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## Pornography Consumption and Sexual Behaviors in Spanish Adolescents and Young Adults: Findings from a Sample of Girls and Boys Aged 15 to 29 Years

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### Abstract

In recent years, there has been an increase in the consumption of pornography, particularly among young people and adolescents, with implications that are beginning to be more thoroughly examined in Spain. Therefore, the objective of this research is to understand the relationship between the consumption of pornography in Spanish adolescents and young men and women and its repercussions on their sexual behaviors. The sample was drawn from the study published in 2020 by the Youth Institute of the Spanish Government, comprising a total of 4,562 individuals aged between 15 and 29. The results indicate that, in most cases, when they started having sex, men had already consumed pornography several times a week, while women did not or had done so only once in their lifetime. Both women and men who had done things they did not want to do in their sexual relationships consumed more pornography than those who had not done things they did not want to do. Men and women who consume more pornography tend to refrain from using condoms because they feel the sexual encounter more, although the trend is not very clear. The study concludes on the significance of pornography as a socializing and educational element among young men and women.

### Keywords

Pornography consumption, repercussions, sexual behaviors, condom use

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# Consumo de Pornografía y Comportamientos Sexuales en Adolescentes y Jóvenes Españoles: Hallazgos de una Muestra de Chicas y Chicos de 15 a 29 Años

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## Resumen

En los últimos años se ha producido un aumento del consumo de pornografía que ha sido especialmente importante en jóvenes y adolescentes, con unas repercusiones que están empezando a ser analizadas más exhaustivamente en España. Por ello, el objetivo de esta investigación es conocer la relación que existe entre el consumo de pornografía en mujeres y hombres adolescentes y jóvenes españoles y las repercusiones que tiene en sus comportamientos sexuales. La muestra ha sido extraída del estudio publicado en el año 2020 por el Instituto de la Juventud del Gobierno de España y está compuesta por un total de 4.562 jóvenes de entre 15 y 29 años. Los resultados indican que, en la mayoría de los casos, cuando empezaron a mantener relaciones sexuales, los hombres ya habían consumido pornografía varias veces a la semana, mientras que las mujeres no lo hacían o sólo lo habían hecho una vez en su vida. Tanto las mujeres como los hombres que habían hecho cosas que no querían en sus relaciones sexuales consumían más pornografía que los que no habían hecho cosas que no querían. Los hombres y mujeres que consumen más pornografía tienden a no utilizar preservativo porque sienten más la relación sexual, aunque la tendencia no está muy clara. Se concluye sobre la relevancia de la pornografía como elemento socializador y educativo en mujeres y hombres jóvenes.

## Palabras clave

Consumo de pornografía, repercusiones, comportamientos sexuales, uso de preservativo.

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Since the development of pornography as a mass cultural product from the last third of the 20th century, debates have arisen in society, whether considering it a form of sexual freedom or a manifestation of violence against women. Regardless of these perspectives, its development and rise are intertwined with the advancement of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and globalization. Technological progress has allowed the majority of the population, especially young people and adolescents, to have electronic devices with internet access. This provides easy and cost-free access to certain websites offering pornographic content. These characteristics define what Ballester et al. (2019) have termed as "new pornography" – a form where the majority of pornographic productions are not physically distributed through magazines and videos, but rather via the internet, facilitating dissemination, accessibility, image quality, anonymity, and gratuity.

Moreover, these characteristics are evident in the content available on websites that offer pornography, as reflected in various studies focusing on the content of videos from the most visited pornographic websites. For instance, these studies indicate that 45% of scenes on one of the most visited pages involve at least one act of physical aggression (spanking, slapping, choking, or hair-pulling) towards women, carried out by men in 76% of cases (Fritz and Paul, 2017). In a study by Klaassen and Peter (2014), it is highlighted that men tend to be more dominant, while women adopt submissive roles. In addition to this, Alario (2021) has conceptualized a series of messages conveyed by pornography, including the eroticization of women's lack of desire and their physical pain.

In any case, since the advent of the internet in the 1990s, the creation of major pornography websites, and the industry's expansion during the 2000s, scientific production has focused on understanding what authors like Döring (2009) refer to as "sexuality on the internet," including aspects related to pornography. Although there was no operational definition of the term pornography until a few years ago, Ashton et al. (2019) have proposed that it refers to "sexually explicit material, given the context, primarily intended to sexually arouse the consumer, and produced and distributed with the consent of all involved parties." However, this definition makes invisible the fact that pornography is directed at men, that it stars women, and that the videos show sexual violence against women. Also, does not address elements such as the sexual attitudes depicted and the consequences for those who consume it. In this regard, in addition to seeking to understand the phenomenon itself, research on the topic has focused on the repercussions of consumption on individuals.

