

THE PERCEPTIONS OF YOUNG ADULT MALES REGARDING THE IMPACT OF PORNOGRAPHY ON THEIR LIVES

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SUMMARY

The perceptions of young adult males regarding the impact of pornography on their lives

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Rapid technological development has led to an increase in the accessibility of pornography. Some professionals have labelled pornography as a social issue due to the increase in accessibility and exposure to pornography. In the past, extensive research has been conducted regarding the possible impact of pornography on adolescents as well as on adults. However, there is discrepancy among professionals with regard to the impact of pornography, as it seems as if there is little agreement on what effects or impact regular pornography consumption may have on the consumer. Some researchers regard pornography as a social issue with severe ramifications for the consumer. Other researchers view pornography as harmless time-consuming activities. Therefore, it seems that inadequate research was previously done to investigate what impact regular exposure to or consumption of pornography may have on the consumer's life.

Young adulthood is considered a crucial phase in human development. Critical developmental tasks such as reaching emotional and financial independence, defining morals, values and principles, establishing intimacy and dedication, choosing a life partner and having children and raise them, are prevalent during this life phase. There is little existing research regarding the impact of pornography on males in this life phase. The hypothesis was made that: should pornography consumption lead to any hindrance in the acquisition of any developmental tasks during this specific life phase, that it may have an effect on the person in a later life phase.

The researcher thus endeavoured to address the gap by looking specifically at the possible impact of pornography on young adult males, but the researcher also attempted to contribute to the existing scholarly debate regarding the impact of pornography consumption on the consumer in general. The rationale for this study emanated from the researcher's desire to add to the existing knowledge base, and to inform professionals in the therapeutic setting about the impact of pornography.

The researcher undertook a qualitative, applied research study which enabled her to explore the perceptions of young adult males who have had prolonged experience to pornography consumption. Fifteen (15) young adult male participants were purposefully selected. Snowball sampling was applied as a sampling method to identify possible participants. The researcher utilised in-depth interviewing which is also known as unstructured interviewing as data collection method. One (1) open-ended question was directed to the participants and it was formulated as follows:

“What are your perceptions as a young adult male, with regard to the impact of pornography on young adult males' lives?”

The researcher did a pilot test in order to ensure that this open-ended question provided adequate opportunity for the participants to respond unreservedly. The researcher followed the following steps during the process of data analysis:

- Planning for the recording of data by means of audio recordings
- Managing and organising data by means of detailed transcripts and filing it in folders
- Reading and writing memos
- Generating categories, themes and patterns
- Representing, visualising and displaying the data by means of a complete research report.

The research study revealed that pornography consumption may have a significant impact on the lives of young adult males. The following areas of the life of the young adult male were identified which may be affected by pornography consumption:

- Self-value
- The development of a gender-identity (masculinity)
- Moral and Spiritual development
- Cognitive development
- Addiction
- Career development
- Sexual development in terms of sexual knowledge, sexual attitude and sexual behaviour
- Development of interpersonal relationships
- Development of mentors in society.

It was recommended that there should be improved service delivery for young adult males who are experiencing some of these effects of pornography consumption. Training for professionals and further research regarding this phenomenon will make this recommendation possible.

Key concepts:

The following are key concepts that are applicable to this study:

- Pornography
- Young adult male
- Perceptions
- Developmental tasks

SAMEVATTING

Die persepsies van jong volwasse mans met betrekking tot die impak van pornografie op hulle lewens

Deur

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Snelle tegnologiese vooruitgang het 'n verhoging in die toeganklikheid van pornografiese materiaal tot gevolg. Sekere kenners bestempel pornografie as 'n maatskaplike probleem, juis as gevolg van die verhoging tot die blootstelling aan en toeganklikheid van hierdie materiaal. Bestaande navorsing oor hierdie fenomeen is grootliks uitgevoer met betrekking tot die moontlike impak van pornografie op adolessente en volwassenes. Dit blyk asof daar verskil in bevindinge en opinies onder professionele persone is met betrekking tot die impak van gereelde pornografiese blootstelling op die verbruiker. Sekere navorsers bestempel pornografie as 'n maatskaplike probleem wat erge negatiewe gevolge vir die verbruiker mag inhou. Ander navorsers bestempel pornografie as onskuldige tydverdryf. Daarom blyk dit asof onvoldoende navorsing voorheen uitgevoer is om te ondersoek watter impak blootstelling aan, of verbruiking van pornografie op die verbruiker se lewe mag hê.

Jong volwassenheid word as 'n essensiële fase in menslike ontwikkeling bestempel. Kritieke ontwikkelingstake sluit onder andere die volgende in: om emosionele en finansiële onafhanklikheid te bereik, om morele waardes en beginsels te definieer, om intimiteit en toegewydheid te vestig en om 'n lewensmaat te kies, kinders te baar en op te voed. Daar is min bestaande navorsing uitgevoer aangaande die impak van pornografie op mans in hierdie lewensfase. Die hipotese was soos volg geformuleer: sou pornografie tot enige obstruksie in die bereiking van enige van die

ontwikkelingstake gedurende hierdie spesifieke lewensfase lei, dit 'n effek op 'n persoon in 'n latere lewensfase mag hê. Die navorser het dus gepoog, om die gaping in bestaande navorsing oor die moontlike impak van pornografie op die jong volwasse man aan te spreek, maar die navorser het ook gepoog om 'n bydrae tot die bestaande akademiese debat, met betrekking tot die impak van pornografie op die verbruiker in die algemeen, te lewer. Die motivering vir hierdie studie het uit die navorser se begeerte om 'n bydrae tot die bestaande kennisbasis te lewer en om professionele persone in die terapeutiese omgewing rakende die impak van pornografie in te lig, ontstaan.

Die navorser het 'n kwalitatiewe, toegepaste navorsingstudie onderneem, wat haar in staat gestel het om die persepsies van jong volwasse mans wat ervaring met langdurige verbruik van pornografie het, te verken. Vyftien (15) jong volwasse mans was doelgerig vir deelname aan die studie geselekteer. Sneeubal-steekproef is as steekproefmetode toegepas om moontlike deelnemers aan die studie te identifiseer. Die navorser het van in-diepte onderhoudvoering, wat ook bekend staan as ongestruktureerde onderhoudvoering, as data insamelingsmetode gebruik gemaak. Een (1) oop vraag is soos volg aan die deelnemers gestel:

“Wat is jou persepsies as jong volwasse man met berekking tot die impak van pornografie op jong volwasse mans?”

Die navorser het 'n voorondersoek uitgevoer om te verseker dat hierdie oop vraag voldoende geleentheid vir deelnemers skep om onbeperk te reageer. Die navorser het die volgende stappe tydens die proses van data-analise geneem:

- Beplanning vir die opneem van data deur middel van oudio-opnames
- Bestuur en organisering van data deur middel van gedetailleerde transkripsies en die liasering daarvan in lêers
- Lees en skryf van memmo's
- Generering van kategorieë, temas en patrone
- Verteenwoordiging, visualisering en voorstelling van data deur middel van 'n volledige navorsingsverslag.

Die navorsingstudie het getoon dat die verbruik van pornografie, 'n kenmerkende impak op die lewe van jong volwasse mans mag hê. Sekere areas in die lewe van die jong volwasse man wat deur die blootstelling aan pornografie beïnvloed kan word, sluit onder andere die volgende in:

- Die self-waarde
- Die ontwikkeling van 'n gelsagsrol-identiteit (manlikheid)
- Morele en spirituele ontwikkeling
- Kognitiewe ontwikkeling
- Verslawing
- Loopbaan ontwikkeling
- Seksuele ontwikkeling in terme van seksuele kennis, seksuele houding en seksuele gedrag
- Ontwikkeling van interpersoonlike verhoudings
- Ontwikkeling van mentors in die samelewing.

Aanbevelings, in terme van verbeterde en ingeligte dienslewering aan jong volwasse mans waarvan sommige van hierdie effekte van pornografieverbruik presenteer, was gemaak. Opleiding van professionele persone en verdere navorsing met betrekking tot hierdie fenomeen sal die realisering van die aanbeveling moontlik maak.

Sleutelkonsepte:

Die volgende is sleutelkonsepte wat van toepassing op hierdie studie is:

- Pornografie
- Jong volwasse mans
- Persepsies
- Ontwikkelingstake.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY AND THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

This study sought to explore the perceptions of young adult males regarding the impact of pornography on their lives. The intention of this study was to seek with a sample of young adult males who have had prolonged exposure to pornography, or who have been consuming sexually explicit material regularly, their perceptions of how this behaviour impacts their lives. Currently, the Internet can easily be accessed with a cellular telephone and pornography can be viewed anytime and anywhere. A survey done in the year 2000 by *MSNBC.com* indicated that of the 38,000 participants who responded, more than 80 percent admitted that a large amount of their time is spent on the Internet in search of sexually explicit material (Paul & Shim, 2008:187). Ybarra and Mitchell (2005:473) state that the increased accessibility to pornographic material has caused distress among researchers globally.

The researcher anticipated that the knowledge gained from this exploration will provide new insights and inform professionals in the therapeutic field concerning the phenomenon of pornography. This research utilised qualitative methodology. Participants of this study included purposefully selected young adult males who have had prolonged exposure to pornography. Snowball sampling was applied as a sampling method to identify possible participants.

The concept “pornography” is defined and discussed in various sources. The *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* stipulates the etymology of the Greek word *pornographos* as follows: *pornē* as prostitute and *graphein* as write. The original word then refers to writing about prostitutes.

The modern meaning of the word is outlined by the same source as: “The depiction of erotic behaviour (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement.”

The Films and Publications Act No 65 of 1996 (as amended) defines pornography as:

“any image, publication, depiction, description or sequence containing a visual presentation, description or representation of a sexual act or of an explicit sexual nature of a person which may be disturbing or harmful to, or age-inappropriate for children.”

Considering the definitions above, is it clear that pornography is the explicit illustration of sexual activities. This can occur through literature, films or photography that is aimed to provoke sexual stimulation or arousal.

For the purpose of this study pornography was regarded as any sexually explicit image, video or written depiction of any act or individual that is aimed to stimulate or arouse the viewer sexually (Bunting, 2008:14; Perrin, Madanat, Barnes, Carolan, Clark, Ivins, Tuttle, Vogeler & Williams, 2008:11). Svedin, Åkerman and Priebe (2011:780) elaborates on the definition by stating that pornography includes images of sex between adults, sex with violence or force, sex with animals or sex between adults and children.

