

Symbolic Interaction and Sexual Behavior of the Adolescents Experiencing Internet Pornographic Addiction

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Abstract—One of the negative impacts of internet are the consumption of pornographic content that is increasing and far more open than before. The internet is considered a more comfortable place to search for sexual information. This study aims to describe the symbols of pornography and to find out the meaning of symbols consumed by adolescents. The perspective of symbolic interactionism theory is used to understand the process of formation of individual behavior because of the social environment. In the perspective of symbolic interactionism, it shows that the condition of the society will continue to be created repeatedly through individual interactions with symbolic representations of the surrounding society. Symbolic interactionism enables individuals to develop their own self-sense to be socialized in social life. This research uses a qualitative method by conducting a case study on four subjects who are addicted to internet pornography. Interviews are used to collect the data and the use purposive sampling technique is used to select the subjects of the research. Thematic analysis technique is used to analyze the data. The results showed that subjects studied sexuality or acts related to sex through internet pornography and messages communicated through internet pornography. Internet pornography contains the symbols of power namely the power over women's bodies that are communicated in pornography. In internet pornography, men are symbolized as strong and dominant figures, while women are portrayed as weak figures. In addition, a man is physically symbolized as a muscular, stocky and well-built while a woman is supposed to be slim, big-breasted and slim-hipped.

Keywords— *internet pornography, symbolic interaction, adolescents*

I. INTRODUCTION

The topic of this research is basically motivated by pornography shows as a trigger of changes in adolescent attitudes or behavior. Adolescents will save the imagination of the pornography they have watched in their memory and even they will be addicted to consume it over and over again. They always think about it and always need and want to watch it. At this time most of the pornography content in internet which becomes the main consumption contain elements of violence, sex abuse and brutality and child pornography, other abusive and illegal videos [1] and hardcore pornography that clearly exploits the genitals [2]. Pornography is a media that explicitly presents sex content with the primary aim of arousing viewers' sexually desires [3], [4]. It contains pictures of naked and semi-nude women and men, implied sexual activity, and actual sexual activity

[5], [6]. Pornography shows are also described as sources of information and stimulation [7], [8].

Some teenagers point out that accessing to pornography is a normal thing to do and can be accepted by men and women. This statement is supported by survey results that show 64% of young people, aged 13-24, are actively in search for pornography every week or more often. Teenage girls and young women are significantly more likely to be actively looking for pornographic content than women aged 25 years and over [9]. The results of the study involving 813 students are done online from six college sites across the United States. Based on the data above, it shows that pornography has become part of teenagers' online activities. Exposure to pornography has penetrated almost all teenagers in various parts of the world. Pornographic content has shifted its patterns based on access, form and perspective on pornographic content.

Internet pornography is defined as the use of the internet for sexual activity, such as viewing pornographic images, chatting about sex, exchanging pictures or videos about sex that are sometimes followed by masturbation. Internet pornography is a very interesting medium for its users due to the nature of "Triple A", namely accessibility, affordability, and anonymity. Accessibility refers to the fact that the internet provides millions of pornographic sites and provides chat rooms that will provide opportunities for online pornography. Affordability means accessing porn sites provided by the internet which is not always expensive. And lastly, Anonymity is someone's feeling of no fear of being recognized by others. The characteristics of internet pornography as mentioned above provide an opportunity for adolescents to fulfill their curiosity about sexuality without any age-appropriate restrictions on their development. Today the internet is becoming a new world for teens to get unlimited information about sexuality [10].

This research is interesting to be studied through the perspective of symbolic interactionism Blummer, derived from several basic assumptions, namely: first is that human act on the objects based on the meanings they have. Second, whether the meaning of such things originates from or arises through social interaction. Also, these meanings are handled and modified through an interpretive process used by the individual in dealing with things that are encountered [11].

Symbolic interactionism takes an idea that sexuality reflects one's relationship with the real world and is not

merely a biological problem [12]. According to symbolic interactionism, sexual meaning is negotiated through social interaction, which provides a basis for 'learning' and 'gaining'. Sexual behavior, like all human behavior, is a symbol. Men and women use symbols and it exists in the world of meanings created by these symbols. Sexual behavior is associated with various activities, each with a different meaning including getting physical pleasure, having fun, creating intimacy, achieving spirituality, and exerting strength, but not limited to having children [13].

II. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method of case study approach. Researchers use instrumental case studies because case study research by examining cases is conducted to provide an in-depth understanding. It is intended to show something unique that can be learned from a particular case, which is different from the explanations obtained from other objects [14]. The participants or the subjects of this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique with some characteristics namely: adolescents aged 18-25 years, experiencing internet pornography addiction set by psychologists, and willing to become research respondents. The number of participants is four teenagers who experience internet addiction to pornography content. The in-depth interviews were done as data collection method to explore the experience of internet addiction in pornographic content experienced by the participants. Then, thematic analysis is used as the data analysis method. Analysis techniques used NVivo software are conducted to identify, to analyze and to report the patterns contained in the data and to present them in detailed and comprehensive data.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the data reduction of the participants' interview showed that the figure of female and male players in porn videos is such ideal figures. The female has a good and great size of breasts, while the male player has a muscular body. The behavior of male figures depicted by participants in porn videos always has an active and aggressive characteristics while the female is always reigned. Participants added that actually not all porn videos show sexually active men. According to participants, there are also active women and passive male players in the videos with certain titles. However, the participants preferred pornographic videos with active male actors.

"... then the men ..., the men are always well-built, like a strong man. Reference 10 - 0.17% Coverage ... yes, physically, yes, the curls are this long, some with red and some with yellow hair. Reference 11 - 0.04% Coverage ... yes, the body is proportional, Bu. Reference 12 - 0.02% Coverage ... well, for example, seen from the breasts, they are big, after all, woman should be like that woman. Reference 13 - 0.05% Coverage ... yes ideal. Hehe Reference 14 - 0.01% Coverage ... male characters are always muscular and must be also sexually passionate, for example it seems that woman enjoy that so much in the film. Reference 15 - 0.07% Coverage ... so much passionate in that way, they enjoy doing it much in the video Reference 16

- 0.05% Coverage ... yes they tend to surrender, they tend to surrender when the man does it despite of their typical screaming ... if I have to choose, I prefer an active male, Bu Reference 18 - 0.02% Coverage "

Participant AN said that she first saw many types of foreign sexual contents. She was interested in sexual content that has 1 female relationship with many men, for example sexual content containing of 1 woman with 5 or 6 men. Intimate relationships in sexual content are carried out alternately. There are some types of man's physical characters such as big, small, or black men depending the selected video. In addition, there are also some characters in the video seen from their age such as elderlies, adults, teenagers or even kids. She was more interested in heterosexual sexual content than homosexuals and was more interested in active male behavior.

"Sometimes at the top, sometimes one did it on miss V, then sometimes did another thing. Yes, they do it alternately. Sometimes a woman for 2 men. Then, they change the person again, up and down like that. Reference 3 - 0.17% Coverage ... yes sometimes some stand up, sometimes lie down, yes it depends on the film of course ... Reference 4 - 0.08% Coverage ... yes depending on the person, sometimes he is so big, sometimes small, sometimes foreigner, the black niggers, there are so many.... Reference 5 - 0.15% Coverage ... the first time, yes mostly found foreign people like that. Reference 1 - 0.07% Coverage ... what makes more interesting is when doing it with many persons involved. So one girl with some guys. Reference 2 - 0.10% Coverage ... the woman is only one with 5 or 6 people, then they will change each other. Reference 3 - 0.09% Coverage ... there are some teenagers, there are also some aged persons. Reference 4 - 0.05% Coverage ... the ones already aged, the ones like my grandpa. Reference 5 - 0.06% Coverage ... the man, sometimes both of them (aged) ... sometimes the females are still teenagers, and are also still kids. Reference 6 - 0.10% Coverage ... yes I prefer men and women, I don't really like the same sex. Reference 7 - 0.08% Coverage ... well, depending on the video, sometimes the more active is the woman sometimes the man. Reference 8 - 0.12% Coverage ... yes, it depends on the video. Sometimes it is found so sexy woman, sometimes no. Sometimes it is found a girl. Reference 9 - 0.15% Coverage"

Participant NG told about his liking sexual content about affair and rape. People in sexual content are usually teenagers and older men. He usually watches the pornography content with men and women characters. Men are usually active to start sexual activity first. He likes the white-skinned woman with long hair and the characters of student and teacher.

