of married

individuals. Numbers alone also cannot reflect the emotions, struggles, or personal

interpretations that may influence relationship satisfaction. As a result, the findings show the

"what" of the relationships but not the "why" or "how," leaving the deeper human side of the

issue unexplored.

Thirdly, the **cross-sectional design** restricts causal inference. Because the data were

collected at only one point in time, the study could only show that pornography consumption,

sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction are related to one another, but not the

sequence or direction of these relationships. For example, while the findings suggest that

pornography use is linked with lower relationship satisfaction among married individuals, it

is unclear whether pornography use leads to dissatisfaction or whether married individuals

who are already dissatisfied are more likely to turn to pornography. It is also possible that a

third factor, such as stress, poor communication, or unmet emotional needs, influences both

pornography use and relationship satisfaction at the same time. Without observing changes

over time, it is difficult to separate cause from effect, leaving the true nature of these

relationships uncertain.

Lastly, the generalizability of the findings may be limited by the way participants

were recruited. Since the study used online **non-probability sampling**, not every married

individual in Malaysia had an equal chance of being included. Instead, the sample reflected

only those who came across the survey link and were willing to participate. This means that

certain groups of people may have been overrepresented while others were underrepresented.

For example, the participants may have shared similar educational backgrounds, ages, or

religious beliefs, which could shape both their attitudes toward pornography and their levels

of relationship satisfaction among married individuals. If the sample does not capture the full

range of diversity within Malaysian marriages, the results may not accurately reflect the

experiences of all married individuals. As such, the findings should be understood as

representing the specific group studied, rather than the entire married population.

**5.4 Recommendations for future research**

Firstly, because the sensitive nature of pornography consumption and sexual

satisfaction may have influenced how honestly participants answered, future studies should

find ways to reduce the pressure people feel to "look good" in their responses. Many

participants may have been worried about being judged, even though the survey was

anonymous. To address this, researchers could design questions in less direct ways so that

people do not feel forced to give the "socially acceptable" answer. They could also use

**techniques that measure attitudes or behaviors** without asking participants to state them

openly. Most importantly, researchers should provide clear and thorough briefings on **privacy**

**and confidentiality policies** before the survey begins, as creating a strong sense of safety

helps participants feel comfortable sharing their true experiences. This would make the data

more accurate and closer to what people actually think and do, instead of what they believe

they should say.

Secondly, since this study only used quantitative methods, future research could

combine both numbers and personal stories to get a fuller picture. Surveys and statistics are

useful because they show patterns and connections between variables, but they cannot

explain the deeper reasons behind people's behaviors. By **adding qualitative methods** such as interviews, focus groups, or open-ended questions, researchers can explore what pornography means to individuals, why they use it, and how it affects their feelings and relationships. This mix of numerical data and personal experiences would give a richer understanding, showing not just the patterns that exist, but also the human experiences and emotions behind them.

Thirdly, because this study collected data at only one point in time, future research could follow couples over a longer period to see how things change (i.e., **longitudinal designs**). By observing married individuals across different stages of their marriage, researchers could better understand how pornography use and relationship satisfaction among married individuals affect each other. This approach would make it easier to see whether pornography leads to lower relationship satisfaction, whether couples who are unhappy are more likely to use pornography, or whether other factors, like stress or poor communication, are involved. Tracking married individuals over time would give a clearer picture of how these relationships develop and change.

Lastly, because this study only included participants who found the survey online, the results may not represent all married individuals in Malaysia. Future research should apply **probability sampling** and include a larger and more diverse group of participants, with different ages, ethnicities, religions, and education levels. This would help show how pornography use and relationship satisfaction might vary across different types of married individuals. Including a wider variety of people would make the findings more accurate for the general population and give a better understanding of the issue in Malaysian society.

**5.5 Conclusion**

This study revealed that pornography consumption is significantly associated with relationship satisfaction among Malaysian married individuals, with the effect operating primarily through sexual satisfaction (such as personal sexual satisfaction and perceived partner sexual satisfaction). Specifically, gender significantly moderated this relationship, such that married men experienced stronger negative effects of pornography consumption on relationship satisfaction via sexual satisfaction compared to married women. Additionally, the number of children emerged as a significant covariate for both personal and perceived partner sexual satisfaction, suggesting that family composition may influence sexual satisfaction and relationship satisfaction. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of considering gendered pathways and partner-focused sexual satisfaction when examining the impact of pornography on relationship satisfaction, and they provide a foundation for future interventions and research aimed at enhancing relational and sexual health among married individuals in Malaysia.

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**Appendices**

**Appendix A**

**Monte Carlo Power Analysis**

**Appendix B**

**Ethical Approval For Research Project Letter**

**UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN** DU012(A)
Wholly owned by UTAR Education Foundation    Co. No. 578227-M

Re: U/SERC/78-415/2024

17 December 2024

Mr Tay Kok Wai
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 Mr Tay,

**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 <u>Expedited Review</u>.

The details of the research projects are as follows:

| No | Research Title | Student's Name | Supervisor's Name | Approval Validity |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | The Influence of Valence, Behavioural, and Cognitive-Emotional Maturity to Parenthood on Fertility Intention: Examining the Moderating Role of Gender | 1. Chew En Jee 2. Yong Wen Hui | | |
| 2. | The Fragile Bonds of Love: Examining How Partner Affirmation and Commitment Uncertainty Predict Sexual and Emotional Infidelity Among Married Couple in Malaysia | 1. Chang Shan Mei 2. Tay Shi Swen 3. Wong Ming Jie | Dr Tan Soon Aun | 17 December 2024 – 16 December 2025 |
| 3. | Sensitivity and Relationship Commitment Among Unmarried Couples in Malaysia: Attachment Styles as Mediator | 1. Daphne Voon Kai Yen 2. Ng Yi Xuan | | |
| 4. | Pornography Consumption and Relationship Satisfaction Among Married Couples: A Moderated Mediation Model of Sexual Satisfaction and Gender | 1. Tay Xue Jie 2. Wong Wei Zhong | | |

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.

**Kampar Campus** : Jalan Universiti, Bandar Barat, 31900 Kampar, Perak Darul Ridzuan, Malaysia
Tel: (605) 468 8888   Fax: (605) 466 1313
**Sungai Long Campus** : Jalan Sungai Long, Bandar Sungai Long, Cheras, 43000 Kajang, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Tel: (603) 9086 0288   Fax: (603) 9019 8868
**Website**: www.utar.edu.my

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

**Appendix C**

**Poster For Recruiting Participants**

**Appendix D**

**Questionnaire**

# Pornography Consumption and Relationship Satisfaction Among Married Couples

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**Start of Block: Default Question Block**

Introduction

**Introduction**

We would like to conduct a research study to examine the predictors of romantic relationship among couples in Malaysia.