It is noteworthy that such consumption is predominantly led by men, who engage in greater and more frequent consumption than women, both at the national level (Ballester et al., 2019) and internationally (Miller et al., 2019; Sun et al., 2016). Early-age consumption in our country is increasing among young people and adolescents, especially in young men, as reflected in reports such as Save the Children (2020) and Torrado et al. (2021). This is significant because, as pointed out by Wright et al. (2014), pornography can impact the sexual socialization of young men and women by influencing their understanding of what sexual behaviors and attitudes are considered normative, acceptable, and gratifying. Similarly, Peter and Valkenburg (2016) have also asserted that pornography consumption is associated with the sexual attitudes of young and adolescents' men and women. In fact, several studies have demonstrated how young men use pornography as a source of sexual education, incorporating the practices

depicted in it into their sexual lives (Rothman et al., 2015; Svedin et al., 2011). If the contents that they incorporate into their sexual lives include the violence that appears in pornography, it is likely that they will understand these violent sexual practices as the correct way to relate to each other and they will end up using sexual violence by men against women.

From a gender perspective, it is important to highlight that several recent studies have indicated that pornography is a form of violence against women (Alario, 2021; DeKeseredy & Corsianos, 2016) that reproduces gender inequalities (Criado, 2022), conveys male domination and male pleasure over that of women (Gorman et al., 2010) and is linked to prostitution (Gutiérrez & Cuervo, 2023).

### **The Repercussions of Pornography Consumption in Young People and Adolescents**

Research focusing on the repercussions of pornography consumption has been conducted from various perspectives. From an addiction perspective, Alarcón et al.'s review (2019) found that it can lead to developmental and sexual functioning issues, especially among younger men. Its relationship with sexual dysfunction has been studied (Park et al., 2016), as well as its connection to sexual objectification of women (Peter and Valkenburg, 2007) and even revenge pornography in female survivors (Bates, 2017), whose results indicated that victims experienced trust issues, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, and other mental health consequences.

In this line of inquiry, one of the most explored dimensions is its impact on the sexual attitudes of young people and adolescents. Internationally, studies such as Lim et al. (2017) found that, in a sample of Australian youth male and female aged 15 to 29, earlier exposure to pornography was linked to engaging in sexual activities at younger ages and with being male. Similar associations have been found in other studies with comparable populations (Rissel et al., 2017; Weber et al., 2012). In Spain, Moreno et al. (2020) conducted a study on the sexual behavior of adolescents, with a sample of over 40,000 men and women aged 11 to 18. Descriptive results indicate that those men and women who had engaged in sexual activities at 17 and 18 years were more than double (48.3%) compared to those who claimed to have done so at 15 and 16 (20%).

Pornography consumption has also been associated with reduced condom use among young and adolescents' men and women. Tokunaga et al. (2020) conducted a study with data from 18 countries and over 35,000 participants, concluding that consuming pornography without condom use representation is linked to engaging in unprotected sex, whereas consuming pornography depicting condom use is not associated with such behavior. Wright et al. (2019) found in a sample of U.S. adolescents aged 14 to 18 that pornography consumption and engaging in unprotected sex were only associated when both boys and girls had little or no communication with their parents. Additionally, Moon et al.'s (2023) study on both male and female Korean couples aged 20 to 30 emphasizes that sexual communication has a significant effect on safe sexual behaviors, as condom use was more frequent in couples who discussed their sexual relationships.

Pornography consumption has also been studied in relation to impersonal sex, referring to encounters where commitment, emotional intimacy and exclusivity are absent or not valued (Malamuth et al., 2012). In this regard, the meta-analysis conducted by Tokunaga et al. (2019),

analyzing over 70 studies spanning 40 years, incorporating data from 13 countries with more than 40,000 participants, concluded that pornography consumption is associated with a more impersonal approach to sex, across genders, age groups, countries, and time periods.

Another aspect that has been studied is the relationship between pornography consumption and the perpetration of sexual assaults, coercive behaviors, and permissive sexual attitudes. In this regard, Wright et al. (2015) analyzed 22 studies from seven different countries and found that men and women who consumed pornography more frequently were more predisposed to hold attitudes conducive to sexual aggression and engage in actual acts of sexual aggression compared to those who did not consume pornography or did so less frequently. This relationship has also been demonstrated in various studies conducted with university men and women students in the United States (Marshall et al., 2017; Vega and Malamuth, 2007), where it was further discovered that male university students who consumed pornography were more predisposed to believe in rape myths and report an increased behavioral intent to rape (Foubert et al., 2011). Regarding permissive sexual behaviors, Sun et al. (2017) conducted a study with nearly 400 young German women, finding an association between consuming pornography and the desire to engage in or having engaged in submissive sexual behaviors (hair-pulling, ejaculating on the face, being spanked, choked, or slapped). Furthermore, this association was stronger when women had consumed pornography at an earlier age. In the case of dominant behaviors, no such association was found.