"Oo at that time, about an affair Reference 1 - 0.29% Coverage ... yes, most like children going home from school Reference 2 - 0.37% Coverage ... some teens after school and tired parents Reference 3 - 0.37% Coverage ... Many, the movie titles are like affair, rape and lots of content like TV shows, if existed... Reference 4 - 1.17% Coverage ... teens with aged persons Reference 5 - 0.23% Coverage ... yes, Chinese people ... Reference 7 - 0.21% Coverage ... yes,

the white women, the Chinese are white ... Reference 8 - 0.49% Coverage ... yes most of the them have long hair, it's a bit of a mess like Chinese, like Korean ... Reference 9 - 0.78% Coverage ... yes, mostly the women below the men, mostly like that ... Reference 6 - 0.69% Coverage ... yes mostly both. Initially the man ... Reference 10 - 0.41% Coverage ... the most memorable is student and teacher in school ... Reference 11 - 0.55% Coverage".

Participant TM when explaining his consumed pornography content said that he usually likes the intercourse done by high school peers who are of the same age. He enjoys the couple of students who have dating appointments by cellphone, then they met and went to a place and continued by kissing, hugging and having sex intercourse. Sexual intercourse is carried out by alternating positions between the male and the female, above or below. Women are described as being resigned or passive to anything treated by men. The participant described the physical character of males and females. The males' body are mostly not so big and a bit thin while women are also not so big but plump.

"Yes, the contents with high school students ... Reference 1 - 0.19% Coverage ... Yes first yes, meet up and keep going to a place and have an intercourse directly ... Reference 2 - 0.44% Coverage ... Yes, like the students in common, dating or making love in a place, in a rented room or somewhere else ... Reference 3 - 0.65% Coverage ... Yes mostly kisses, then an intercourse ... Reference 4 - 0.26% Coverage ... Yes hugs, and sleep together ... Reference 5 - 0.20% Coverage ... yes if they want, they will have it in the video ... Reference 6 - 0.37% Coverage ... Yes, the girl and the boy are students who had dating appointments by cellphone, then they met and walked together to a place, then having drinks or meals and continued by kissing and having sex intercourse... Reference 7 - 0.86% Coverage ... Yes, sleeping together sometimes the man is under-positioned the girl is above-positioned. Sometimes the girls squat too ... Reference 8 - 0.65% Coverage ... Most of the guys are thin ... Reference 9 - 0.18% Coverage ... yes in medium size, not too thin not too fat such a plump... Reference 10 - 0.43% Coverage ... Yes, the boy kissed the girl, squeezed the girl's breasts, then continued to have sex ... Reference 11 - 0.53% Coverage ... she was only reigned, willing to do anything asked by the boy ... Reference 12 - 0.39% Coverage ... Yes, the girl did anything the boy asked meekly such as to kiss , or to lie down, or to squat such a way ... Reference 13 - 0.50% Coverage ... The girl was more active, she started it first ... Reference 14 - 0.33% Coverage".

Research participants give meaning to the symbols displayed on pornographic internet content. Based on Mead [15] opine that aspects of symbolic interaction through actions, gestures, significant symbols, mind, self, society. This analysis is to find out the formation of sexual scripts of adolescents who experience internet pornography addiction.

The results of this study can be analyzed based on aspects of these symbolic interactions, namely:

A. Action

Based on Mead's opinion, participants experience internet addiction to pornography content through four stages namely impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation [16]. The first step, impulse, which includes spontaneous

stimulation associated with the senses, and the reaction of participants when they first see the shows in pornographic internet content, is inquisitive and curious. The two participants first saw pornographic internet content at puberty at the time of sex drive because of the maturation of the sexual organs and sexual hormones that began working at puberty. Curiosity then makes participants repeat watching pornographic content shows again and again.

The second stage is perception. After being curious, the participants want to know the visual scenes that appear in pornographic internet content shows. Then the participants react to those in sex with impulse namely being aroused or stimulated when viewing scenes of pornographic content. This is the capacity of participants as individuals to feel and understand stimuli through hearing, smiling, feeling, and so on. After seeing the pornographic content shows, participants think and bring imagination in their mind.

The third stage is manipulation. At this stage the participant raises the impulse to declare himself and has already understood the object of pornographic content, the next step is to manipulate the object or take action regarding the object. This manipulation stage is an important pause stage in the action process so that responses are not spontaneously manifested, but are processed appropriately. The next stage is the consummation stage or taking actions that satisfy the impulse. Male and female participants used different actions. The males prefer masturbating to satisfy their sexual desire while female participants only said yes when the men asked her to have sexual intercourse.

B. Gesture

Mead defines gesture as the movements of the first organism that act as specific stimuli that evoke (socially) appropriate responses to the second organism [16]. In this aspect, participants interpret every scene on the internet with pornographic content through movements by pornographic content players, such as the movement of undressing, kissing and inserting genitals and some others according to the type of pornographic content seen by each participant. The scenes in pornographic content, according to the participants' assumptions, are portrayed by figures who are handsome, good-looking, and beautiful, with an ideal body.