**Procedures and Confidentiality**

The following questionnaire will require approximately 15 minutes to complete. All information provided will remain as **private and confidential**. The information given will only be reported as group data with no identifying information and only use for academic purpose.

**Participation** All the information gathered will remain anonymous and confidential. Your information will not be disclosed to any unauthorized person and would be accessible only by group members. Participant in this study is voluntary; you are free to withdraw with consent and discontinue participation in anytime without prejudice. Your responses will be coded numerically in the research assignment for the research interpretation. Your cooperation would be greatly appreciated.

If you choose to participate in this project, please answer all the questions as honestly as possible and return the completed questionnaire promptly.

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Consent

**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:**      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. 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.        You may access and update your personal data by writing to us at EMAIL

Tay Xue Jie - suzietay0611@1utar.my

Wong Wei Zhong - wongweizhong333@1utar.my

**Acknowledgment of Notice**

o    I have been notified by you and that I hereby understood, consented and agreed per UTAR above notice.
o    I disagree, my personal data will not be processed.

*Skip To: End of Survey If Personal Data Protection Statement*

*Please be informed that in accordance with Personal Data Protecti = I disagree, my personal data will not be processed.*

Part A 1. How often have you viewed pornography in the past year?

o   I viewed pornography once in the past year
o   I viewed pornography about once every six months
o   I viewed pornography about monthly
o   I viewed pornography weekly
o   I viewed pornography multiple times a week
o   I viewed pornography daily
o   I haven't viewed pornography in the past year

Q2. How often have you viewed pornography in the past 30-days?

o   I viewed pornography once in the past 30-days
o   I viewed pornography twice in the past 30-days
o   I viewed pornography weekly
o   I viewed pornography multiple times a week
o   I viewed pornography daily
o   I viewed pornography multiple times a day
o   I haven't viewed pornography in the past 30-days

Q3. How often have you viewed pornography in the past 7-days?

o   I viewed pornography once in the past 7-days
o   I viewed pornography twice in the past 7-days
o   I viewed pornography every day of the past 7-days
o   I viewed pornography multiple times a day in the past 7-days
o   I haven't viewed pornography in the past 7-days

Q4. When I view pornography, I view it for…

o   Less than 5 minutes
o   6-15 minutes
o   16-25 minutes
o   26-35 minutes
o   36-45 minutes
o   46+ minutes

Q5. When I visit a pornography website, I visit for...

o   Less than 5 minutes
o   6-15 minutes
o   16-25 minutes
o   26-35 minutes
o   36-45 minutes
o   46+ minutes

Q6. The last time I viewed pornography, I viewed it for...

o   Less than 5 minutes
o   6-15 minutes
o   16-25 minutes
o   26-35 minutes
o   36-45 minutes
o   46+ minutes

Page Break

Part B 1. How often does your partner meet your needs?

o   1 (Poorly)
o   2 (2)
o   3 (Average)
o   4 (4)
o   5 (Extremely Well)

Q2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?

o   1 (Unsatisfied)
o   2 (2)
o   3 (Average)
o   4 (4)
o   5 (Extremely Satisfied)

Q3. How good is your relationship compared to most?

o   1 (Poor)
o   2 (2)
o   3 (Average)
o   4 (4)
o   5 (Excellent)

Q4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten in this relationship?

o   1 (Never)
o   2 (2)
o   3 (Average)
o   4 (4)
o   5 (Very Often)

Q5. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?

o   1 (Hardly at all)
o   2 (2)
o   3 (Average)
o   4 (4)
o   5 (Completely)

Q6. How much do you love your partner?

o   1 (Not much)
o   2 (2)
o   3 (Average)
o   4 (4)
o   5 (Very Much)

Q7. How many problems are there in your relationship?

o   1 (Very few)
o   2 (2)
o   3 (Average)

o    4 (4)
o    5 (Very Many)

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Page Break    ———————————————————————————————

**PART C** Instructions*: Please select the answer that best describe you.*

| | Not at all satisfied | A little satisfied | Moderately Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Extremely Satisfied |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The intensity of my sexual arousal | o | o | o | o | o |
| 2. The quality of my orgasms | o | o | o | o | o |
| 3. My 'letting go' and surrender to sexual pleasure during sex | o | o | o | o | o |
| 4. My focus/ concentration during sexual activity | o | o | o | o | o |
| 5. The way I sexually react to my partner | o | o | o | o | o |
| 6. My body's sexual functioning | o | o | o | o | o |
| 7. My emotional | o | o | o | o | o |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| opening up in sex | | | | | |
| 8. My mood after sexual activity | o | o | o | o | o |
| 9. The frequency of my orgasms | o | o | o | o | o |
| 10. The pleasure I provide to my partner | o | o | o | o | o |

---

Page Break

**PART D** Instructions: *Please select the answer that best describe you.*

| | Not at all satisfied | A little satisfied | Moderately Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Extremely Satisfied |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The balance between what I give and receive in sex | o | o | o | o | o |
| 2. My partner's emotional opening up during sex | o | o | o | o | o |
| 3. My partner's initiation of sexual activity | o | o | o | o | o |
| 4. My partner's ability to orgasm | o | o | o | o | o |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. My partner's surrender to sexual pleasure ('letting go') | o | o | o | o | o |
| 6. The way my partner takes care of my sexual needs | o | o | o | o | o |
| 7. My partner's sexual creativity | o | o | o | o | o |
| 8. My partner's sexual creativity | o | o | o | o | o |
| 9. The variety of my sexual activities | o | o | o | o | o |
| 10. The frequency of my sexual activity | o | o | o | o | o |

---

Page Break

---

**PART E** Please fill in your personal details or select **ONE** option.

1. Age:

_____

---

Q2. Gender:

o   Male
o   Female

------------------------------------------------------------

Q3. Ethnicity:

o   Malay
o   Indian
o   Chinese
o   Others (*Specify) _____

------------------------------------------------------------

Q4. Religion:

o   Muslim
o   Buddhist
o   Hindu
o   Christian
o   Others (*Specify) _____

------------------------------------------------------------

Q5. Relationship status:

o   Single
o   In a relationship
o   Engaged
o   Married

------------------------------------------------------------

Q6. Employment status:

o   1. Employed (*Specify) _____
o   2. Unemployed (housewife)
o   3. Student

---

Q7

7. Length of the current relationship: _____ months

_____

---

Q8 8. No of children (If relevant):

_____

**End of Block: Default Question Block**

**Appendix E**

**Cronbach's Alpha for each scale (Pilot study)**

The Consumption of Pornography Scale-General (COPS-G)
Variable: Pornography consumption (PC)