It is important to mention that pornography is a product starring women and intended for men (Cobo, 2020). Through differential socialization, men will learn the sexual practices of domination that appear in the videos, while women will integrate the sexual practices of submission. (Torrado et al., 2021). In addition, some of the studies cited above do not disaggregate their results by sex, which leads to possibly erroneous conclusions.

Considering all of the aforementioned, the sexual violence of pornography against women, and the limited number of studies in Spain that have focused on understanding the repercussions of pornography consumption on the sexual behaviors and onset age of adolescents, the objective of this research is to explore the relationship between pornography consumption in Spanish adolescents and its impact on their sexual behaviors. This latter variable will be operationalized as 1) age of onset of sexual activity, 2) engaging in unwanted sexual activities, 3) condom use in the last year, and 4) reasons for not using a condom. A second objective is to establish profiles of young people and adolescents based on their relationship with pornography and the repercussions its consumption has on their sexual behavior. These profiles will be established through multivariate methodologies, combining the variables from the previous objective.

## Method

The results of this research are based on the microdata corresponding to the Youth Report in Spain 2020 (INJUVE, 2021), conducted by the Youth Institute of the Government of Spain in November and December 2019. This investigation covered the entire national territory of Spain (Peninsula, Balearic Islands, Canary Islands, Ceuta, and Melilla) and targeted young people of both genders aged 15 to 29 residing in Spain. The sampling design was multistage and

stratified, selecting primary sampling units (municipality) and secondary units (sections) randomly and proportionally, and final units (individuals) through random routes and quotas for gender and age. The sampling error was  $\pm 1.38\%$  for a confidence level of 95.5% and  $p=q$ .

### **Hypothesis**

Considering the reviewed literature, the hypotheses of this study are the following:

1. Young and adolescents' men and women who consume pornography more frequently have an earlier age of sexual initiation than those who do not consume.
2. Young and adolescents' men and women who consume pornography more frequently are less likely to use condoms in their sexual encounters compared to those who do not consume.
3. Young and adolescents' men who consume pornography more frequently have engaged in sexual activities they did want to.
4. Young and adolescents' women who consume pornography more frequently have engaged in sexual activities they did not want to.

### **Instrument and Procedure**

The questionnaire used to collect data consisted of a total of 107 questions, in addition to seven questions related to sociodemographic aspects. It aimed to understand the situation of youth in Spain across various domains such as education, politics, family, leisure and sexuality. The questions from the latter category were selected for this research and include the following: age of first sexual relation (P98), use of condoms in all sexual relations in the last year (P102), reason for not using condoms (P103), has had consensual or non-consensual sexual relations (P105), and consumption of pornography (P106). Additionally, questions from sociodemographic data (P1 and P95) regarding gender and age were used.

The aforementioned questions were grouped to create the sexual behavior variable. The operationalization of the concept of sexual behavior is as follows: 1) age of onset of sexual activity, 2) engaging in unwanted sexual activities, 3) condom use in the last year, and 4) reasons for not using a condom. This variable was cross-referenced with sociodemographic variables and pornography consumption to explore differences between consumers and non-consumers, considering the frequency of consumption.

Although one of the variables in the study from which this article is based is called engaged in unwanted sexual activities, and in this paper, we have chosen to keep that name because it is the question asked to the participants, it is important to mention that it is related to different forms of violence, such as sexual, physical, psychological, etc.

Data analysis was conducted using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 22 statistical software, examining the profiles of adolescents who consume pornography and their sexual behavior. Bivariate analysis techniques (contingency tables) and Multiple Correspondence Analysis were employed to observe the consumption behavior of pornography and sexual behaviors in a multivariate environment. The reason for performing the multiple correspondence analysis is to establish profiles of young people and adolescents

according to the characteristics of whether or not they consume pornography, their sex, their age of sexual onset, whether they have used condoms, the reasons why they have not done so, and whether they have done things they did not want to do in sex. In this way, it will be possible to observe the underlying structures in the analyzed sample.

## Participants

The total sample for this study (INJUVE, 2021) consists of 5,265 young people and adolescents. However, after refining the responses and excluding those who did not answer the question about pornography consumption, the selected sample comprised a total of 4,562 young people and adolescents aged 15 to 29. Among them, 51% (2,343) are females, and 49% (2,219) are males. Within the sample, 7% consume pornography every day, 22.8% several times a week, 15.5% once a month or several times a year, 21.7% have done so once in their lifetime, and 33% have never consumed pornography.