The second concept that required clarification for this study is that of *young adult*. Early or young adulthood is regarded as a developmental phase normally between the ages 20 and 39 years (Gerdes, Louw, Van Ede & Louw, 1998:478). However, Jekielek and Brown (2005:1) define a young adult as a person between the ages 18 and 24 years. South African law also stipulates that adolescence ends at the age of 18 years. Berg, Johnson, Meegan and Strough (2003:33) states that a person is no longer seen as a young adult, but rather as an adult from the age of 30 years onwards.

Since there is disagreement among professionals concerning the specific age range of when young adulthood commences and ends, the researcher agreed that the age of onset of young adulthood is 18 years and that adulthood commences at the age of 30 years. Therefore, a young adult was considered as a person between the ages of 18 and 29 years.

1.2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Rapid technological development has led to an increase in the accessibility of pornography. Largely, the Internet has transformed the manner in which society accesses pornographic material and it has developed into the most popular setting for this sexual intention (Paul & Shim, 2008:187). The invasion of high speed Internet technology is prevalent and fairly inexpensive as it has delivered the cybersex industry, also known as the electronic pornography industry, an extensively profitable e-commerce business (Coopersmith, 2006:1; Philaretou, Mahfouz & Allen, 2005:150). "The size of the global pornography industry is estimated at 97.1 billion dollars" (Perrin et al, 2008:11).

Emerging technologies have caused cybersex or electronic pornography to raise severe social and legal questions including issues of access, content, privacy, and morality (Coopersmith, 2006:13). Despite the increase in accessibility and exposure to pornography together with the growth of the industry, some authors have labelled pornography as a social issue. Researchers have fought for legal restrictions since 1973 (Perrin et al, 2008:12).

Bryant and Brown (1989, in Peter & Valkenburg, 2006) show that the first encounters with pornography usually occur during adolescence. This may result in a rise in the number of children and adolescents being exposed to sexually explicit material. This exposure may lead to severe possible complications for the healthy sexual development of children and adolescents.

Gerdes et al (1998:401) state that physical development during puberty creates inevitable consciousness of sexuality.

However, a crucial developmental task in this life phase is to develop a “healthy sexual identity”. Adolescents are curious with regard to sexuality and often desire sexual stimulation (Peter & Valkenburg, 2006). As pornography is intended to create sexual arousal, adolescents may turn to pornography for sexual stimulation. Ven-hwei and Wei (2005:222) point out that early exposure to pornography during adolescence may lead to an increase in sexual promiscuity later in the consumer’s life. The possibility of developing socially or sexually deviant behaviour as the result of exposure to pornography among adolescents may also be amplified (Hunter, Figueredo & Malamuth, 2009:141). If some adolescents fail to develop a healthy sexual identity, the question is raised as to what implications there might be for young adults, during a later life phase, who have been exposed to pornography during adolescence.

The question can be asked whether differentiation between genders is made concerning pornography exposure. Research has shown that more males than females view pornography regularly as a number of previous studies have indicated that a larger likelihood exists for men to consume or seek sexually explicit material than for women (Twohig, Crosby & Cox, 2009:253; Häggström-Nordin, Tydén, Hanson & Larsson, 2009:277; Paul & Shim, 2008:187; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2005:483).

Different motivations for viewing pornography exist and it provides insight to the factors that are presented by consumers for initiating and sustaining pornography consumption. Paul and Shim (2008:193) mention four (4) predominant factors that serve as motivators for viewing sexually explicit material and these factors are also emphasised by prior research.

Pornography is of *social value* as it is used by some to enhance or prolong relationships or sexual partnerships. A study conducted by Perrin et al (2008:12) also supports this motivation as two (2) social benefits for sexuality and coupling technology was discovered. Further access regarding sex education and sexual health is gained and new alternatives for relating with romantic partners are offered. The viewer is aroused before or during sexual engagement, and couples may find it entertaining as new sexual positions are learned or explored together. Surprisingly,

researchers have not yet investigated this motivation in more depth regarding the relationship factor of pornography (Paul & Shim, 2008:193).

The second motivation for pornography consumption is what is called, *the mood management factor*. It was mentioned by consumers that pornography improves their mood, relieves sexual frustration and may be an arousing visual aid to look at while masturbating or can provide entertainment for people who are bored or depressed (Paul & Shim, 2008:193; Philaretou et al, 2005:150).

A third motivation for pornography consumption is called the *fantasy factor*. Consumers merely stated that pornography is viewed to fantasise about being part of the role-play – either fantasising about having sex with some of the actors or actresses, or fantasising about being one of the actors or actresses (Paul & Shim, 2008:194; Cooper, Delmonico, Griffin-shelley & Mathy, 2004:135). Perrin et al (2008:12) further state that “much of the sexual portrayal through the Internet is oriented to providing sexual fantasies or enhancing sexual pleasure.”

The fourth motivation for pornographic use is the *habitual factor* of Internet pornography. It is considered to be related to regular activity which may develop into sexual compulsivity or addiction (Twohig et al, 2009:257; Paul & Shim, 2008:194; Levert, 2007:147; Philaretou et al, 2005:150).

Research thus indicated that exposure to pornography can lead to pornography addiction or sexual compulsivity. Sexual compulsivity is defined as "an insistent, repetitive, intrusive, and unwanted urge to perform specific acts often in ritualized fashions" (Paul & Shim, 2008:196). The question can be asked whether the effects of the above mentioned motivations for regular pornography exposure may be harmful to the consumer, or whether they are harmless.

In opposition to possible harmful impact of pornography consumption, Philaretou et al (2005:164) rightly argue that, for many individuals, the Internet presents a significant opportunity for healthy sexual pursuits. Cybersex might prove to be very constructive for gay adolescents or for individuals who are shy, physically or mentally challenged or perceived as unappealing, or for those who live in rural areas isolated

from the social networks of urban areas. Sex is considered a basic human desire, just like food, water, shelter and security. If this basic need is thus fulfilled through pornography, cybersex is considered as excellent technology (Coopersmith, 2006:17). The libertarian theory advocates that pornography is harmless fantasy. It promotes inspiration in the sex lives of the consumer and can be seen as works of art, which can even be sexually therapeutic (Linz & Malamuth, 1993:5). Perrin et al (2008:12) do not refer to possible benefits or negative effects of pornography, but remain neutral when stating that to some individuals, pornography is harmless, nothing more than a few movies of poorly dressed women posing seductively.

Although one can speculate as to what possible implications pornographic exposure or consumption might have on the consumer and that literature provides some perspectives regarding the motivations for pornographic consumption, there seems to be little conclusive agreement regarding the impact thereof. As Quayle, Loof and Palmer (2008:1) state: “there is a lack of a critical understanding of the harms posed by the new technologies.” Therefore, the researcher identified the need for such a critical understanding and this study sought to explore the impact of pornography on young adult males’ lives.

1.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework that directed the fieldwork and the researcher’s actions for this research study was the person centred approach, which is also known as the PCA. “Orientational qualitative inquiry begins with an explicit theoretical or ideological perspective of the researcher that determines the fieldwork and the interpretation of findings” (De Vos, Strydom, Schultze & Patel, 2011:6). The theoretical framework is the perspectives or assumptions of the researcher which determines how the participants, and the information from the participants, had been viewed, clarified and interpreted.

Doctor Carl Rogers developed the person centred approach in the 1940s and 1950s. This approach regards humans as experts of their own experiential world. (Du Toit, Grobler & Schenck, 2004:5).

Humans' perceptions and experiences shape their understanding of their world and it directs their behaviour. Seeing that the researcher aimed to understand through this study, what impact pornography may have on individuals' lives and thus their experiential world, the researcher viewed the participants' perceptions as the primary source of this information.

Du Toit et al (2004:38) emphasise that proposition eight (8) forms the person centred approach as it is stipulated that an individual's core self is gradually differentiated through perceptual experiences and changes of the person. Therefore, each aspect of change or development influences the individual's core self or the concept of self. The researcher considered the individual as holistic and thus assumed that the exposure to pornography may affect one or more than one component of the person.

Carl Rogers stated that the practitioner of the person centred approach should always convey certain qualities. These qualities are unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruency (Du Toit et al 2004:16). The researcher conducted this study through the expression of these qualities. The participants were viewed as individuals with strengths that can contribute to society. The researcher had the opportunity to be a mere visitor in the participants' experiential world and that world should be respected and accepted in totality. The deeper meaning participants attach to their experiences and perceptions regarding the impact of pornography need to be understood and the researcher aimed to do so through empathy and genuineness.

1.4. RATIONALE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Research indicates that pornography is both easily accessed and more accessible compared to a decade ago.

Extensive research have been conducted in the past regarding the impact of pornography on adolescents (Svedin et al, 2011:779-788; Tsitsika, Critselis, Kormas, Konstantoulaki, Constantopoulos & Kafetzis, 2009:545-550; Peter & Valkenburg: 2006:207-234). The impact of pornography on adults has also been investigated previously (Peter & Valkenburg, 2011:1015-1025; Popovic, 2011:449-456).

However, young adulthood is considered a crucial phase in human development. Critical developmental tasks such as to reach emotional and financial independence, to define morals, values and principles, to establish intimacy and dedication, to choose a life partner and to have children and raise them, are prevalent during this life phase (Gerdes et al, 1998:478). Research pertaining to the impact of pornography on the lives of young adults has shown to be deficient. Therefore, the researcher aimed to address this gap through this study.

More adolescents are exposed to pornography at an earlier age, which may create deviances in adolescents' sexual development. This may influence the person during a later life phase, such as the young adulthood phase where core life choices are made, as previously referred to. The researcher's attention regarding the topic of the impact of pornography was captured during practical training as a student social worker in the year 2009 at a secondary school in Pretoria. A situation analysis done at the school indicated that rebellious behaviour, alcohol abuse, sexual practices and pornography are the main contributors to learners' misconduct. According to the vice-principal, the incidence of pornography is more wide-spread in schools nationwide than what is currently realised (Greeff & Hodgetts, 2009). This view is supported by Philaretou et al (2005:150) as it is stated that school counsellors report a significant quantity of complaints relating to sexual behaviour among learners that is associated with inappropriate computer use. Research has shown that exposure to pornography during adolescence may thus affect the sexual development of the adolescent with certain effects which may manifest during the following life phase of the person (Peter & Valkenburg, 2006:213).

Even though research has been conducted in the past regarding the impact of pornography on adolescents as well as on adults, there is clear discrepancy among professionals with regard to the impact of pornography as it seems as if there is little conclusive agreement on what effects or impact regular pornography consumption may have on the consumer. Ybarra and Mitchell (2005:484) mention that more young adults consume pornography regularly and this consumption may lead to compulsiveness and addiction. Some researchers regard pornography as a social issue with severe ramifications for the consumer (Hunter et al, 2009:141; Perrin et al, 2008:11).