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .535 | .707 | 6 |

Cronbach's Alpha of COPS-G after item 3 is removed

**Item-Total Statistics**

| | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. How often have you viewed pornography in the past year? | 9.43 | 13.166 | .678 | .887 | .238 |
| 2. How often have you viewed pornography in the past 30-days? | 10.22 | 16.451 | .605 | .844 | .345 |
| 3. How often have you viewed pornography in the past 7-days? | 8.65 | 38.328 | -.724 | .587 | .934 |
| 4. When I view pornography, I view it for... | 9.91 | 14.447 | .849 | .975 | .220 |
| 5. When I visit a pornography website, I visit for... | 9.83 | 13.787 | .855 | .970 | .192 |
| 6. The last time I viewed pornography, I viewed it for... | 9.78 | 15.542 | .794 | .880 | .273 |

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)

Variable: Relationship satisfaction (RS)

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .895 | .902 | 7 |

New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS)

Variable: Personal Sexual Satisfaction (PSS)

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .968 | .969 | 10 |

New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS)

Variable: Perceived Partner Sexual Satisfaction (PPSS)

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .980 | .979 | 10 |

**Appendix F**

**Cronbach's Alpha for each scale (Actual study)**

The Consumption of Pornography Scale-General (COPS-G)
Variable: Pornography consumption (PC)

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .688 | .729 | 6 |

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)

Variable: Relationship satisfaction (RS)

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .881 | .892 | 7 |

New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS)

Variable: Personal Sexual Satisfaction (PSS)

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .977 | .977 | 10 |

New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS)

Variable: Perceived Partner Sexual Satisfaction (PPSS)

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .973 | .973 | 10 |

**Appendix G**

**Histogram**

Pornography consumption (PC)

## PC_Mean



### Histogram

Mean = 2.44
Std. Dev. = .988
N = 200
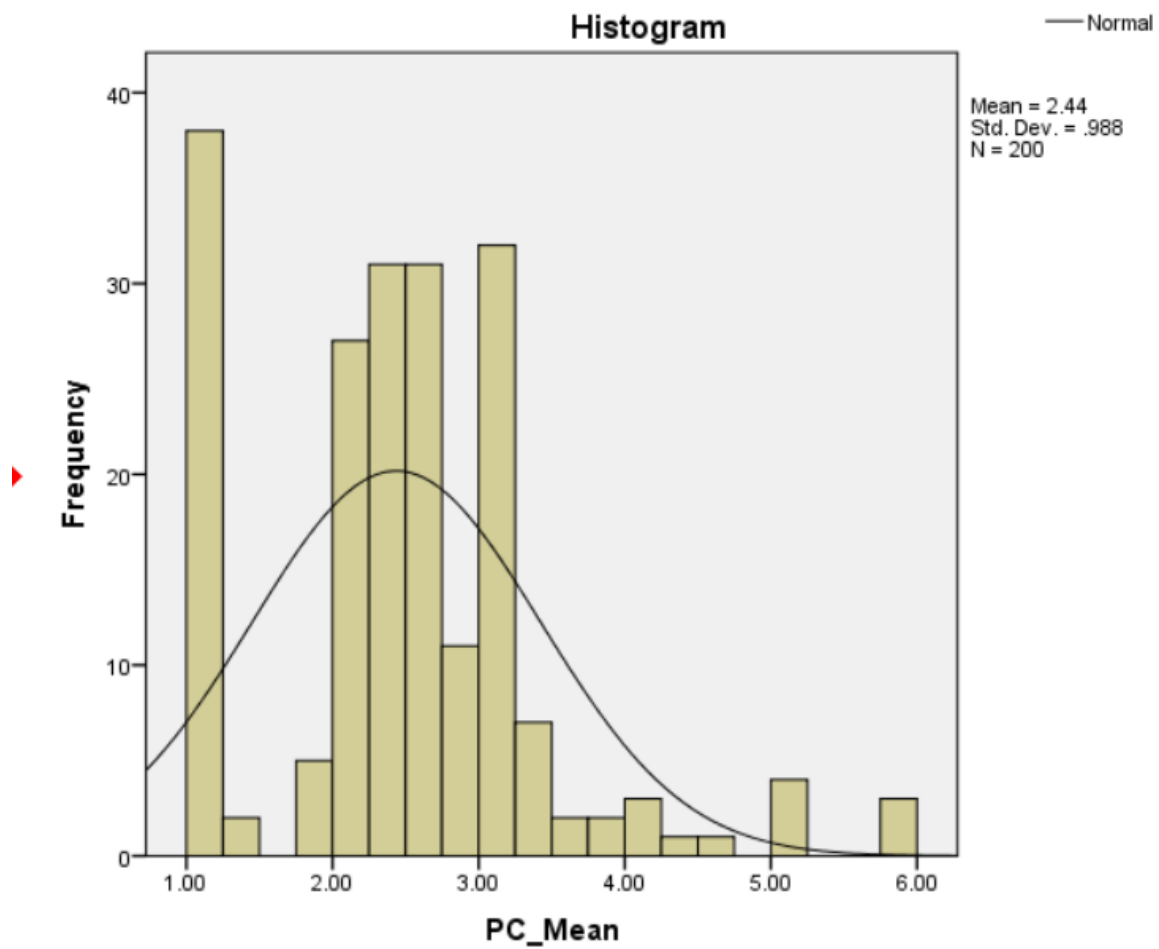
Relationship satisfaction (RS)