## Results

Table 1 displays the consumption of pornography according to sex, and the age of onset of those relations. As the data reveals, women consume pornography less frequently and to a much lesser extent than men, as the percentage of women who have never consumed pornography is more than three times that of men. In fact, the relationship between pornography consumption and the sex of the interviewee can be characterized as very strong in statistical terms ( $\chi^2= 1019.42$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.43$ ).

Regarding age of onset, 15% of men initiated sexual relations at 15 years of age or younger, 18.3% at 16 or 17 years of age and 16.6% at 18 years of age or older. In the case of women, 12.8% initiated at 15 years of age or younger, 17.7% at 16 or 17 years of age, and 19.6% at 18 years of age or older. The age of onset of sexual relations has a statistically significant relationship with pornography consumption, and this relationship is of moderate intensity ( $\chi^2= 76.50$ ,  $df 8$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.14$ ). Therefore, the earlier they initiated sexual activity, the more likely they are to consume pornography.

The data show that there are significant differences between men and women in all age groups. In the age group that started at 15 years of age or younger ( $\chi^2= 262.31$ ,  $df 4$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.45$ ), men tend to have consumed pornography several times a week, once a month or several times a year, while women never or once in their lifetime. The same is the case for the age groups who started at 16 or 17 ( $\chi^2= 357.885$ ,  $df 4$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.46$ ) and those who started at 18 or older ( $\chi^2= 295.69$ ,  $df 4$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.45$ ). In other words, in most cases, when they started having sex, men had already consumed pornography several times a week, while women did not or had done so only once in their lifetime.

**Table 1***Pornography Consume by Variables of Sex and Age at Sexual Initiation*

|                     | Sex                                 |                | Age at sexual initiation |               |               |               |               |               |         |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------|
|                     | Men                                 | Women          | 15 or less               |               | 16-17         |               | 18 or more    |               |         |
|                     |                                     |                | Men                      | Women         | Men           | Women         | Men           | Women         |         |
| Pornography consume | Every day                           | 12.8%**        | 1.5%**                   | 17.8%**       | 1.9%**        | 11.2%**       | 1.5%**        | 11.4%**       | 0.8%**  |
|                     | Several times a week                | 36.7%**        | 9.7%**                   | 36.8%**       | 12.5%**       | 43.4%**       | 10.0%**       | 38.4%**       | 10.5%** |
|                     | Once a month / several times a year | 17.4%**        | 13.8%**                  | 22.7%**       | 17.8%**       | 18.3%         | 16.8%         | 17.1%         | 14.3%   |
|                     | Once in a lifetime                  | 17.8%**        | 25.3%**                  | 15.9%**       | 30.2%**       | 19.9%**       | 31.5%**       | 17.3%**       | 26.2%** |
|                     | Never                               | 15.3%**        | 49.7%**                  | 6.8%**        | 37.6%**       | 7.2%**        | 40.1%**       | 15.8%**       | 48.2%** |
| Total (N)           | 100%<br>(2219)                      | 100%<br>(2343) | 100%<br>(555)            | 100%<br>(473) | 100%<br>(678) | 100%<br>(653) | 100%<br>(614) | 100%<br>(726) |         |

Note. research data; \*\* Standardized corrected residuals significant at 95% confidence level.

Table 2 displays the consumption of pornography and whether they have engaged in unwanted activities during a sexual encounter. 7.4% of men say they have done things they did not want to do in their sexual relations, while 42% say they have not done things they did not want to do. In the case of women, 11.9% say they have done things they did not want to do, while 38.8% have not done things they did not want to do. This variable is associated with pornography consumption, although the relationship is weak ( $\chi^2= 26.82$  df 4, p-value= 0.000, CC 0.09). In this case, individuals who have viewed pornography are more likely to have engaged in unwanted activities, indicating that watching pornography can be said to increase the likelihood of engaging in undesired sexual practices.

There were differences between women and men in both those who had done things they did not want to do ( $\chi^2= 147.131$ df 4, p-value= 0.000, CC 0.42) and those who had not ( $\chi^2= 806.76$  df 4, p-value= 0.000, CC 0.45). Women who had done things they did not want to do, consumed more pornography daily (2.1%) or several times a week (17.2%), the percentages being twice as high as women who had not done things they did not want to do (1% and 8.5%, respectively). This is similar in the case of men, as those who had done things they did not want to do consumed pornography more frequently. That is, both women and men who had done things they did not want to do in their sexual relationships consumed more pornography than those who had not done things they did not want to do.