Other researchers view pornography as harmless time-consuming activities (Coopersmith, 2006:17; Linz & Malamuth, 1993:5). Despite the research that has been conducted, it is still stated that inadequate research was done previously to investigate what impact regular exposure to or consumption of pornography may have on the consumer's life (Twohig et al, 2009:257; Buzzel, 2005:29). The effect of this lack of knowledge and discrepancy in agreement will directly influence the helping process in the social service profession, as the task of intervention by clinical therapists and social workers is extremely complex. Internet pornography is altering the approach therapists undertake in order to assess and address sexual compulsivity and addiction (Levert, 2007:145).

Ayres and Haddock (2009:75) also state that certain therapists are unsuspecting of possible implications related to habitual Internet pornography consumption: "Therapists may be unsure about what kind of assessment is necessary, fail to perform a thorough assessment, or misdiagnose these issues. Without education and training, therapists may be more likely to generate treatment plans based on personal opinion" (Ayres & Haddock, 2009:75). As the new age of technology and addiction is entered by mental health professionals, the necessity to investigate the dominant influence of the Internet and to educate clinicians, the public, and the church accordingly is evident.

Jansen (2010:3) explains that a research question directs the researcher to proper literary resources and supplies the researcher with a specific focus for data-collection. The research question thus also informs the reader what question the research is aiming to answer (Punch, 2000:6). The research question for this study could be formulated as follows:

What are the perceptions of young adult males with regard to the impact of pornography on their lives?

The researcher thus endeavoured not only to address the gap by looking specifically at the young adult developmental phase, but also to contribute to the existing scholarly debate regarding what effect or impact regular pornography consumption may have on the consumer in general.

1.5. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

1.5.1 Goal of the research study

The goal of this research study was to explore the perceptions of young adult males regarding the impact of pornography on their lives.

1.5.2 Objectives of the research study

The objectives of the study could be outlined as follows:

- To conceptualise a theoretical framework regarding the developmental tasks of the young adult male that are necessary for successful functioning in society by focusing on key aspects that pertains specifically to this developmental phase
- To conceptualise a theoretical framework regarding pornography as phenomenon and the possible impact it may have on the consumer
- To determine the perceptions of young adult males with regard to the impact of pornography on their lives
- To formulate conclusions and recommendations based on the outcome of the study and to present knowledge that can assist professionals during the helping process in dealing with young adults who are dependent on pornography.

1.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.6.1 Research approach

The researcher utilised the qualitative approach as the focus of the study was to gain insight and understanding of the participants' experiences regarding pornographic consumption. Creswell (2007:38) explains that qualitative research aims to understand the everyday actions of individuals' social existence and to gain a holistic idea, through exploration regarding the meaning that these individuals attach to this social existence.

1.6.2 Type of research

Babbie (1992:44) states that applied research corresponds with an intention to satisfy a need through specific facts and findings in practice. The researcher identified the need to explore the possible impact of pornography on young adult males' lives. Applied research assisted the researcher in addressing certain questions and dilemma's concerning pornography consumption that were identified in practice. Applied research also enabled the researcher to formulate certain conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study, which can support professionals in practice.

1.6.3 Research design

The goal of the study was to gain understanding of the participants' perceptions regarding the way pornography may impact their lives. The researcher thus identified a phenomenological strategy as most applicable to the study as attempts were made to understand through the frame of reference of the participants, how and in which way pornography may impact their lives. Merriam (1998:15) explains that the focus of a phenomenological strategy is the essence of a specific phenomenon or the experiences of individuals.

1.6.4 Research methods

1.6.4.1 Study population and sampling

This study required young adult males with prolonged personal experience with pornography exposure. Prolonged exposure implies that the young adult male is or has been consuming pornographic material for a period longer than six months. Barlow and Durand (2005:364) consider behaviour as habitual when it has been reoccurring for six months or longer. The population for this study was regarded as all young adult males in Pretoria who have prolonged experience with pornography consumption.

The researcher estimated that snowball sampling would be the most applicable sampling method as a type of non-probability sampling. Snowball sampling is frequently applied in situations where the population for the study is difficult to locate (Maree & Pietersen, 2010:177; Strydom & Delpont, 2011:393). The researcher had access to a small group of young adult males who indicated that they had prolonged experience with pornography consumption. These possible participants also stated that they were acquainted with other young adult males who consumed pornography and they were thus able to refer these other similar cases to the researcher until data saturation occurred.

1.6.4.2 Data collection methods and pilot testing

Interviewing allowed the researcher to explore the participants' thoughts, perceptions and feelings regarding the impact of pornography consumption. Darlington and Scott (2002:48) view individuals as experts with regard to their own experiences. Therefore, they are the best information sources to obtain insight concerning a specific phenomenon. The researcher utilised in-depth interviewing which is also known as unstructured interviewing as data collection method. One open-ended question was directed to the participants and it was formulated as follows:

What are your perceptions as a young adult male, with regard to the impact of pornography on young adult males' lives?

The researcher did a pilot test in order to ensure that this open-ended question provided adequate opportunity for the participants to respond unreservedly. This pilot study tested whether themes from the participants' responses from the open-ended question could be accumulated. Two (2) participants were selected for the purpose of the pilot test and their responses were not included in the report.

1.6.4.3 Data-analysis

The researcher followed the following five (5) steps which are provided by Creswell (1998:142-165) during the process of data analysis:

- Planning for the recording of data: the researcher made use of audio recordings of each interview. The consent of all the participants was obtained for the recordings prior to data collection. Field notes were also made.
- Managing and organising data: The researcher had the task to transcribe the recorded data and to manage it by organising it into file folders, index cards and computer files.
- Reading and writing memos: The entire database of transcripts was explored and, by making relevant notes in the margins of the field notes and the transcripts, the researcher became familiar with the data.
- Generating categories, themes and patterns: It is the process of ordering and structuring and where meaning is attached to the gathered data (De Vos, 2005:333). The emergent understandings were tested and the researcher searched for alternative explanations to evaluate the usefulness and the centrality of the social phenomenon that was studied.
- Representing, visualising and displaying the data: The researcher presented the data in text format in a complete research report.

1.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations in human science research are prevalent when conflict originates between norms and values of a community in terms of freedom, privacy, and scientific methods which may invade privacy in order to obtain data with high scientific value (Singleton et al, 1988:456 in Strydom, 2005:68). Ethics are also defined by Kotze (2006:30) as a set of moral principles which are suggested by a group and then accepted across the broad spectrum of researchers. They provide rules and behavioural expectations regarding the most correct manner towards experimental subjects, respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers and students.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* (2005:197), ethics is described as “a branch of philosophy concerned with moral principles and values.” Ethics thus serve as a guideline for any researcher involved in social scientific research to evaluate their own conduct (Babbie, 2005:62). Merriam (1998:214) declares that qualitative researchers are visitors in the private environments of individuals and therefore they should always demonstrate good manners and consist of a strong code of ethics.

The following ethical aspects as outlined by Strydom (2005:58-66) were thoroughly considered, as it was applicable to the anticipated study: avoidance of harm; informed consent; violation of anonymity and confidentiality; actions and competence of the researcher; release or publication of findings and debriefing of participants.

1.7.1 Avoidance of harm

Strydom (2005:58) explains that with a social scientific study, harm of emotional nature is more probable than physical harm and that emotional harm, sometimes difficult to predict, may have long term negative effects on the participants. The researcher understands that the theme for this study is highly sensitive in nature and therefore any emotional harm must be prevented. The following guidelines were followed, as summarised by Babbie (2005:63-64) and Strydom (2005:58-59).

- Participants were informed in detail regarding the purpose, nature and potential impact of the study (Strydom, 2005:58). The participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.
- During the data collection phase, participants were requested to recall negative behaviour in the past, which may have lead to personal indignity or embarrassment. The researcher was sensitive and did not request information from the participants that did not pertain to the goal of the study (Babbie, 2001:471; Strydom, 2005:58).

- The researcher created opportunity for debriefing directly after each interview to identify and address potential psychological harm of the participants or any misinterpretation pertaining to the study.

If any negative emotional effect was identified, the participants could be referred to a practicing social worker from the Christian Social Council in Pretoria for counselling. However, none of the participants requested counselling and no negative emotional effect was thus identified.

1.7.2 Informed consent

According to Seale, Gobo, Gubrium and Silverman (2004:231), informed consent implies that the participant has the right to be knowledgeable regarding the nature of the research study. Information regarding the nature of the study includes the goal of the study, the procedures to be followed when conducting the research study as well as possible benefits and disadvantages of the study (Strydom, 2005:59). The researcher made sure that no participant was compelled to participate and the participant was adequately informed regarding the research procedures (Babbie, 2005:64). See Annexure A: the informed consent letter that the participants read and signed prior to the study.

1.7.3 Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

Strydom (2005:61) describes privacy of an individual as certain aspects which are not intended for any other person's analysis or observation. Singleton et al (1998:454 in Strydom, 2005:61) explain that the right to privacy of a participant incorporates that individual's choice to decide with whom and to what extent personal behaviour, perceptions and experiences are shared. Privacy involves a participant's choice to share personal information or not to share personal information, while confidentiality refers to the conduct and distribution of this personal information (Strydom, 2005:61). The researcher showed utmost respect for the privacy of the participants and did not attempt to invade any personal boundaries, unless they chose to share it with the researcher for the purposes of the study only.

Babbie (2005:64) further distinguishes between confidentiality and anonymity. Confidentiality implies that only the researcher is familiar with the identity of the participants while anonymity is a situation where neither the researcher, nor any other person is able to identify or link a given response with a given participant. In this particular research study, anonymity was not possible as the identity of the participants was known by the researcher. The researcher however, endeavoured to ensure confidentiality. Audio recordings were utilised as part of the data-collection method, but the consent of the participants was obtained and their names were not mentioned, neither on the recording nor in the research report. The data will be safely kept for a period of 15 years in the Department of Social Work and Criminology, according to the stipulation of policy of the University of Pretoria. This was explained to the participants.

1.7.4 Actions and competence of the researcher

Even though Merriam (1998:214) states that in-depth interviewing may cause certain long term effects that cannot be anticipated by the researcher before hand, it is also mentioned that interviewing can have the potential to enhance the overall living conditions of participants (Merriam, 1998:214). Patton (1990:354) emphasises the role of the researcher during interview conducting, as the accumulation of data is the primary focus point. The researcher may never be perceived as a judge that condemns or either be viewed as a therapist who strives to relieve participants' emotional strains through intervention. Patton (1990:354) highlights the necessity for the researcher to have knowledge regarding applicable resources or professionals in practice, where participants can be referred to when the need arises. The researcher liaised with a social worker in Pretoria who was willing to provide emotional assistance to participants if the need arose.