## RS_SUM
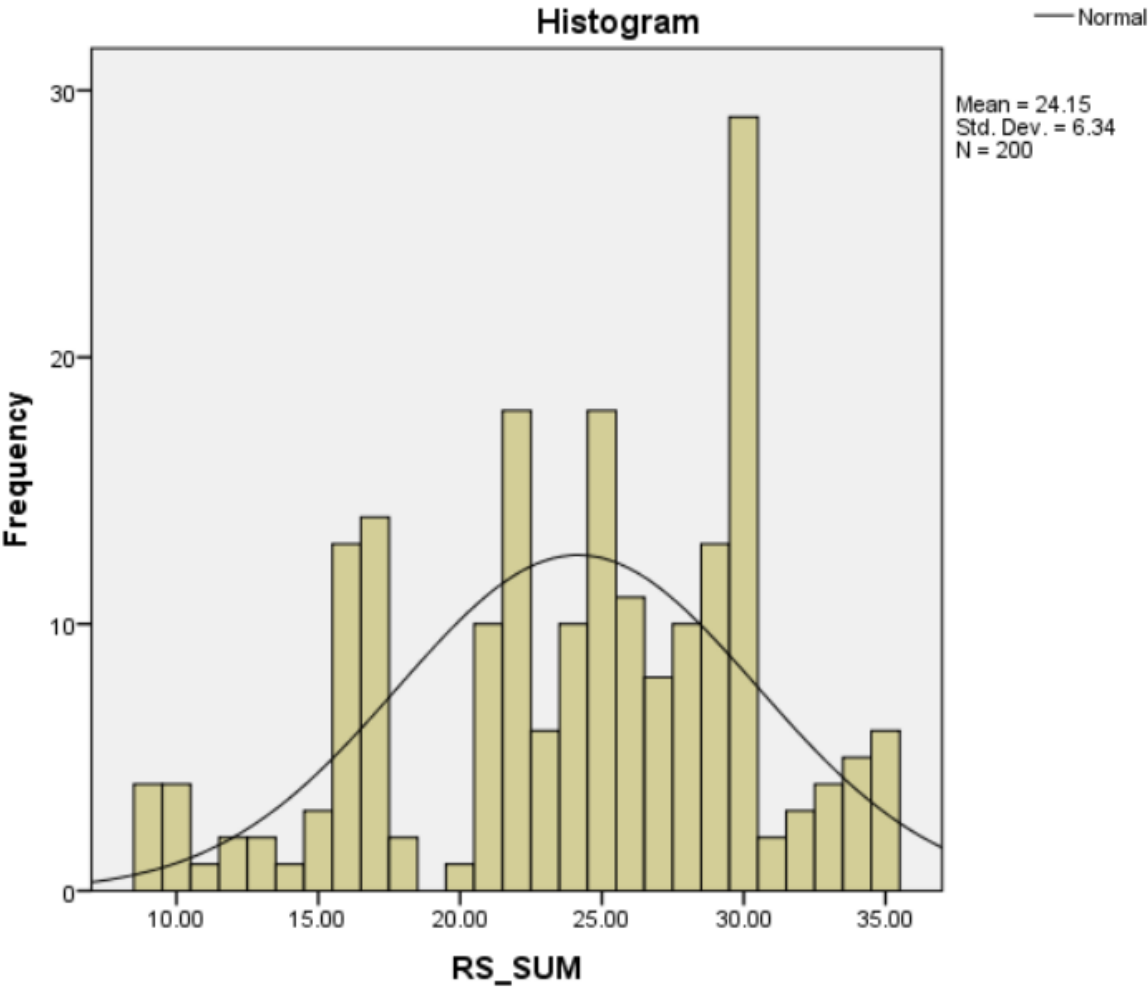
Personal sexual satisfaction (PSS)

**PSS_SUM**
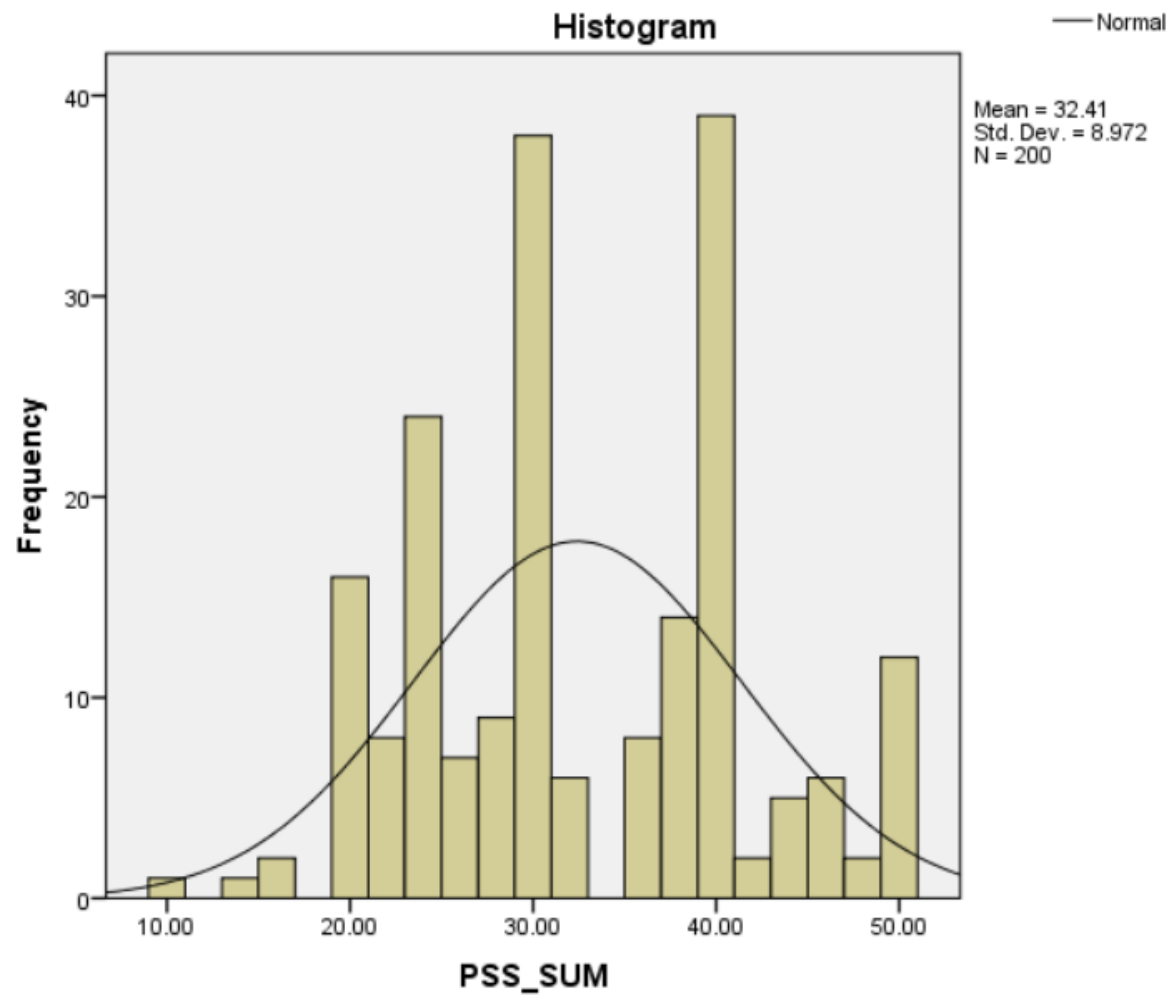
Perceived partner sexual satisfaction (PPSS)

▸ **PPSS_SUM**
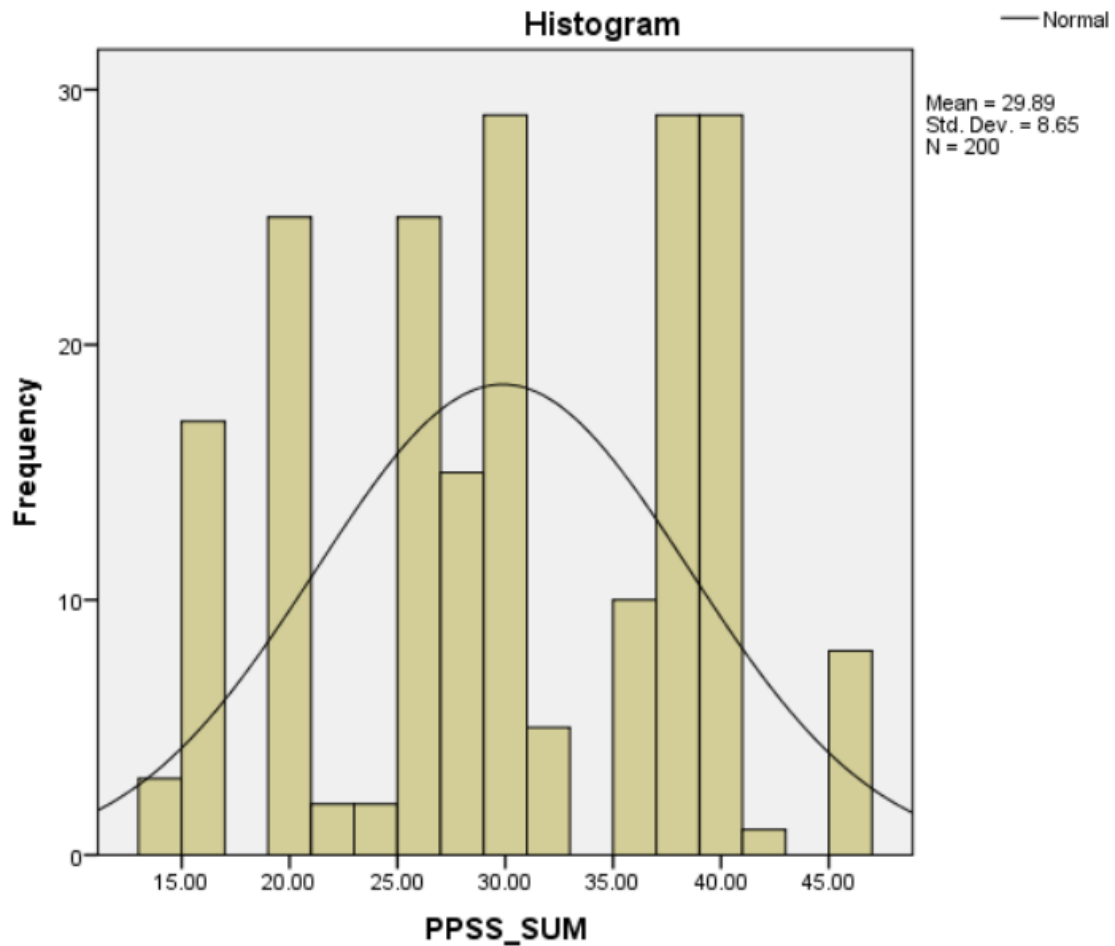