**Table 2***Pornography Consume by Variable of did Things that Didn't Want To*

|                        |                                     | Did things that didn't want to |            |             |             |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
|                        |                                     | Yes                            |            | No          |             |
|                        |                                     | Men                            | Women      | Men         | Women       |
| Pornography<br>consume | Every day                           | 14,8% **                       | 2,1% **    | 13,1% **    | 1,0% **     |
|                        | Several times a week                | 47,9% **                       | 17,2% **   | 38,1% **    | 8,5% **     |
|                        | Once a month / several times a year | 16,3% **                       | 22,4% **   | 20,1% **    | 14,2% **    |
|                        | Once in a lifetime                  | 14,4% **                       | 32,1% **   | 18,6% **    | 28,8% **    |
|                        | Never                               | 6,5% **                        | 26,2% **   | 10,1% **    | 47,5% **    |
| Total (N)              |                                     | 100% (263)                     | 100% (424) | 100% (1508) | 100% (1363) |

Note. research data; \*\* Standardized corrected residuals significant at 95% confidence level.

Regarding pornography consumption based on condom use, the results are shown in Table 3. The relationship between these two variables has a statistically moderate intensity ( $\chi^2=148.40$ ,  $df=16$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ,  $CC\ 0.17$ ), although a clear trend is not evident. The percentages of condom use are, in the case of those who always use it, 24.8% men and 22.9% women, those who use it sometimes 19.6% men and 20.25% women, and those who never use it 5.9% men and 6.6% women. There are also statistically significant differences between women and men among those who always use condoms ( $\chi^2=438.78$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ,  $CC\ 0.46$ ), those who use them sometimes ( $\chi^2=354.54$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ,  $CC\ 0.46$ ), and those who never use them ( $\chi^2=98.01$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ,  $CC\ 0.43$ ). There is no clear trend, since in all cases, men who always, sometimes and never use condoms consume pornography more frequently than women.

**Table 3***Pornography Consume by Variable of Condom use in the Last Year*

|                        |                                     | Condom use in the last year |            |            |            |            |            |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                        |                                     | Always                      |            | Sometimes  |            | Never      |            |
|                        |                                     | Men                         | Women      | Men        | Women      | Men        | Women      |
| Pornography<br>consume | Every day                           | 9,6% **                     | 0,4% **    | 18,2% **   | 2,5% **    | 15,3% **   | 0,9% **    |
|                        | Several times a week                | 38,5% **                    | 8,1% **    | 42,9% **   | 13,4% **   | 34,2% **   | 11,2% **   |
|                        | Once a month / several times a year | 21,2% **                    | 13,4% **   | 17,1%      | 18,7%      | 18,8%      | 19,7%      |
|                        | Once in a lifetime                  | 19,2% **                    | 30,8% **   | 14,9% **   | 28,9% **   | 22,8%      | 26,5%      |
|                        | Never                               | 11,6% **                    | 47,3% **   | 6,9% **    | 36,6% **   | 8,9% **    | 41,7% **   |
| Total (N)              |                                     | 100% (845)                  | 100% (778) | 100% (666) | 100% (689) | 100% (202) | 100% (223) |

Note. Research data; \*\* Standardized corrected residuals significant at 95% confidence level.

Among those men and women who have not used a condom in the last year, the reasons are quite varied, citing that sexual relations feel better without a condom, not having access to them, knowing the person well enough not to use it, or using another contraceptive method, among others. This variable has a statistically moderate relationship with the pornography consumption variable ( $\chi^2=47.63$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ,  $CC\ 0.12$ ). It appears that men and

women who consume more pornography tend to refrain from using condoms because they feel the sexual encounter more, although the trend is not very clear. The most frequently chosen response options in both men and women, excluding other reasons, were because they used another contraceptive method or because they knew the person well. It should be noted that the response rate for other reasons was much higher in both men and women than in the other responses. The number of women who said that they did not use a condom because they used another contraceptive method or because they knew the person well is higher than men, while in the reasons that they feel better without a condom or that they did not use a condom because they did not have one at the time, it is men who select this answer more than women.

Analyses between women and men point to several statistically significant differences. Men who do not use a condom because they did not have one at the time ( $\chi^2= 63.77$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.46$ ) or because they consider that they feel better without it ( $\chi^2= 52.47$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.56$ ), tend to consume pornography more frequently than women who do not use it for the same reasons. The same is the case for the options that they used another contraceptive method ( $\chi^2= 107.08$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.43$ ), that they knew the person well ( $\chi^2= 107.62$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.44$ ), and other reasons ( $\chi^2= 702.87$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ,  $CC 0.43$ ).