C. Significant Symbols

Mead calls a significant symbol as a symbol whose meaning generally enables the mental process of thinking. Symbols refer to every social object (for example physical objects, cues, or words) [16]. Symbols on internet pornographic content are slow motion, sound, facial expressions, cosmetology, indoors, outdoors, musical accompaniment. Participants give meaning to internet pornography shows as a form of sexual intercourse that are actually experienced in a real situation. A muscular body is symbolized as an ideal body shape that should be owned by men. The women are symbolized with great breasts, white skin and slim body so that it becomes the dreams of woman.

D. Mind

Mead argues that mind is the process of an individual's conversation with himself. Mind is not found in an individual because mind is actually a social phenomenon [16]. Initially pornographic content was not spread over the internet but it was found in the form of images in books, novels, VCD /

DVD. Society is still difficult to access pornographic content. But along with the development of information technology, pornographic content is finally easily accessible to anyone through social media such as Whatsapp, Twitter, Facebook or the PornHub site as well as Waptrik. The community has different opinion in viewing pornographic content in the past and at the present. Now people can easily access and share pornographic content either from individuals or large industries. On the other hand participants have different interpretations according to the background of their respective conditions. Participants consider the internet pornographic content is common and easy to obtain at this time. Participants get pornographic content for the first time with their friends. Participants said that friends of their age also considered pornographic content as a common thing.

E. Self

In this study, the first participant became the example when placing the college student's position as "I" as the acting subject. This participant, as a subject research, is a student in a university. The participant as the research subject actually knows that consuming pornographic content on the internet is prohibited by religion or social norms in his environment. However, he keeps accessing the internet with pornographic content that has become his habit since he was in elementary school. Participant became "Me" when positioning himself as a student with the same daily activities as the other common students. Participant was found to have very satisfying academic achievements and became an activist with good organizational skills. The participant is willing continue his studies abroad to deepen his religious knowledge in accordance with his current college majors. The participant is polite, respectful, smart, friendly and calm when interacting with his classmates. Participant also looked very religious because he had studied religion in Islamic boarding schools.

The second participant of the analysis was put in her position of high school student as "I" as the acting subject. The participant is a woman who dropped out of school from one of the State Senior High Schools (SLTAN). The participant as a subject actually knows that consuming pornographic content on the internet is prohibited by religion or social norms in her environment. However, the participant as subjects keeps accessing the pornographic content internet which has become her habit since she was in junior high school (SLMPN). In contrast to the first participant, the second participant as "Me" is positioned as a student when she was in junior and senior high school has different behavior with his friends at school. She had poor academic performance. She has forbidden relationship with a married man causing her to experience pregnancy out of wedlock. She completed her study in junior high school in pregnancy and then delivered a baby afterwards. This participant, as a student, did not behave politely. She was so confident with her own behavior and style. She likes to wear tight and hot clothes. She was also less obedient to the advice of her teachers and his parents. At present she only stays at home without having activities as her other peer friends are still studying in high school.

F. Society

Mead uses the term "society" which basically has a non-stop understanding of social processes that precede the

mind and self. Society is formed through coordinated interaction among individuals. Interactions that occur in individuals occupy the highest level due to the use of a variety of significant symbols namely language [17]. Social interaction in the current era has changed into a socially connected society through cyberspace due to the presence of the internet. Social interaction in cyberspace is different from the real world. Internet pornography is present through symbols in the form of text and images, photos and videos as the communication media. Society in cyberspace become very loose to provide space to display intimate relationships that are actually taboo when viewed in real life.

IV. CONCLUSION

The results of the study illustrate that when pornographic content is consumed by adolescents based on the perspective of symbolic interactionism, it can even shape sexual behavior. Adolescents perform internet pornography watching activities which contain exploitation of a woman's body and sexual harassment. Men as a symbol of strength must be strong, muscular while women should be slim with big breasts. Sexual behavior that appears on the subject in is performed by having sexual intercourse followed by masturbation. The symbols in the video either in the form of sexual scenes, sounds, words or places can give meaning to sexual symbols. Participants are teenagers as millennial generation become part of changes in information technology that makes the internet as a source of sexual information. Sexual symbols that were previously conversations using figurative language are now changing into something more than actual sex. Sexual symbols in pornographic content are exaggerated as if it were real but are enjoyed by teenagers. This requires further in-depth further research by taking female subjects with similar sexual orientation and sexual abnormalities.

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