Since snowball sampling was applied as data collection method and participants were not approached through an institution, such as a university, an organisation or a church, no external authorisation to conduct this study was required. Since all the participants were over the age of 18 years, authorisation from parents or guardians was also not required. Participants were requested to read and sign informed consent forms before participation in this study.

It is clear that the researcher can never be cut off from human relations, and it is therefore important to uphold a certain code of ethics that will ensure that conduct is always directed at the best interest of the participant. The researcher was competent and adequately skilled to conduct the research study. Continuous consultation with the researcher's academic supervisor occurred. The supervisor's academic knowledge, experience and insight assisted the researcher in the ethical conduction of the research study.

1.7.5 Release or publication of findings

Any scientific study will be of little value if the results are not submitted in written format to the reading public (Strydom, 2005:65). It is further explained by Strydom (2005:65) that researchers are obliged to compile a research report as accurately and objectively as possible. The research findings are submitted in written format to the University of Pretoria as a prerequisite to the completion of the Master's degree in Social Work.

1.7.6 Debriefing of participants

The researcher understood that the study required the participants to share highly personal and sensitive information. Babbie (2005:68) affirms that it is the researcher's responsibility to provide debriefing immediately after the interviews in order to ensure that no participant suffer any emotional harm.

The researcher attached value to the summary of the contents of a debriefing session as outlined by Strydom (2005:67):

- ✓ The participant should be given the opportunity to freely discuss and reflect upon emotions and thoughts that he experienced during the interview.
- ✓ Any misperception of the participant pertaining to the study should be corrected by providing accurate information
- ✓ The termination of the session should be performed with sensitivity and the participants should be thanked for their contribution to the study.

The participants could be referred to a social worker in Pretoria for counselling if necessary or if they requested intervention. The social worker at the organisation was informed of the nature of the study, and was required to act confidentially. Thus, opportunity for individual therapy was created, if such a need were identified. However, none of the participants requested such intervention and no need for it could be justified.

1.8. DIVISION OF RESEARCH REPORT

The research report consists of five (5) chapters, which were structured as follows:

Chapter one General introduction to the research, the research process and methodology utilised.

Chapter two *Young adulthood as developmental phase:*
A theoretical framework regarding the developmental tasks of the young adult male that is necessary for successful functioning in society by focusing on key aspects that pertains specifically to this developmental phase.

Chapter three A theoretical framework regarding pornography as phenomenon and the possible impact it may have on the consumer.

Chapter four *Research methodology and empirical findings*
An analysis and interpretation according to the chosen methodology will be provided.

The perceptions of young adult males with regard to the impact of pornography on their lives will be interpreted.

Chapter five *Conclusions and recommendations*

Conclusions and recommendations will be made based on the research findings. Knowledge that can assist professionals during the helping process in dealing with young adults who are dependent on pornography will be presented

CHAPTER 2

A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF THE YOUNG ADULT DEVELOPMENTAL PHASE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research study is to explore how young adult males who have had prolonged exposure to pornography perceive the impact of this behaviour on their lives. The researcher endeavoured to understand how regular consumption of sexually explicit material affects these individuals holistically. To perform this study, it is fundamental to establish a concrete theoretical framework through the review of existing literature. This literature study is continuous as the researcher will reflect and compare various authors' findings regarding the content throughout the research process, which includes the phases of data collection, data analysis and synthesis (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008:59).

This research study will explore the interconnected experiences of participants concerning regular pornography consumption among young adult males. Two (2) main aspects of literature will be reviewed critically: (a) the developmental phase of young adult males concerning developmental tasks that are viewed as necessary for successful functioning in society and (b) the possible impact of regular exposure to pornography on this developmental phase. The latter will be discussed in chapter three (3).

A review of literature on the developmental phase of the young adult male will offer a notion of the context, history, and structure under which young adult males function, or ought to function in society. The accumulation of knowledge regarding the impact of regular exposure to pornography, will supply a context for understanding what knowledge and attitudes researchers have regarding this phenomenon. The researcher utilised multiple information sources which included books, dissertations, Internet resources, and professional journals.

Throughout the literature study, the researcher will attempt to highlight significant exceptions and conflicting views in literature as and when it becomes apparent (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008:60).

2.1.1 Introducing development theories as a means of understanding human development

As the goal of this chapter is to explore the developmental phase of the young adult male, the researcher will first introduce the role of theories pertaining to human development. Berk (2006:6) explains that developmental theories of human development are relatively new as it was formulated in the early twentieth century. However, Berk (2006:6) gives the following reasons for the vital role that development theories play in understanding human development:

- Development theories offer organised frameworks that provide meaning to what we can observe in human development.
- Development theories that are substantiated by research serve as a basis for practical action. This means that development theories do not only clarify certain aspects of human development, but also assist people in becoming familiar with ways to improve their functioning.
- When a person is, for some reason, not acquiring certain tasks which are specified by developmental theories, it can enable professionals to predict the outcome and action can be taken to address this limitation.

The themes pertaining to the developmental phase of young adult males concerning developmental tasks will now be discussed.

2.2. THE YOUNG ADULT DEVELOPMENTAL PHASE

2.2.1 Introduction of the young adult developmental phase

Early or young adulthood is regarded as a developmental phase normally between the ages 20 and 39 years (Gerdes et al, 1998:478). In South Africa, a person is

considered an adult at the age of 18 years when he or she (independently from parents or guardian) may sign legal documents like the purchase of a house, a vehicle or the inscription of a marriage contract.

Jekielek and Brown (2005:1) also refer to young adulthood from the age of 18 years and Berg et al (2003:33) no longer regard a person from the age of 30 years as a young adult, but rather as an adult. For this study, a young adult is therefore considered as a person between the ages of 18 and 29 years.

The young adult developmental phase which is the transition to adulthood is complex as it is characterised by many internal changes and personal growth. Emotional, financial and residential autonomy are objectives to be achieved and roles of the young adult start to include that of spouse, parent and employee (Jekielek & Brown (2005:1). This gradual yet crucial change requires responsibility and willingness to reach autonomy from the individual. It is evident that failure to achieve certain developmental objectives during young adulthood will lead to further disadvantages and shortcomings in the following phase of the life cycle, which is adulthood.

Du Toit et al (2004:5) emphasise proposition eight from the person centred approach as it is stipulated that an individual's core self is gradually differentiated through perceptual experiences and changes of the person. Therefore, each aspect of change or development influences the individual's core self or the concept of self. It is impossible to consider certain components of the developmental phase of young adulthood only, as one will certainly neglect vital understandings. The researcher considers the individual as holistic and therefore each developmental task will carefully be explored.

2.2.2 Developmental tasks of the young adult male

There are certain developmental tasks for young adulthood outlined by Gerdes et al (1998:480-481) and they are summarised under four (4) broad categories, namely: developmental tasks pertaining to the self, developmental tasks pertaining to career and leisure time, developmental tasks pertaining to interpersonal relationships and developmental tasks pertaining to the community.

Geldard and Geldard (2000:2) also provide categories that are associated with human development. These categories correlate with the developmental tasks, as the development of an identity correlates with psychosocial development and include the establishment of gender-identity. Geldard and Geldard (2000:2) also include values and principles that relate to moral and spiritual development.

Cognitive development and an understanding of how the human brain functions is a prerequisite for the developmental tasks pertaining to mental health and career development. Geldard and Geldard (2000:2) include sexual development as a category before reference is made to interpersonal relationships which are also referred to as social development. Therefore, the young adult developmental phase will be discussed in eights (8) rather than four (4) categories with specific reference to the following:

- Psychosocial development
- The development of a gender identity
- Moral and Spiritual development
- Cognitive development
- Career development
- Sexual development
- Social development
- Development of mentors in society (community development).

2.2.2.1 Psychosocial development of the young adult male

- **Self-value**

The self-concept is associated with self-esteem, self-worth or value of the self. According to Mruk (1995:14) self-esteem is regarded as the evaluation an individual makes and sustains with regard to him- or herself and this evaluation is commonly made based on standards the individual derives from messages from the external environment. Thus, what is commonly viewed by others and society as acceptable and appealing, is internalised by the individual as such. Gerdes et al (1998:527) state that the young adult should establish an identity and take responsibility to

define his or her own sense of self. This means that the maturing adult cannot bluntly accept all standards from society. The skill of discerning between enriching and demeaning messages from society is required for a satisfying life with a high self-esteem.

Barlow and Durand (2005:309) refer to self-efficiency as a psychological factor that promotes self-control of an individual. Self-control is exercised when the individual can manage stress and pressure from society in such a manner that decisions are not influenced by external instructions, but rather stem from own preferences which correlate with the core self. Exercising self-control serves as a shield against anxiety and depression (Barlow & Durand, 2005:309). If the young adult male is confident in himself and he expresses self-control, Schmitt, Ault and Bennet et al (2004:372) refer to him as being secure in his identity as it is stated that: "Secure individuals possess an expectation that other people will be accepting and responsive to their expressions of love, identity and masculinity" (Schmitt et al, 2004:372).

If the young adult male consequently expresses self-control and his behaviour correlates with his internal beliefs and not the opinions of others, he is more likely to receive love and respect from his community. Anxiety and depression are also less prevalent among those who exercise self-control and self-esteem of the individual is more positive. A higher level in quality of life, and especially later in life is achieved when a positive self-concept is maintained (Gerdes et al, 1998:527).

2.2.2.2 The development of a gender-identity (masculinity)

Masculinity and femininity are not regarded as mere biological differences between males and females, but are rather considered as desirable social traits of masculine and feminine roles which are often based on socially acceptable stereotypes (Galambos, Almeida & Peterson, 2012:1906; Rosen, 2005:127). It is also stated by Fumer (2005:221) and Morris (1997:211) that heterosexual manhood does not arise spontaneously during development, as masculinity is something that should be proven and demonstrated by the man. Heterosexual manhood is thus embedded in a sense of constant challenge and testing (Rosen, 2005:126). The young adult developmental phase is the exact time when this masculinity should be verified and

the young adult man himself, his family and society in general set the pressure for approval of manhood (Fumer, 2005:221). Three (3) main criteria are used to stipulate what heterosexual manhood does not entail and Fumer (2005:221) outlines it as follows: “a man is not a boy, not a woman and not a homosexual.”