**Appendix H**

**Q-Q Plot**

Pornography consumption (PC)
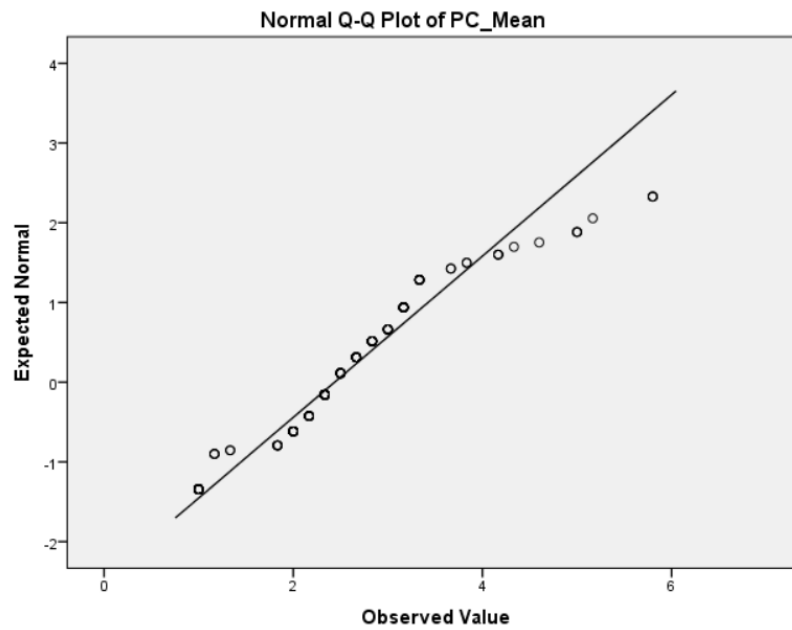


Relationship satisfaction (RS)
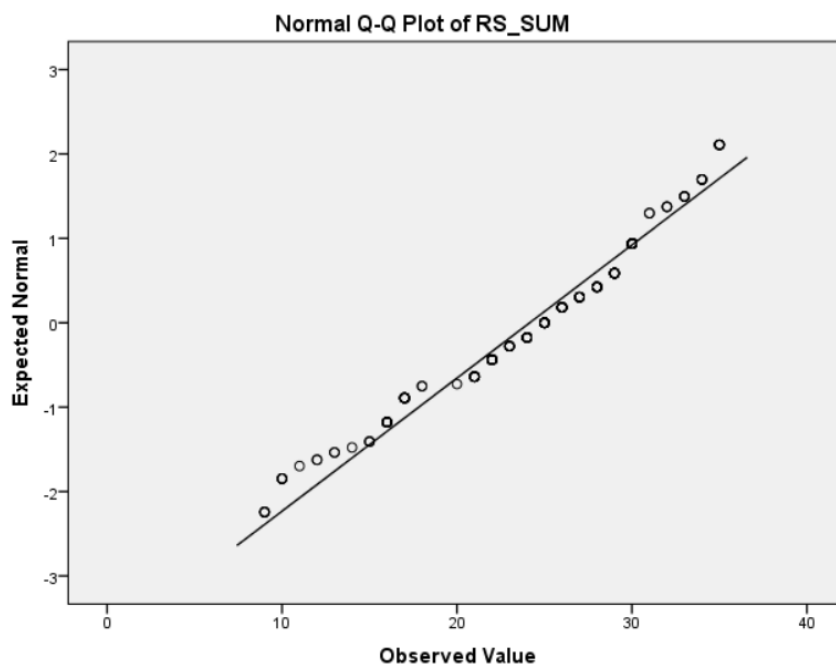
Personal sexual satisfaction (PSS)
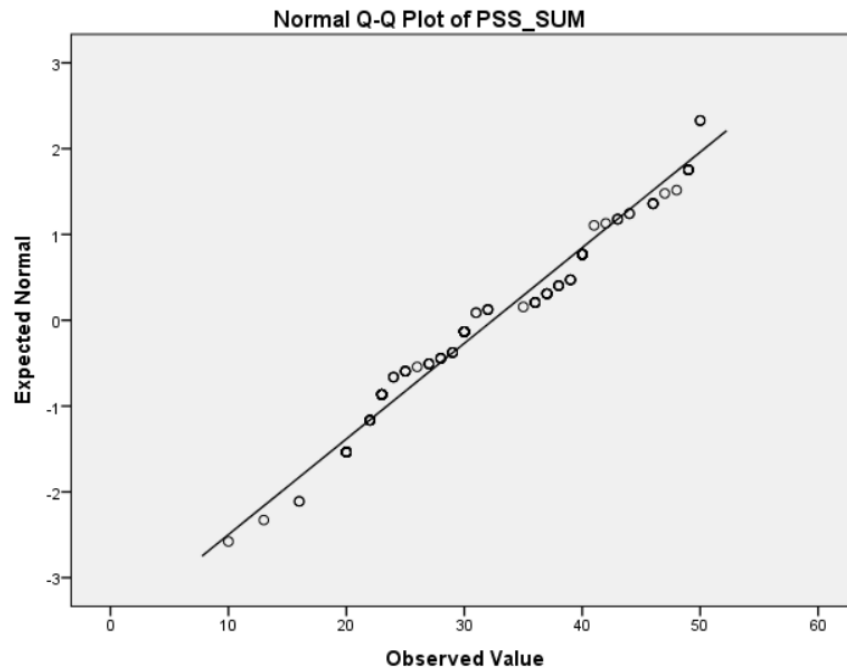