**Table 4**

*Pornography Consume by Variable of Reasons for not Using a Condom*

|                     |                                   | Reasons for not using a condom       |               |                                |               |                                       |               |                                  |              |                |                |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
|                     |                                   | We used another contraceptive method |               | I knew that person well enough |               | We didn't have condoms at that moment |               | It feels better without a condom |              | Other          |                |
|                     |                                   | Men                                  | Women         | Men                            | Women         | Men                                   | Women         | Men                              | Women        | Men            | Women          |
| Pornography consume | Every day                         | 15,5%**                              | 1,5%**        | 15,0%**                        | 1,3%**        | 13,8%**                               | 2,0%**        | 34,3%**                          | 2,2%**       | 11,2%**        | 1,5%**         |
|                     | Several times a week              | 37,0%**                              | 12,0%**       | 37,4%**                        | 11,1%**       | 52,9%**                               | 16,7%**       | 46,3%**                          | 13,0%**      | 34,8%**        | 8,7%**         |
|                     | Once a month/several times a year | 21,0%                                | 18,6%         | 19,2%                          | 18,4%         | 14,5%                                 | 19,6%         | 9,0%                             | 13,0%        | 17,3%**        | 12,0%**        |
|                     | Once in a lifetime                | 18,0%**                              | 32,5%**       | 20,1%**                        | 29,5%**       | 13,0%**                               | 27,5%**       | 6,0%**                           | 26,1%**      | 18,4%**        | 23,4%**        |
|                     | Never                             | 8,5%**                               | 35,4%**       | 8,4%**                         | 39,7%**       | 5,8%**                                | 34,3%**       | 4,5%**                           | 45,7%**      | 18,3%**        | 54,5%**        |
| Total (N)           |                                   | 100%<br>(200)                        | 100%<br>(274) | 100%<br>(214)                  | 100%<br>(234) | 100%<br>(138)                         | 100%<br>(102) | 100%<br>(67)                     | 100%<br>(46) | 100%<br>(1600) | 100%<br>(1687) |

*Note.* Research data; \*\* Standardized corrected residuals significant at 95% confidence level.

As mentioned earlier, all the variables mentioned were included in a multivariable model to observe their behavior in relation to pornography consumption. Two-dimensional multiple correspondence analysis was employed for this purpose. The goodness of fit is considered good, as the model explains an inertia of 0.63. The discriminatory measures for each variable along the axes are found in Table 5. As can be observed, Dimension 1 is characterized by the influence of the condom use variable, the reasons for no condoms, and pornography consume, while Dimension 2 is marked by the sex variable, pornography consumption, reasons for no condom and condom use.