Anxiety may be experienced because of fear of being labelled anything deviating from the true masculine role. Various authors refer to homophobia as a phenomenon where young men fear to be classified as a homosexual (Fumer, 2005:221). Rosen (2005:125) also include the fear of being humiliated in the presence of other men as homophobia.

Fumer (2005:221) outlines some methods used by young men in a quest to avoid homophobia and to prove their manhood and these methods can entail:

- Autonomous functioning by physical and emotional separation from his family of origin
- Demonstrations of physical strength
- Risk taking behaviour
- Willingness to fight
- Dating women and
- Performing sexually

Morris (1997:209-213) supports this view as deviant sexual behaviour is often the result of quests to prove manhood as he states that:

“The male sexual organ, the penis is viewed as the very centre of human life: love, sex, passion, lust, procreation, and offspring – thus a man with a large penis is afforded a special place in masculine society.”

These beliefs, according to Morris (1997:210) are misguided myths. Inappropriate sexual behaviour may thus stem from false assumptions and may include many sexual interactions with various sexual partners and the fathering of many children, as this is often believed to guarantee masculinity.

Defeat and feelings of unworthiness may be a result of the young adult male's failure to meet society's or cultural definitions of masculinity. This may lead, according to Fumer (2005:222), to a lack of pride, shame and regret which will negatively influence his marriage and other developmental tasks later during adulthood. However, if the young adult male undertakes extreme measures like sexual callousness to prove masculinity, it is evident that the effects will be much more severe.

In conclusion, Rosen (2005:125) acknowledges that cultural history is frequently the motivational factor that coerces men to identify themselves as men and they do it through extreme measures, escape or reactive exclusion. However, an answer is provided by Carter and McGoldrick (2005:28) as it is stated that a requirement for healthy development is the establishment of a sound sense of self within the context of culture and connections with others. This sense of self will secure the male in his masculinity. With a secure masculinity, the need for self-righteousness and approval through inappropriate or harmful measures, will not be evident. By striving to develop a sound sense of self and thus aiming to minimise the environment's pressure to prove and conform, the young adult is accomplishing this developmental task. The prerequisite for the development of masculinity is the development of autonomous and independent functioning. As Carter and McGoldrick (2005:27) state:

“Individual development defines maturity as self in context, that is, by our ability to live in respectful relation to others and to our complex and multifaceted world while being able to control our own impulses, and our ability to think and function for ourselves on the basis of our own values and beliefs, even if others around us do not share them.”

In confirmation with the statement above, Cornwall (1997:10) declares that men will note that in their daily lives, they will spontaneously behave differently than boys or women in various situations if they have a solid sense of their own identities. Maturity in the masculine role requires the capability to converse, respect, collaborate and most importantly to negotiate for autonomy in the self's best interest within society - that includes families and communities (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005:27).

2.2.2.3 Moral and spiritual development

Defining values and principles is regarded as fundamental to a meaningful life (Carter, 2005:271; Linz & Malamuth, 1993:9). Gerdes et al (1998:480) specifically mention this developmental task as crucial during young adulthood as autonomy is attained through this task. Values and principles are described by Oosthuizen (1990:16 in Van der Linde, 2000:90) as motivational drive forces for human behaviour.

Values are the fundamental basis from which decisions are made. Louw et al (1998:407) mention certain prerequisites for the definition of a value system which are outlined as follows:

- A few alternative values should be present in order for a specific decision to be made
- Autonomy in decision-making is emphasised and external pressure or persuasion should be absent
- The person making the decision should be aware of the possible consequences of the decision
- The person should be able to identify an appropriate value system and should be able to be loyal to that value system and act accordingly.

It is clear that the young adult should take ownership for decisions and values and be accountable for the decisions that are made. The young adult should be knowledgeable about certain implications of his value system or moral beliefs and be able to justify his actions. Carter and McGoldrick (2005:28) state that an individual's level of maturity stems from the ability to accumulate differences as well as connections from the environment and past experiences to form a unique basis for right and wrong.

The environment, which includes culture and spiritual views, often plays an integral part in the formulation of an individual's moral beliefs. Societal and religious values are sometimes viewed as never changing absolutes derived from fundamental rules

which represent religious authorities and God – the Ultimate Authority (Linz & Mallamuth, 1993:5 in Conradie 2001:12). Whether the young adult is influenced by these fundamental rules or not, it is still necessary for him to choose to integrate it as his own moral beliefs to gain autonomy (Carter and McGoldrick, 2005:32). South Africa is still predominantly classified as a religious Christian country (Statistics South Africa, 2009). However, Hackett (2006:177-179) states that the media in South Africa has experienced considerable demands in the post apartheid era from democratic legislation to broadcast all religions practiced in South Africa equally.

Thus, society in South Africa is more exposed to a variety of religions and cultures compared to a decade ago. This emphasises the developmental task of the young adult male to develop autonomy to be able to choose which values or moral beliefs will be internalised. Levert (2007:160) state that whatever values the young adult chooses to incorporate into his own moral belief system, his behaviour and actions should substantiate his belief system. People suffer greatly when their behaviour does not correlate with their internal beliefs for some reason.

2.2.2.4 Cognitive development

The brain is the central organ of all bodily functions. It is responsible for physiological homeostasis or equilibrium as well as the higher functions of a person, namely thought and behavioural processes. The brain is divided into different anatomical and functional regions that communicate with the body via a range of hormones called neurotransmitters (Meyer, Papendorp, Meij & Viljoen, 2002:610). For the purpose of this study, the limbic system and association areas of the brain will be discussed, because the limbic system is primarily concerned with behaviour, emotion and motivation, which are the higher functions of the brain (Day, 2007:155-159; Meyer et al, 2002:729).

Behaviour is divided into survival and social behaviour. Survival behaviour is the primitive response to hunger, fear, temperatures and need for procreation (sexual desire). Social behaviour is regulated by the neocortex, found in the frontal lobes of the brain, and controls survival behaviour in order for the person to function normally within society (Meyer et al, 2002:730). Thus, a young adult or any other developing

person should strive for harmony between survival behaviour and social behaviour. As the person strives to fulfil his or her basic surviving needs, it should still occur within acceptable societal parameters. Proposition five from the person centred approach according to Du Toit et al (2004:4), stipulates that behaviour of any person is always goal directed to satisfy a specific need. Behaviour can thus be understood when the need of the person is identified.

Emotions can be defined as “the various energetic states of the brain that have many attributes such as autonomic arousal, cognitive, expressive and feeling aspects” (Swartz, De la Rey & Duncan, 2004:529). Perceptions of situations (also linked to past experiences and cultures) relate to the cognitive aspect of emotion, with affective sensations (pleasantness or unpleasantness) of a stimulus relating to feeling aspects (Meyer et al, 2002:730; De la Rey et al, 2004:530). Emotions can be expressed by either internal changes in the body (respiratory, cardiovascular, visceral and metabolic) or externally such as laughing, crying or vocalisation.

Motivation is a process by which one is driven to an assured action or goal. Once this has been achieved, the drive ceases (De la Rey et al, 2004: 134). The limbic system together with the hypothalamus contains two (2) centres are referred to as “punishment (avoidance)” and “reward (pleasure)” centres. Stimulation of either centre results in the affective sensations, namely pleasantness or unpleasantness (Meyer et al, 2002:731). The amygdale, forming part of the limbic system, serves an important function in deep emotional memory. Pleasurable and unpleasant experiences imprint here, setting a pleasure thermostat memory (Day, 2007:151). If the reward centre is stimulated pleasure is experienced, and the motivation for the behaviour leading to the reward becomes stronger (Meyer et al, 2002:731).

The cortical association areas integrate and regulate the higher functions of the brain, and therefore also the limbic system. The prefrontal area is associated with control of innate behaviour blueprints, harmonising inner and external motivational drives (Meyer et al, 2002:731). So, as the limbic system is stimulated by some experience, generating an emotion and affective sensations, the expression of the emotion and subsequent behaviour is controlled by the prefrontal area for it to be appropriate and socially accepted. Social constraints therefore influence motivational

drive forces because the individual should be aware of the consequences and awards of desires, behaviour and motivations. An individual should also exhibit the skill of control in terms of innate behaviour blueprints, as certain behaviour such as sexual behaviour, is prohibited in public. This ability is, according to Day (2007:154), the difference between human beings and animals. Animals do not possess the ability to suppress certain instinctive motivators, while humans have to develop this ability.

As mentioned, various neurotransmitters relay different signals to the involved structures of the brain and the body. These are hormones and can be viewed as messengers being sent to and from the different structures. The correct balance of these transmitters is of vital importance to the brain, in order to maintain homeostasis and healthy functioning of the higher orders of the brain (Meyer et al, 2002:730). In the limbic system and hypothalamus, the important neurotransmitters are adrenalin, noradrenalin, dopamine and serotonin.

These transmitters must be present in the correct quantities for optimal functioning (Meyer et al 2002:730). Incorrect quantities may be the result of a neurological condition, damage to brain structures or an addiction of some form (Holden, 2001:981). Therefore, malfunctioning of the limbic system and cortical association areas, due to the imbalance of these neurotransmitters, will lead to behavioural and developmental deviations.

For the young adult male to develop healthily and reach maturity, it is important for him to discern between positive and negative pleasurable experiences. As mentioned, memories are imprinted into the brain and the person becomes motivated to either avoid punishable experiences, or seek pleasurable experiences. This motivation dictates the young adult male's behaviour with regard to the self and others, setting the scene for successful or non-successful completion of the developmental phase.

2.2.2.5 Career development

The tasks of young adult men achieving adulthood are often portrayed in ideals that involve financial success and social privileges which are attained through a satisfying career (Rosen, 2005:131). It is also stated by Jekielek and Brown (2005:5) that a primary ambition or objective for young adult men is to generate financial resources that allow them to live independently from their parents or caregivers. However, Fumer (2005:216) and Jekielek and Brown (2005:5) point out that wages and salaries are decreasing globally and expertise and experience requirements for employment are increasing. Therefore, more young adult males are struggling to reach their objective and take longer to become financially self reliant. Education through schooling and labour in different varieties are regarded by Jekielek and Brown (2005:5) as predominant activities that secure future financial well-being.

Educational achievement and continuous learning thus seem to be beneficial for employment. Barlow and Durand (2005:21) refer to self-actualisation as a term to describe every individual's tendency to attempt to reach their full potential in all aspects of their functioning. Continuous study and the embracing of new learning opportunities through training and education, serves as a means for self-actualisation.

Young adults who are not pursuing self reliance through the above mentioned activities are referred to by Jekielek and Brown (2005:8) as being inactive or detached from autonomy. This disconnection from financial independence will inevitably influence young adults in adulthood in relation to educational accomplishment and income.