Perceived partner sexual satisfaction (PPSS)
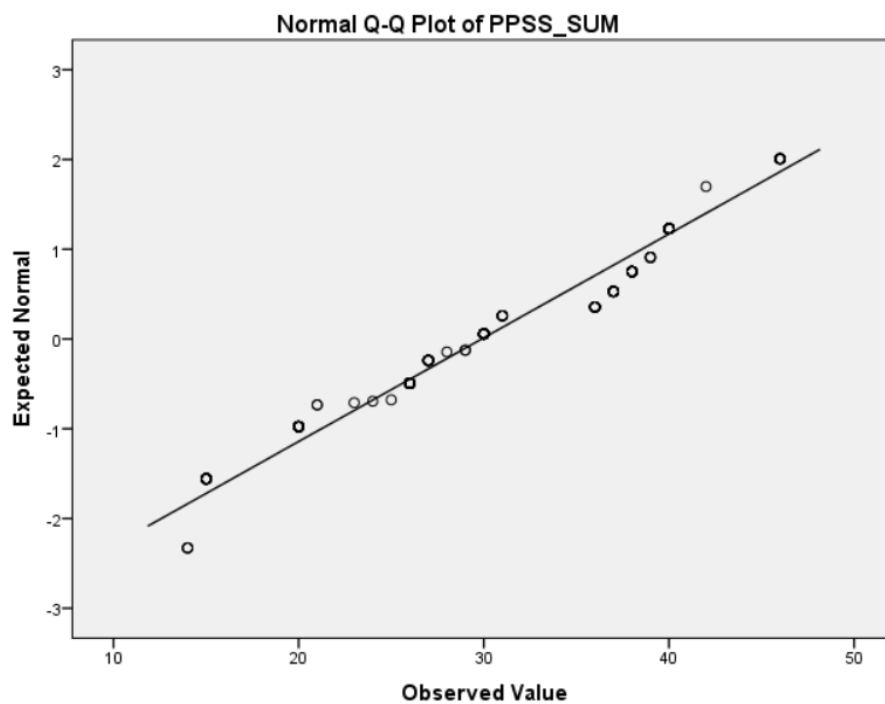
## Appendix I

### Skewness and Kurtosis

Pornography consumption (PC)

| PC_Mean | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | | 2.4367 | .06990 |
| | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | Lower Bound | 2.2988 | |
| | | Upper Bound | 2.5745 | |
| | 5% Trimmed Mean | | 2.3704 | |
| | Median | | 2.3333 | |
| | Variance | | .977 | |
| | Std. Deviation | | .98849 | |
| | Minimum | | 1.00 | |
| | Maximum | | 5.80 | |
| | Range | | 4.80 | |
| | Interquartile Range | | 1.00 | |
| | Skewness | | .672 | .172 |
| | Kurtosis | | 1.383 | .342 |

Relationship satisfaction (RS)

| RS_SUM | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | | 24.1550 | .44829 |
| | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | Lower Bound | 23.2710 | |
| | | Upper Bound | 25.0390 | |
| | 5% Trimmed Mean | | 24.3667 | |
| | Median | | 25.0000 | |
| | Variance | | 40.192 | |
| | Std. Deviation | | 6.33971 | |
| | Minimum | | 9.00 | |
| | Maximum | | 35.00 | |
| | Range | | 26.00 | |
| | Interquartile Range | | 8.00 | |
| | Skewness | | -.500 | .172 |
| | Kurtosis | | -.415 | .342 |

Personal sexual satisfaction (PSS)

| SelfSS_SUM | Mean | | 32.4100 | .63441 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | Lower Bound | 31.1590 | |
| | | Upper Bound | 33.6610 | |
| | 5% Trimmed Mean | | 32.3000 | |
| | Median | | 30.0000 | |
| | Variance | | 80.494 | |
| | Std. Deviation | | 8.97187 | |
| | Minimum | | 10.00 | |
| | Maximum | | 50.00 | |
| | Range | | 40.00 | |
| | Interquartile Range | | 16.00 | |
| | Skewness | | .107 | .172 |
| | Kurtosis | | -.874 | .342 |

Perceived partner sexual satisfaction (PPSS)

| | | | Statistic | Std. Error |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PPSS_SUM | Mean | | 29.8850 | .61166 |
| | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | Lower Bound | 28.6788 | |
| | | Upper Bound | 31.0912 | |
| | 5% Trimmed Mean | | 29.8889 | |
| | Median | | 30.0000 | |
| | Variance | | 74.826 | |
| | Std. Deviation | | 8.65020 | |
| | Minimum | | 14.00 | |
| | Maximum | | 46.00 | |
| | Range | | 32.00 | |
| | Interquartile Range | | 12.75 | |
| | Skewness | | -.131 | .172 |
| | Kurtosis | | -.964 | .342 |

**Appendix J**

**Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

**Tests of Normality**

| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| PartnerSS_SUM | .145 | 200 | .000 | .944 | 200 | .000 |
| PC_Mean | .115 | 200 | .000 | .916 | 200 | .000 |
| RS_SUM | .098 | 200 | .000 | .957 | 200 | .000 |
| SelfSS_SUM | .136 | 200 | .000 | .956 | 200 | .000 |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