**Table 5.***Discrimination Measures of Multiple Correspondence Analysis model*

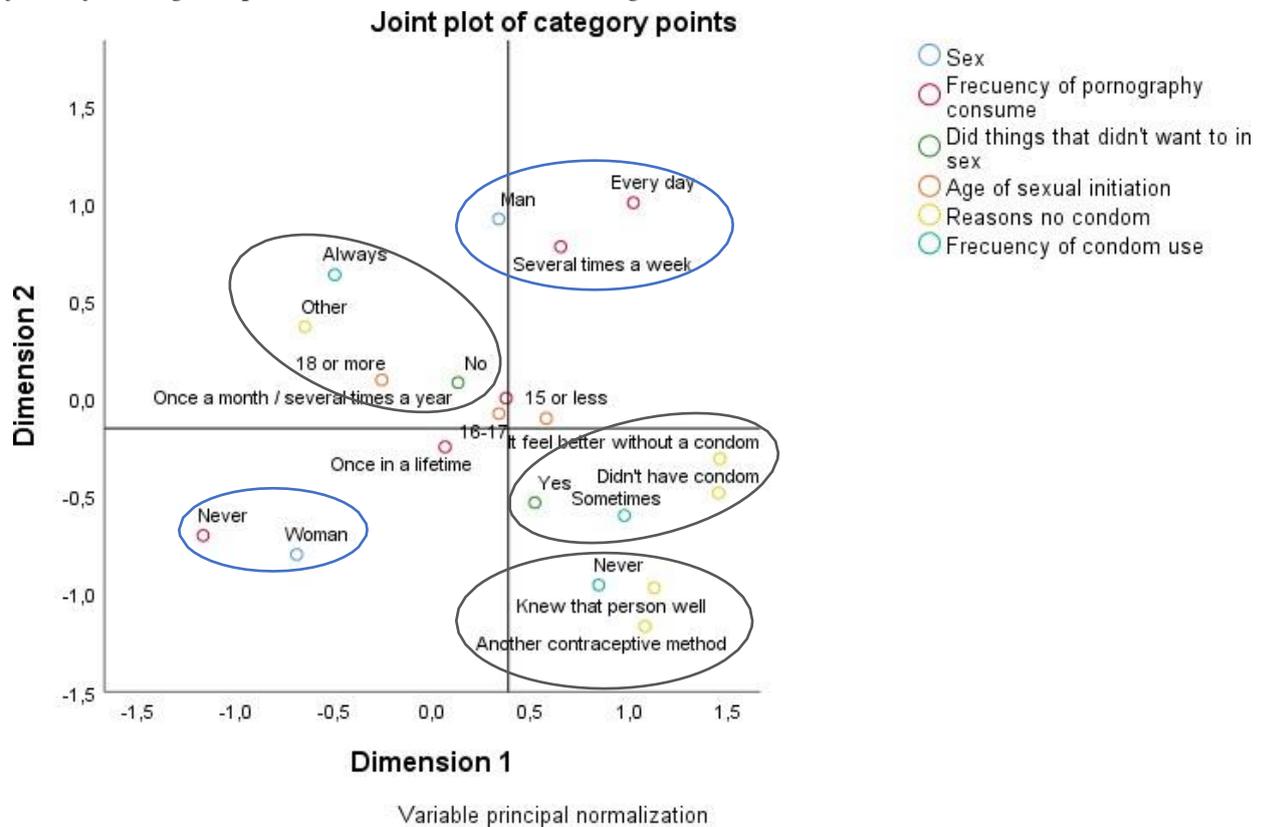
|                             | <b>Dimension</b> |          |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------|
|                             | <b>1</b>         | <b>2</b> |
| Sex                         | .296             | .739     |
| Did things that didn't want | .046             | .042     |
| Age sexual initiation       | .117             | .006     |
| Consume pornography         | .554             | .332     |
| Reasons for no condom       | .682             | .326     |
| Condom use                  | .399             | .307     |
| Active Total                | 2.096            | 1.752    |

*Note.* Research data

The model obtained is shown in Figure 1, which shows the configuration of several groups of categories. First, in the upper right quadrant we find the profile of men who consume pornography daily or several times a week. In the lower left quadrant, we find another profile, formed by those women who have never consumed pornography. These two profiles have the primary variable of pornography consumption as the main dimension. However, in addition to these profiles, others can be observed without this variable, such as, in the upper left quadrant, those men and women 18 or older who always use condoms in their sexual relations, who have not done things they did not want to do, and when they do not use condoms, they do so for reasons other than those listed in the study. In addition, in the lower right quadrant we can see two other profiles: the first, in the upper part, is formed by those men and women who have done things they did not want to do in their sexual relations, who sometimes use condoms, and when they do not use them, the reasons are that they feel better without a condom or that they did not have one at the time. The other profile, at the bottom, is formed by those men and women who never use condoms because they know the other person well or because they used another contraceptive method.

**Figure 1**

*Profiles of Young People and Adolescents According to their Sexual Behaviors*



*Note.* Research data; rounded in blue the profiles that have pornography consumption as the main variable; in black those that do not.

## Discussion

As indicated by the results, there is a majority and more frequent consumption of pornography among men in the studied sample, following the national and international trend reported in studies with populations of young people and adolescents (Díaz et al., 2023; Gutiérrez y Torrado, 2020; Peter & Valkenburg, 2016). This is consistent with the target audience for pornography, men, and with the relationship between pornography consumption and male socialization (Abalo-Rodríguez et al., 2023). For these reasons, it is necessary to continue research on pornography consumption by disaggregating the results by men and women.

Several studies have highlighted the importance of pornography as a socializing and educational element in sexual education (Abalo-Rodríguez et al., 2023; Wright et al., 2014). This study has attempted to find out how pornography consumption impacts sexual behavior. In this sense, as opposed to the arguments that pornography is innocuous and has no consequences on the people who consume it, it has been found that it has an impact on the three points analyzed, which are the following:

1. **Earlier age:** The age of onset of sexual activity seems to be a variable influencing pornography consumption, as those men and women who consume more had initiated sexual relations at an earlier age. Thus, the first hypothesis is confirmed. As shown in

various studies and reports (Save the Children, 2020; Torrado et al., 2021), the age of initiation of pornography consumption is decreasing, and coupled with the limited restrictions on access to pornographic websites in our country and the ease of access, it is expected that the age of initiation and the average age of consumption will continue to decrease. In addition to this, it is very important to consider that the results obtained indicate that, in most cases, when men and women started having sex, men had already consumed pornography several times a week, while women did not or had done so only once in their lifetime. This may lead young boys, who consume pornography on a regular basis and have been socialized in it, to want to engage in the practices they have learned with their female partners, which may result in cases of sexual violence. In other words, when they have their first sexual relations, men start from a socialization in pornography while women do not have this socialization.