Therefore, it is expected of young adult men to develop an interest in a form of work and pursue a career through the necessary study and training to enable them to earn an income and to support himself as well as a family (Fumer, 2005:216). Work provides a level of self-sufficiency, a channel for creative achievement, a cognitively stimulating environment which is shared with colleagues and an improved self-esteem (Duncan & Van Niekerk, 2004:123).

2.2.2.6 Sexual development

Morris (1997:3) states that, in the past, researchers paid much less attention to sexual development in children compared to other developmental tasks of children. Negligence in this regard might have caused confusion regarding appropriate or normal sexual development. This will then have an effect on sexuality during a later life phase.

Sexuality normally begins to be associated with emotional intimacy during young adulthood (Gerdes et al, 1998:492). It is in contrast to adolescents where sexuality is more egocentric as the adolescent's identity has not developed fully. The establishment of identity is thus a prerequisite for an adult sexual relationship that is marked by emotional intimacy, care and respect towards the other party.

McGoldrick (2005:243) and Morris (1997:2) are of the opinion that a sexually gratifying and partnership relationship between young couples during this developmental phase, is currently characterised by bewilderment and hearsay. Society is failing to provide appropriate and informative knowledge regarding this phenomenon.

Morris (1997:2) refers to society's attempts to provide guidance relating to sexuality, as a historic witches' brew that consists of conflicting ideas, some biological facts, religious doctrine and socio-political activism. This must leave young adults in perplexity regarding sexuality as uncertainty in this matter is created by various and sometimes conflicting sources.

Wallmyr and Welin (2006:290) also expressed the concern that true sexuality is predominantly discovered during late adolescence and early adulthood. With misguidance from society, professionals fear that young adults will explore their sexuality in ways that might be developmentally harmful to them.

Sexuality of the young adult male will be discussed in terms of sexual knowledge, sexual attitude, fantasies and sexual behaviour.

2.2.2.6.1 Sexual knowledge

Van der Linde (2000:59) refers to the term sexual knowledge as the source and commencement of all sexual components of an individual. Sexual knowledge can therefore be regarded as a precondition for sexual behaviour as this knowledge may thus guide and influence the person's sexual actions. Sexual knowledge is not merely instinctively attained. Persons, throughout their life cycle and from a very young age, are exposed to different sexual information sources whether intentionally or unintentionally (Morris, 1997:2; Van der Linde, 2000:62). It is therefore crucial for an individual to be capable of discerning between appropriate and damaging information, both pertaining to the self, own sexuality and a significant other or sexual partner.

Carter (2005:243) found that the majority of young adults have more knowledge and sexual experience compared to a previous generation. This might be due to an increase in the different available sexual information sources and more common liberal attitudes pertaining to sex in general (Mancini et al, 2012:21; Paul & Shim, 2008:187; Splinter, 2010:2) Sexual information is regarded as beneficial under the following conditions:

- When the information is based on biological and tested truths (Häggström-Nordin et al 2009:283)
- When the information is merely informative and not persuasive (Stulhofer, Busko & Landripet, 2008:20)
- When the information correlates with the moral belief system of the recipient (Boutellier, 2000:446).

Morris (1997:215-216) emphasises the absolute necessity of young adult males to acquire a thorough and informative sexual knowledge base both pertaining to themselves and the sexuality of their female sexual partner. However, the key to the successful completion of this developmental task is the ability to discern what information is appropriate and beneficial to the sexual knowledge base of the young

adult male. They should also be able to disregard false, misleading or persuasive sexual information.

2.2.2.6.2 Sexual attitude

A person's attitude towards the sexual component of human life will direct his or her sexual behaviour (Van der Linde, 2000:84). Concern is expressed by McGoldrick (2005:243) with regard to certain traditional or cultural assumptions that may influence people's sexual attitude. Benokraitis (2005:532) also states that "cultural factors play an important role in sexual expression." These assumptions include that males should always be in control of a relationship, both physically and emotionally and should express dominance and power over the female partner who, in turn, should be submissive and responsive to her partner's needs.

If the young adult male should adhere to these traditional assumptions, he will likely have a sexual attitude of dominance and insensitiveness towards his female partner. He is then likely to use power to attain sexual benefits and this, according to Morris (1997:215) may lead to sexual violence and aggression. This will destroy relationships as the young adult male may struggle to sustain a loving, nurturing relationship.

To maintain a loving relationship with a partner is stipulated as a predominant developmental task of the young adult male as egocentric motives for own sexual gratification should develop into intimacy and care both for himself and his partner (Boutellier, 2000:446).

The developmental task of the young adult male pertaining to his sexual attitude is therefore to avoid believing that power and dominance in sexual relationships are acceptable to obtain sexual gratification. The young adult male should strive for a mutual partnership in a relationship which is characterised by intimacy and care (Morris, 1997:215; McGoldrick, 2005:243).

2.2.2.6.3 Sexual behaviour

Masturbation is described as sexual self stimulation. This is sexual behaviour and gratification of one person that usually occurs privately without the presence of another person (Gerdes et al, 1998:406). It is also explained by Louw et al (1998:407) that masturbation is normally a male's first sexual encounter which usually occurs during adolescence. Many authors are in favour of masturbation even in adulthood as masturbation is regarded as an acceptable means to relieve sexual tension (Cooper et al, 2010:134; Louw et al, 1998:407). However, masturbation is seen as detrimental when it replaces social interaction and other activities of the male's normal functioning (Briken et al, 2007:131; Louw et al 1998:407).

Sexual fantasies are defined by Burton and Meezan (2004:53) as cognitive reconstructions or images of sexually pleasurable events or circumstances. Sexual fantasies often lead to masturbation as the memory of the pleasurable event often sexually arouses the person.

Briken et al (2007:139) state that sexual fantasies or urges may relate to excessive sexual behaviour as the individual who has these fantasies may struggle to suppress the urge to actualise their sexual ideals. These sexual fantasies may cause hindrance in occupational or social functioning of the individual, as the fantasy may become an obsession in the person's mind and motives. As stated previously, the young adult male should develop autonomy to avoid any hindrance in his social functioning. When sexual fantasies and masturbation are intruding into the social or occupational functioning of the young adult male, then one may assume it may have a negative effect on his healthy sexual development.

2.2.2.7 Social development

Carter and McGoldrick (2005:9,28) state that humans cannot function in complete isolation and even though autonomy is an objective for the young adult male, absolute autonomy does not exist. A prerequisite for healthy development is thus the establishment of the self in correlation with other people. "The most important aspects of human experience are relational." (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005:9). This is

also confirmed by Benokraitis (2005:532) that positive or negative sexual relations depend solely on the quality of persons' interpersonal relationships. It seems as if a good interpersonal relationship is necessary for satisfactory sexual interaction. Therefore, the interpersonal relationships pertaining to the young adult male's development need be explored.

Jekielek and Brown (2005:13) and Olmstead, Negash, Pasley and Fincham (2011:3) refer to young adulthood as a period which is characterised by preparation for long term committed relationships as the young adult explores and decides what characteristics and qualities are desirable in a future life partner. Marriage is often followed by the commencement of a household and children are often born during this life phase.

Therefore, the following three (3) developmental tasks relating to the young adult male's interpersonal relationships are outlined by Gerdes et al (1998:480):

- To choose a life partner
- To establish a meaningful and satisfactory relationship with one's life partner
- To have children and raise them.

Horwits, Mclaughlin and White (1998:124) regard marriage as advantageous for people. It was proven that people who are married have better physical, mental and psychological well-being and health compared to unmarried people. The explanation provided for this phenomenon is that the attachment, social support and belonging offered by a life partner may act as a shield against stressful life events (Benokraitis, 2005:237).

On the contrary, it seems that if the long term relationship or marriage is not providing the support and belonging, problems such as jealousy, criticism and anger may arise. Horwits et al (1998:125) state that:

“Problematic relationships with spouses are among the most powerful predictors of distress in community populations and may have detrimental effects on mental health.”

If a relationship is nurturing and supportive, individuals seem to thrive in all aspects of health, but if relationships are problematic, individuals’ well-being suffer greatly. Benokraitis (2005:237) state that there is a delay in the ages of young adults getting married compared to a generation ago. Young adults seem to consider more carefully whom and when they want to marry. This deliberate consideration may thus enhance the quality of a relationship. Horwits (1998:126) regards this action necessary to ensure that the marriage or long term relationship will offer the needed emotional support. The young adult male therefore needs to shift his focus from his own needs and adjust to the needs of his spouse and children.

2.2.2.8 Develop to be a mentor in society

Gerdes et al (1998:502) refer to a young male’s developmental task pertaining to the community. He should “discover a place within the community and have an impact or contribute to the community’s upliftment.” Morris (1997:216) refers to the need of young adult men to have the skills to mentor younger males. The young adult male should therefore possess leadership abilities in order to inspire and guide other younger men to follow his example of communal upliftment.

As Brooks (1997:4) concludes: “We need replace the anachronistic rituals of young men’s lives with true mentoring into responsible and compassionate masculinities. Only then will we find avenues to reintegrate our sexuality with our humanity.”

2.3. CONCLUSION

A review of literature regarding the developmental phase of the young adult male offered a notion of the context, history, and structure under which young adult males function, or ought to function in society. It became evident that emotional, financial and residential autonomy are some of the objectives to be achieved during this life

phase. The roles of the young adult start to include that of spouse, parent and employee (Jekielek & Brown, 2005:1). The following areas of development were identified in this life phase and these areas of development will be summarised. The researcher will emphasise certain inappropriate behaviour of the young adult male which may pose a threat to healthy development.

- ❖ Psychological development refers to the young adult's ability to discern between enriching and demeaning messages from society. This is required for a satisfying life with a high self-esteem. Self-control is promoted when a high self-esteem is maintained. It is exercised when the individual can manage stress and pressure from society in such a manner that decisions are not influenced by external instructions.

Therefore, it was concluded that hindrance in this developmental task may occur when the young adult male is influenced by external messages in such a way that his self-value is determined by these external standards.

- ❖ Cultural history is frequently a motivational factor that drives men to identify themselves as men. Masculinity is therefore often culturally determined. It was previously stated that a requirement for the development of a healthy gender-identity, is the establishment of a sound sense of self within the context of culture and connections with others. The prerequisite for the development of masculinity is the development of autonomous and independent functioning. Maturity in the masculine role requires the capability to converse, respect, collaborate and to negotiate for autonomy in the self's best interest within society.