**Appendix K**

**Descriptive Statistics (Demographic)**

**Gender**

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Female | 82 | 41.0 | 41.0 | 41.0 |
| | Male | 118 | 59.0 | 59.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

**Race**

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Malay | 10 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| | Chinese | 190 | 95.0 | 95.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

**Religion**

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Muslim | 10 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| | Buddhist | 160 | 80.0 | 80.0 | 85.0 |
| | Christian | 30 | 15.0 | 15.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

**Number of children (NOC)**

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | 0 | 44 | 22.0 | 22.0 | 22.0 |
| | 1 | 31 | 15.5 | 15.5 | 37.5 |
| | 2 | 48 | 24.0 | 24.0 | 61.5 |
| | 3 | 37 | 18.5 | 18.5 | 80.0 |
| | 4 | 21 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 90.5 |
| | 5 | 12 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 96.5 |
| | 6 | 6 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 99.5 |
| | 7 | 1 | .5 | .5 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

**1. Age:**

| N | Valid | 200 |
|---|---|---|
| | Missing | 0 |
| Mean | | 42.92 |
| Median | | 38.00 |
| Mode | | 35 |
| Std. Deviation | | 12.312 |
| Minimum | | 22 |
| Maximum | | 76 |

## Appendix L

## Descriptive Statistics (Scales)

Total

**Descriptive Statistics**

|  | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PC_Mean | 200 | 1.00 | 5.80 | 2.4367 | .98849 | .977 |
| RS_SUM | 200 | 9.00 | 35.00 | 24.1550 | 6.33971 | 40.192 |
| PSS_SUM | 200 | 10.00 | 50.00 | 32.4100 | 8.97187 | 80.494 |
| PPSS_SUM | 200 | 14.00 | 46.00 | 29.8850 | 8.65020 | 74.826 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 200 |  |  |  |  |  |

Male

**Descriptive Statistics**

|  | N | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PC_Mean | 118 | 4.80 | 1.00 | 5.80 | 2.4729 | .83346 | .695 |
| RS_SUM | 118 | 26.00 | 9.00 | 35.00 | 22.7797 | 6.18122 | 38.207 |
| PSS_SUM | 118 | 39.00 | 10.00 | 49.00 | 31.3983 | 8.72969 | 76.208 |
| PPSS_SUM | 118 | 32.00 | 14.00 | 46.00 | 28.7542 | 8.63697 | 74.597 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 118 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Female

**Descriptive Statistics**

|  | N | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PC_Mean | 82 | 4.80 | 1.00 | 5.80 | 2.3846 | 1.18004 | 1.392 |
| RS_SUM | 82 | 26.00 | 9.00 | 35.00 | 26.1341 | 6.06907 | 36.834 |
| PSS_SUM | 82 | 30.00 | 20.00 | 50.00 | 33.8659 | 9.16752 | 84.044 |
| PPSS_SUM | 82 | 26.00 | 20.00 | 46.00 | 31.5122 | 8.45795 | 71.537 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 82 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Appendix M

## Correlation Analysis (Pearson Correlation Coefficient)

**Correlations**

| | | PC_Mean | RS_SUM | SelfSS_SUM | PartnerSS_SUM | Age | Gender: | 7. Length of the current romantic relationship (LOR) | 8. No of children in total (If relevant): |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PC_Mean | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.238** | -.144* | -.122* | -.123* | .044 | -.184** | -.260** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | | .000 | .021 | .042 | .041 | .268 | .005 | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| RS_SUM | Pearson Correlation | -.238** | 1 | .791** | .704** | -.106 | -.261** | -.050 | -.209** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .068 | .000 | .242 | .001 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| PSS_SUM | Pearson Correlation | -.144* | .791** | 1 | .662** | -.099 | -.136* | -.019 | -.208** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .021 | .000 | | .000 | .082 | .028 | .394 | .002 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| PPSS_SUM | Pearson Correlation | -.122* | .704** | .662** | 1 | -.142* | -.157* | -.131* | -.267** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .042 | .000 | .000 | | .022 | .013 | .032 | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| Age | Pearson Correlation | -.123* | -.106 | -.099 | -.142* | 1 | .174** | .784** | .525** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .041 | .068 | .082 | .022 | | .007 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| Gender: | Pearson Correlation | .044 | -.261** | -.136* | -.157* | .174** | 1 | .147* | .026 |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .268 | .000 | .028 | .013 | .007 | | .019 | .358 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| 7. Length of the current romantic relationship (LOR) | Pearson Correlation | -.184** | -.050 | -.019 | -.131* | .784** | .147* | 1 | .413** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .005 | .242 | .394 | .032 | .000 | .019 | | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| 8. No of children in total (If relevant): | Pearson Correlation | -.260** | -.209** | -.208** | -.267** | .525** | .026 | .413** | 1 |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .000 | .001 | .002 | .000 | .000 | .358 | .000 | |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |

**Appendix N**

**Moderated Mediation Analysis**

Outcome variable: Personal Sexual Satisfaction (PSS)

Path a[1]

```
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 PSS_SUM

Model Summary
          R         R-sq        MSE          F         df1         df2          p
       .335        .113      72.900      6.183       4.000     195.000       .000

Model
             coeff         se          t          p        LLCI        ULCI
constant    39.181      2.428     16.140       .000      34.393      43.968
PC_Mean     -1.010       .819     -1.233       .219      -2.625        .606
Gender       2.867      3.268       .877       .381      -3.577       9.311
Int_1       -2.071      1.242     -1.667       .097      -4.522        .379
NOC         -1.402       .376     -3.729       .000      -2.144       -.661

Product terms key:
 Int_1    :         PC_Mean   x         Gender

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):
      R2-chng         F         df1         df2           p
X*W        .013      2.779      1.000     195.000       .097
----------
    Focal predict: PC_Mean  (X)
          Mod var: Gender   (W)
```

```
Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

DATA LIST FREE/
    PC_Mean        Gender        PSS_SUM    .
BEGIN DATA.
      1.448          .000        34.739
      2.437          .000        33.741
      3.425          .000        32.742
      1.448         1.000        34.606
      2.437         1.000        31.560
      3.425         1.000        28.515
END DATA.
GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=
 PC_Mean  WITH      PSS_SUM BY      Gender       .
```

Outcome Variable: Perceived Partner Sexual Satisfaction (PPSS)