2. **Condom use:** Although a clear trend has not been identified, men and women who consume more pornography tend to refrain from using condoms because they feel the sexual encounter more, confirming the second hypothesis. This reality may be associated with the fact that in the majority of videos on the most popular pornography websites, men and women depicted do not use condoms or any protective measures. It is important to highlight the differences between women and men, since the motivations for not using a condom during sexual intercourse are different. In the case of men, the number of responses was higher in the options that they felt better without a condom and that they did not use a condom because they did not have one at the time. In the case of women, the most selected reasons were because they knew the person well and because they used another contraceptive method. Regardless of the reason for not using it, both women and men are engaging in risky and unhealthy sexual practices, making the possibility of unwanted pregnancies or contracting sexually transmitted diseases or infections greater.
3. **Engage in sexual practices they do not desire and impose these practices on their peers:** This study has revealed a noteworthy finding about the sexual behavior of the studied sample of adolescents and young people. Both men and women who have consumed pornography more frequently are more likely to engage in sexual practices they do not desire and impose these practices on their peers. It is important to mention that 7.4% of men say they have done things they did not want to do in their sexual relations, while in the case of women this percentage increases to 11.9%, thus supporting the third and fourth hypothesis of the study. This may be related to the aggressive and violent practices towards women depicted in pornography, as some studies have found a greater predisposition to engage in aggressive behavior among those men who consume pornography more frequently (Wright et al., 2015). Studies such as that of Bridges et al. (2016) have pointed to the relationship between pornography consumption and men wanting to reproduce sexual behaviors depicted in pornography, including assaults, ranging from spanking or slapping to practices that put women's health at risk, such as double anal penetration or anal penetration and fellatio without the condom use. It should be noted that the reasons why women and men have engaged in unwanted sexual practices are not known, but considering the existing literature, we can suspect that they are not the same. Furthermore, taking into account the male socialization of

pornography (Abalo-Rodriguez et al., 2023) and the fact that the aggressions are directed in the vast majority of cases towards women and are perpetrated by men (Fritz and Paul, 2017), it can be suspected that it is men who may coerce, force or threaten their partners or sexual associates to perform the acts they have learned in pornography. For their part, the image of women in pornography is reduced to subordination and submission by men, so it is to be expected that they do not force their partners or sexual partners to perform practices they do not want.

This study provides new knowledge on pornography consumption and its consequences in young Spanish women and men. Considering that pornography seems to act as an educational and socializing element, and that young men and women reproduce in some way what they see in it, in the case of men domination and violent practices, addressing the issue is necessary not only from a research point of view, but also from a political point of view. Therefore, the results of this study may be useful in developing public policies that promote safer and healthier sexuality among adolescents and young people.

This research has some limitations that should be considered. Although it is a valuable sample that largely represents the situation of Spanish young people and adolescents, the sexual behaviors analyzed are those asked in the survey of the Institute of Youth of the Government of Spain. In this sense, it would be of great interest to know the motivations that lead young girls and boys to do things they do not want to do during sexual relations. In addition, it would also be of great interest to know what boys and girls mean when they say that they have engaged in sexual practices they did not want, since it is likely that there are differences between women and men, both in this and in the previous point. Finally, it is important to mention that in this same question, if they have engaged in sexual practices that they did not want, the participants may not understand that it is about having suffered or exercised violence, since violence is being hidden behind this question.

Therefore, future studies incorporating more questions about sexuality would be interesting to obtain a more holistic view and try to understand all aspects of sexual behavior influenced by pornography.

### **Conclusion**

The overarching aim of this research was to understand the relationship between pornography consumption among Spanish adolescents and its repercussions on their sexual behaviors. This variable was operationalized into 1) age of onset of sexual activity, 2) engaging in unwanted sexual activities, 3) condom use in the last year, and 4) reasons for not using a condom. Additionally, the study sought to establish profiles of young individuals based on their relationship with pornography and the impact of its consumption on their sexual behavior.

The obtained results indicate that pornography consumption has repercussions on Spanish young individuals and adolescents, both men and women, suggesting a connection with the idea of pornography as a catalyst for a sexuality that is less aligned with egalitarian values and respect between men and women. Indeed, the significance of pornography as a socializing and educational element for young people is a crucial consideration, particularly in the current era

of digitalization. As the results have suggested, it seems to be associated with unsafe and even aggressive and violence practices towards women.

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