Inappropriate behaviour of the young adult male pertaining to this developmental task, is identified when measures are taken with the motive to prove masculinity. An example of such inappropriate behaviour is sexual callousness with a motive to prove sexual performance.

- ❖ Moral and spiritual development encompasses the developmental task of the young adult male to develop autonomy to choose which values or moral beliefs will be internalised. It was found that whatever values the young adult chooses to

incorporate into his own moral belief system, his behaviour and actions should substantiate this belief system.

Hindrance in the acquisition of this developmental task is identified, when the young adult male's behaviour does not correlate with his belief system. It was found that a person experiences strain in the form of guilt or shame when there is contradiction between his moral beliefs and conduct.

- ❖ Cognitive development is considered as healthy, when a young adult male expresses the ability to create a balance between survival behaviour, social behaviour and emotions. The young adult male needs to discern between appropriate and inappropriate gratification of impulses and should be able to control inappropriate urges.
- ❖ It is expected of young adult men to develop an interest in a form of work and pursue a career through the necessary study and training. Thus, career development will enable them to earn an income and to support themselves as well as a family. Any hindrance in the acquisition of a career pursuit is considered problematic.
- ❖ Sexual development is divided into three (3) aspects namely: sexual knowledge, sexual attitude and sexual behaviour. Emphasis is placed on the young adult male's ability to move from an egocentric perception regarding sexual gratification, to consider and include a possible partner's sexual needs. When sexual knowledge, sexual attitude or sexual behaviour reflects egocentrism, objectification of a partner, or a lack of respect in sexual behaviour towards a partner, it is regarded as inappropriate.
- ❖ Social development during young adulthood requires the skills to: choose a life partner, establish a meaningful and satisfactory relationship with one's life partner; and have children and raise them. If the long term relationship or marriage is not providing support and belonging, problems such as jealousy, criticism and anger may arise. Therefore, if there is any impediment in a long

term relationship, that may cause weakening of cohesion between partners, it is considered as a threat to both partners' well-being.

- ❖ Lastly, developmental tasks pertaining to the community include skills and willingness of young adult males to develop as mentors in society. The young adult male should therefore possess leadership abilities in order to inspire and guide other younger men to follow his example of communal upliftment.

In the following chapter, the researcher will explore the impact pornography may have on the young adult male's development through a critical literature review.

CHAPTER 3

A THERORETICAL OVERVIEW OF THE IMPACT THAT PORNOGRAPHY MAY HAVE ON THE YOUNG ADULT MALE'S DEVELOPMENT

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Pornography is regarded as any sexually explicit materials that depict sexual activities either with or without violence or force between adults, or between people and animals or sex between adults and children (Svedin et al, 2011:780). These sexual explicit materials include:

“any image, publication, depiction, description or sequence containing a visual presentation, description or representation of a sexual act or of an explicit sexual nature of a person which may be disturbing or harmful to, or age-inappropriate for children.”

(The Films and Publications Act No 65 of 1996 (as amended))

Another component of pornography includes the intent to sexually provoke or arouse the consumer (Bunting, 2008:14 & Perrin et al 2008:11). Pornography is thus the explicit illustration of sexual activities either through literature, films or photography that is aimed to provoke sexual stimulation or arousal.

Seeing that there are different forms of pornography available, regular consumers of pornographic materials indicated that they make no exception with regard to the forms of pornography and prefer to view all variations of pornography, even if it includes sophisticated or deviant variations like animal, child or violent pornography (Svedin et al, 2011:780).

The pornography industry has proven to be a multi-billion dollar industry (Coopersmith, 2006:1; Philaretou et al, 2005:150; Perrin et al, 2008:11). When this industry is compared to the biggest profitable technology companies worldwide,

Diamond (2010:29) declares that the pornography industry is more profitable than all of these top companies collectively. The companies include trademarks like Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Apple. Diamond (2010:29) further states that more or less 40 million adults are visiting Internet pornography websites frequently and more than 10 million consumers are downloading sexually explicit materials regularly, while they are at work.

In support of this view, Splinter (2010:2) declares that no individual is exempted from the effects of pornography as it is freely accessible and widely consumed. Splinter (2010:2) further found that contemporary pornography is substantially different from previous forms of pornography as more extreme forms, typically referred to as hard-core pornography, are more commonly consumed. Since pornography is so widespread, Mancini et al (2012:21) state that this phenomenon tends to be generally accepted without consideration of the possible impact thereof.

Young adulthood, which is the developmental phase between adolescence and adulthood, has proven to be the phase in which pornography is most frequently consumed (Buzzell, 2005:28; Olmstead et al, 2011:3). As the amount of exposure to pornography gradually increases, research concerning the possible impact of such exposure on this age group, is lacking. Young adults are the primary consumers of such material (Zillman, 2000:41; Svedin et al, 2011:780). Some researchers report positive effects of pornography consumption, especially with regard to sexual knowledge, attitudes toward sex and the opposite gender, and sexual fulfilment (Barborka, 2009:306; Hald & Malamuth, 2008; Häggström- Nordin et al, 2005; Svedin et al, 2011:780; Wallmyr & Welin, 2006:291).

Other authors such as Splinter (2010:1) and Zillman (2000:41) refer to the possible harmful effects of pornography consumption among young adult males which may include misperceptions of sexuality, promiscuity, broken marriages and negative attitudes toward women.

In the previous chapter the developmental tasks of the young adult male were discussed. Now, the researcher will explore the way pornography may influence these developmental tasks of the young adult male by means of relevant literature.

3.2 PORNOGRAPHY AND PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

3.2.1 Pornography and self-value

The self-concept is associated with self-esteem, self-worth or value of the self. Gerdes et al (1998:527-528) state that a higher level in quality of life, and especially later in life is achieved when a positive self-concept is maintained. It was stipulated by Mruk (1995:14) in the previous chapter that self-esteem is regarded as the evaluation an individual makes and sustains with regard to him- or herself and this evaluation is commonly made based on standards the individual derives from messages from the external environment.

When looking at sexually explicit material as a possible element or message from an individual's external environment, images of a perfect physique are often presented where the body is portrayed as a flawless design product. These images are sometimes attained through diets, exercise or surgery. Attractive features are accentuated with the help of hair and body styling, and make-up (Paasonen, Nikunen & Saarenmaa, 2007:96). Even though these depictions are artificial, it is not presented as such and may serve as a standard to which an individual compares himself.

Pornography often portrays exotic sexual gratification and performance by men. Men in pornographic material are represented as sexual gurus or experts (Chelsen, 2011:2). According to Morris (1997:209), the male sexual organ is often perceived as the very centre of love, procreation, offspring, passion, sex and lust. Men with large penises automatically receive praise and acceptance regarding their masculinity in society (Morris 1997:209).

It seems as if this concern commences at a young age as *TeenHealthFX* also states that the most frequent concerns of adolescents on this website, revolve around penis size and shape, breast development, sexual embarrassment and masturbation.

A young adult male who consumes pornography may compare himself to the standards which are depicted in pornography, such as the perfect masculine body, the large penis and the sexual skills. It is likely that the young adult male will not meet these requirements. This may be falsely perceived as personal shortcomings and it may lead to a low self-concept.

Dissatisfaction with the self may lead to further negative thoughts and depression or low life satisfaction. According to Peter and Valkenburg (2011:1017), the diverse and extreme sexual activities often depicted in pornography, provides intense experiences and sensations for the consumer. If the consumer already experiences low life satisfaction with regard to the self, these extreme sexual sensations may serve as resources for enhancement (Philaretou et al 2005:158).

In a recent needs assessment, which was conducted by the Adolescent Health Program in the Section of Women's Children's and Family Health Special Summary (2010 in Svedin et al, 2011:780), adolescents and adults alike reported that feelings of hopelessness and depression are one of the top three (3) identified problems in adolescents as well as in adults. Peter and Valkenburg (2011:1017) showed a significant relationship between low life satisfaction or depression and pornography, as sexually explicit materials were more frequently viewed by adolescents and adults who reported to be less satisfied with their lives (Peter & Valkenburg, 2011:1023).

To support these authors, Quayle and Taylor (2006:9) and Svedin et al (2011:786) confirmed that pornography is often deliberately sought as a remedy for emotional distress or depression. A sense of euphoria and feelings of delight are commonly experienced by consumers while watching pornographic materials (Philaretou et al, 2005:158). It was also found by Sessoms (2011:10) that in comparison with pornography consumers and non-consumers, the persons who are not exposed to

pornography reported a higher level of self-worth and less depression. A study conducted by Ybarra and Mitchell (2005:473-486) confirmed that twice as many consumers of pornography, compared to non consumers have shown severe clinical indicators of major depression.

On the other hand, Barlow and Durand (2005:230) state that people become anxious and experience depression when they feel that a certain situation or habit in their lives, like the exposure to pornography, is no longer controllable. If pornography consumption is a habit that young adult males may perceive to be out of control, the assumption can be made that pornography consumption may lead to anxiety and depression in a person's life.

Whether sexually explicit material contributes to depression or whether depression contributes to more frequent pornography consumption, one can make the conclusion that there is a definite association between low life satisfaction and pornography consumption. Levert (2007:162) found that men who consume pornography regularly replied that they all regard consumers of pornography in some way as sinners, minorities or failures that require something marginal compared to themselves to achieve completeness. However, Levert (2007:162) views the use of pornography to achieve that feeling of completeness as a counterfeit pursuit that will inevitably lead to more self-mutilating behaviour patterns.

3.3. PORNOGRAPHY AND GENDER IDENTITY / MASCULINITY

There are clearly defined gender differences with regard to pornography consumption as numerous studies revealed that males are more attracted to pornography compared to females (Hald, 2006:580; Twohig et al, 2009:253; Häggström-Nordin et al, 2009:277; Paul & Shim, 2008:187; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2005:483).

Hald (2006:577) also highlights the following differences with regard to pornography consumption between men and women:

- Men are more fascinated and psychologically aroused by hardcore pornography
- Men are more attracted to pornography without the depiction of emotional attachments or relationships
- Men, more than women, favour pornography with various actors, compared to depictions of the same actors performing diverse acts.

As gender differentiation is evident in pornography consumption, one may question the role pornography plays in gender identity as well as in masculinity.

According to various studies, there are significant differences between adolescent males and adult males concerning pornography consumption. Peter and Valkenburg (2011:1020) found that adult males use sexually explicit material more frequently compared to adolescent males. Paasonen et al (2007:61) state that sexually explicit material is embedded into the code of every consumer's life and this code outlines the understandings of the self and others in progressively influential ways. As a result, it seems as if sexually explicit materials may influence the consumer's sense of self. This is in contrast with the developmental task of the young adult male to establish an autonomous sense of self as outlined in chapter two (2).