Path $a^2$

```
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 PPSS_SUM

Model Summary
          R         R-sq        MSE          F          df1         df2          p
       .396        .157       64.396      9.058       4.000     195.000        .000

Model
            coeff        se          t          p         LLCI        ULCI
constant    36.181      2.282     15.858       .000       31.681      40.681
PC_Mean      -.527       .770      -.685       .494       -2.045        .991
Gender       4.584      3.071      1.493       .137       -1.472      10.641
Int_1       -2.892      1.168     -2.476       .014       -5.195       -.589
NOC         -1.646       .353     -4.658       .000       -2.343       -.949

Product terms key:
 Int_1    :        PC_Mean  x        Gender

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):
       R2-chng         F         df1         df2          p
X*W       .027       6.132      1.000     195.000        .014
----------
    Focal predict: PC_Mean  (X)
          Mod var: Gender      (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

     Gender    Effect         se          t          p         LLCI        ULCI
     Female    -.527        .770      -.685       .494       -2.045        .991
       Male   -3.419        .906     -3.774       .000       -5.205      -1.632


DATA LIST FREE/
   PC_Mean      Gender       PPSS_SUM   .
BEGIN DATA.
     1.448        .000       31.920
     2.437        .000       31.399
     3.425        .000       30.879
     1.448       1.000       32.317
     2.437       1.000       28.937
     3.425       1.000       25.558
END DATA.
GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=
 PC_Mean  WITH    PPSS_SUM BY       Gender      .
```

Outcome Variable: Perceived Partner Sexual Satisfaction (PPSS)


Path $b^1$, $b^2$, c'

```
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 RS_SUM

Model Summary
          R        R-sq         MSE           F         df1         df2           p
       .849        .721      11.666      61.824       8.000     191.000        .000

Model
             coeff          se           t           p        LLCI        ULCI
constant     9.278       1.906       4.867        .000       5.518      13.039
PC_Mean      -.575        .331      -1.738        .084      -1.227        .077
SelfSS_S      .328        .068       4.814        .000        .193        .462
PartnerS      .239        .074       3.228        .001        .093        .385
Gender      -2.203       2.532       -.870        .385      -7.197       2.791
Int_1        -.611        .512      -1.195        .234      -1.620        .398
Int_2         .094        .081       1.165        .245       -.065        .254
Int_3        -.037        .086       -.431        .667       -.207        .133
NOC          -.191        .159      -1.200        .232       -.505        .123

Product terms key:
 Int_1    :        PC_Mean   x         H_2
 Int_2    :        PPS_SUM   x         H_2
 Int_3    :        PPSS_SUM  x         H_2

Test(s) of X by M interaction:
          F          df1         df2           p
M1*X    9.574      1.000     190.000        .002
M2*X    5.909      1.000     190.000        .016

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):
        R2-chng         F         df1         df2           p
X*W        .002      1.427      1.000     191.000        .234
M1*W       .002      1.358      1.000     191.000        .245
M2*W       .000       .186      1.000     191.000        .667
----------
    Focal predict: PC_Mean   (X)
           Mod var: Gender    (W)
```

```
Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

DATA LIST FREE/
   PC_Mean     H_2          RS_SUM       .
BEGIN DATA.
      1.448         .000       25.797
      2.437         .000       25.229
      3.425         .000       24.661
      1.448        1.000       24.657
      2.437        1.000       23.484
      3.425        1.000       22.312
END DATA.
GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=
 PC_Mean  WITH     RS_SUM    BY         Gender       .
----------
    Focal predict: PSS_SUM (M1)
          Mod var: Gender   (W)



Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

DATA LIST FREE/
   PSS_SUM     Gender       RS_SUM       .
BEGIN DATA.
      23.438        .000       22.289
      32.410        .000       25.229
      41.382        .000       28.169
      23.438       1.000       19.698
      32.410       1.000       23.484
      41.382       1.000       27.271
END DATA.
GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=
 PSS_SUM  WITH     RS_SUM    BY         Gender       .
----------
    Focal predict: PPSS_SUM (M2)
          Mod var: Gender   (W)
```

```
Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

DATA LIST FREE/
   PPSS_SUM     Gender     RS_SUM    .
BEGIN DATA.
      21.235        .000     23.163
      29.885        .000     25.229
      38.535        .000     27.294
      21.235       1.000     21.740
      29.885       1.000     23.484
      38.535       1.000     25.229
END DATA.
GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=
 PPSS_SUM WITH     RS_SUM    BY       Gender      .
```

Direct & Indirect effect

```
******************** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y **|****************

Conditional direct effects of X on Y
      Gender     Effect         se          t          p        LLCI        ULCI
      Female     -.575        .331     -1.738       .084      -1.227        .077
        Male    -1.186        .408     -2.908       .004      -1.990       -.382

Conditional indirect effects of X on Y:

INDIRECT EFFECT:
 PC_Mean      ->     PSS_SUM     ->     RS_SUM

        H_2     Effect       BootSE     BootLLCI     BootULCI
     Female     -.331         .370      -1.209         .243
       Male    -1.300         .576      -2.521        -.251

Index of moderated mediation (difference between conditional indirect effects):
          Index     BootSE     BootLLCI     BootULCI
Gender   -.969       .685      -2.305         .393

 Pairwise contrasts between conditional indirect effects (Effect1 minus Effect2)
    Effect1    Effect2    Contrast     BootSE     BootLLCI     BootULCI
    -1.300      -.331      -.969        .685      -2.305        .393

INDIRECT EFFECT:
 PC_Mean      ->     PPSS_SUM    ->     RS_SUM

     Gender     Effect       BootSE     BootLLCI     BootULCI
     Female     -.126         .219       -.641         .232
       Male     -.689         .309      -1.371        -.175

Index of moderated mediation (difference between conditional indirect effects):
          Index     BootSE     BootLLCI     BootULCI
Gender   -.564       .376      -1.332         .151

 Pairwise contrasts between conditional indirect effects (Effect1 minus Effect2)
    Effect1    Effect2    Contrast     BootSE     BootLLCI     BootULCI
     -.689      -.126      -.564        .376      -1.332        .151
```

**Appendix O**

**Turnitin Report**

FYP2

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Publication — 1%

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**4** Qing Liu, Chun Feng, Run Li, Yun Zhou, Xin Meng, Hua Liu. "Study on methane flux variation characteristics and regulation mechanisms in urban wetlands under different restoration years and moisture gradients", Environmental Research, 2025
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**5** Simone Y. Goldberg, Kiarah M. K. O'Kane, Erin T. Fitzpatrick, Greta E. Jang, Katrina N. Bouchard, Samantha J. Dawson. "Associations between Genital Self-Image and Individuals' Own and Perceived Partner Sexual Satisfaction", Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy, 2023
Publication — 1%

6   Robin R. Milhausen, John K. Sakaluk, Terri D. Fisher, Clive M. Davis, William L. Yarber. "Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures", Routledge, 2019
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