Morris (1997:210) is of the opinion that manhood is commonly connected to the capability to perform sexually. Masculinity is proven in society as soon as a male discovers his penis and learns through experimentation how to use it and how to use it well. It is vital for men to maintain a high status in the male community thus also maintaining a positive self-image (Morris, 1997:210). Pornography often encourages extreme sexual performances by men (Peter & Valkenburg, 2006:656). However, Morris (1997:210) states that: "it is highly improbable that all males can give award winning sexual performances consistently, or ever, males often keep their failures a secret and lie to themselves and other males about their sexual prowess." It seems as if the motivational factors for indulgence in methods to prove masculinity are based on fiction.

With regard to men preferring pornography with many sexual actors, Morris (1997:211) also states that the belief is held that an integral part of the developing male is to have as many female sexual partners as possible. Morris (1997:211) explains this as: “Men who have many successful sexual conquests, are often envied by other men who look at them as models of manhood and masculinity” It is clear that pornography may fuel never ending quests by young adult men to prove their masculinity as this exposure may lead to compulsive and inappropriate sexual behaviour.

It is stated in the previous chapter that a requirement for healthy development of young adult males is the establishment of a sound sense of self within the context of culture and connections with others. The young adult male needs to function independently and act in his own best interest (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005:27). Pornography may cloud the young adult male’s judgement regarding appropriate and inappropriate expressions of masculinity and he might compare his masculine role to fictional representations of masculinity. This might lead to the young adult male feeling less manly if he chooses not to consume pornography or if he is unable to conform to the standards that pornography advocates, for instance having multiple sexual partners or constantly performing sexually.

3.4. PORNOGRAPHY AND MORAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Splinter (2010:2) regards pornography consumption as morally- and philosophically challenging. Previous research has explored the relationship between religiosity and attitudes toward pornography. A negative association was evident between pornography consumption and religiosity (Carroll et al, 2008 in Sessoms, 2011:9). Research also indicates a positive relationship between the opposition of pornography and religiosity (Woodrum 1992 and Lambe 2004 in Sessoms 2011:9). Nelson et al (2010 in Sessoms 2011:9) showed that a sample of religious respondents indicated unanimously that the consumption of pornography is unacceptable.

It seems as if there has been a continuous debate about the moral effects pornography may have on society. These debates can be categorised under two (2)

contrasting theories. The theories are named by Linz and Mallamuth (1993:4-15 in Conradie 2001:11) as the moral theory, which is also known as the authoritarian or conservative theory. The second theory is the libertarian theory. These two (2) theories will be discussed briefly as follows:

- The moral theory

The moral theory is guided by the Judeo-Christian theology which accuses pornography of being an assault on fundamental societal and religious values. The regular consumer of pornographic material may thus become insensitive to depraved or immoral actions (Linz & Mallamuth 1993:5 in Conradie 2001:11). Societal and religious values are viewed as never changing absolutes derived from fundamental rules which represent religious authorities and God – the Ultimate Authority. Adultery, promiscuity and homosexuality are strongly rejected.

- The libertarian theory

In contrast to the moral theory, the libertarian theory holds that individuals are rational beings who should not rely on authoritative figures for the truth as they are capable of discerning right from wrong (Conradie, 2001:11). The truth is no longer seen as absolute and unchangeable, but rather as a continually growing phenomenon where each individual's right is to explore, question and challenge. This quest for truth is seen as fundamental for reaching full potential, both intellectually and morally. Linz and Malamuth, (1993:9-10) state that the libertarian theory opposes the perspective that what is good and evil are culturally defined. If individuals choose to accept pornography as arousing and pleasing, it may be because all humans are viewed as naturally sexual. If an individual chooses to reject pornography as it is morally wrong, it is then seen as an own choice which may also evolve and change in time.

The culture and religion of South Africa is predominantly guided by the Judeo-Christian theology. A census conducted in 2007 by the Religious Intelligence in South Africa, has shown that 73.53 percent of the South African population

proclaims to be Christians. This quantity is slightly lower compared to the same census in 2001 where 79.77 percent of the population claimed to practice the Christian religion. These percentages of the Christian religion were significantly higher compared to persons who declare to have no religious affiliations (8 percent in 2007) and persons who belong to any other religious group which includes the traditional African religion (18 percent in 2007).

It was also argued in the previous chapter that the media has been coerced to represent and broadcast all religions and minority cultural groups equally in the post apartheid era (Hackett, 2006:179). Exposure to a variety of alternative religions may influence people in society to change or adapt their moral beliefs. The crucial aspect here is the citizen taking ownership of own moral beliefs and acting accordingly. Levert (2007:160) states that discrepancy between moral beliefs and behaviour may cause severe distress because of failure to justify his or her actions morally.

Despite more exposure to diverse cultures and religions in South Africa, research shows that the majority of the South African population is still influenced by fundamental religious values as embedded in the moral theory of Christianity (Statistics South Africa, 2009). Pornography in South Africa may thus be viewed by the majority of the population as morally wrong. However, statistics have shown that a large amount of pornography is consumed by South-Africans on a regular basis. The assumption may be made that people's moral beliefs are conflicted by their behaviour. Sessoms (2011:10) also supports this phenomenon by stating that: "although religiosity is consistently negatively associated with an acceptance of pornography, these same attitudes do not always translate to a lack of use." Sessoms (2011:10) even refers to a study conducted by Baltazar, Helm, McBride, Hopkins and Stevens (2010) as lifetime pornography consumption among Christian college students shown to be slightly higher (47.6%) in comparison to general population consumption percentages (40-43%). The effect of this discrepancy between moral beliefs and conflicting behaviour is worthy of exploration.

In a culture such as South Africa, which is influenced by religion, people believe in an afterlife with God that is attained through certain measures such as, sexual purity

and abstinence from sex outside of marriage (Barborka, 2009:309). Pornography is characterised as forbidden and if a person should disobey this rule, the person may develop feelings of hopelessness as this standard may now be viewed by the person as unattainable and beyond reach. Splinter (2010:5) and Sessoms (2011:10) has confirmed that church attendance decreased by approximately 26 percent since Internet pornography was introduced in a specific community and the most reported effect of pornography is a weakened relationship with God.

Splinter (2010:2) is of the opinion that cultures that embrace a strong moralistic sexual standard and then later develops a philosophy of sexual freedom (such as the evolving search for truth that is encouraged by the liberalistic theory), suffer from cultural demise. This may lead to feelings of exclusion and depression. Levert (2007:151) refers to common characteristics of compulsive pornography consumers that also claim to be authoritarian Christians. They showed a lack of intimacy with others and with God, compartmentalised thinking, ethnocentrism, double standards and contradiction in their values, morality as well as self-righteousness. Sessoms (2011:11) adds that males who claim to be religious, suffer from extreme distress from pornography consumption and may even exaggerate their behaviour as addictive even without clinical supporting evidence. Levert (2007:160) further found that people who are non-Christian and who also consume pornography compulsively, did not share the equivalent characteristics and pressures of authoritarian Christians.

The culture in the Middle East can also be classified as strictly authoritarian. Barborka (2009:309) describes the experience of a male who is consuming pornography as living in extreme fear if his behaviour would be discovered. This male said that “he would suffer severely in the afterlife and hot melted lava would be poured into his eyes.” Another male in a similar situation reported that he is plagued by constant shame and guilt and that he is desperate to escape from this emotional misery, even if it would mean to emasculate himself or to take his own life.

Barborka (2009:309) quotes an admired psychologist Doctor Randy Hyde who has been working with persons that show addictive pornographic behaviour for many

years. He said that: “when you combine the feelings of despair, guilt and shame with the forbidden nature of pornography within a culture; and a possible predisposition for addiction, you have a recipe for disaster”.

Thus, it seems as if persons with an authoritarian background who believe that pornography is morally wrong suffer greatly when their behaviour does not correlate with their internal beliefs for some reason. This may cause guilt and shame and may hinder a person from admitting his or her behaviour for fear of rejection or judgement by their authoritarian community.

It was mentioned in the previous chapter that the young adult male should take ownership for decisions and values and be accountable for the decisions that are made. Pornography may cause conflict between what certain young adult males regard as morally wrong, and their contrasting behaviour. The impact of pornography may thus be more evident in individuals who internally embrace an authoritarian moral standard.

3.4.1 Pornography and racism

Sessoms (2011:6) notes that racial stereotypes are often endorsed through specific pornographic material and names racism as a pertinent theme of pornography which may have a definite impact on the values and principles of a person who consumes pornography regularly (Cowan & Campbell, 1994; Heider & Harp, 2002:287). It was also found by Heider and Harp (2002:289) that men and women are portrayed as more aggressive towards a different race partner compared to a same race partner. A white man would for example treat a black woman more harshly compared to a white woman and a black man would respond less intimately to his partner compared to a white man (Sessoms 2011:7).

Carter and McGoldrick (2005:29) state that maturity during young adulthood involves skills like:

“The ability to accept one’s self while simultaneously accepting differences in others to maintain one’s values and beliefs and to

relate generously to others even if one is not receiving support from them or from anyone else for one's beliefs."

Pornography with possible stereotypical messages regarding race and ethnicity may hinder the acceptance of others or the acceptance of differences in others.

3.5. PORNOGRAPHY AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Cognitive development comprises the functioning of the brain. The excretion of certain hormones such as adrenalin and dopamine has a significant effect on thought processing and in turn on a person's emotion. During a pleasurable experience, such as sexual gratification, dopamine is released and the reward centre of the limbic system in the brain is stimulated, which then creates a positive effect (Diodge, 2007:106). Adrenalin and noradrenalin are released, resulting in the physical expression of the positive emotion, increased heart rate and respiration (Meyer et al, 2002:730). It has long been argued by scientists that a person becomes addicted to the released hormone, and therefore is motivated to seek activities that will result in the pleasurable effect continuously, irrespective of possible negative consequences (Barboka 2009:388; Sunderwirth & Milkman, 1991:421).

Atrophy (shrinkage) of the cortical areas in the brain has been noted in addicted patients. This is referred to as the "hypofrontal syndrome". People who are addicted to any substance exhibit the same actions as those with frontal lobe brain damage which is erratic behaviour, impaired judgement and aggressiveness (Fowler, Volkow, Kassed & Chang, 2007:5). All addictions entail enduring, and at times permanent, neuroplastic changes in the brain. It affects and limits normal development and proper behaviour (Diodge, 2007:106).

It is clear that addiction creates a dangerous mix of uncontrolled, prolonged erratic behaviour despite its harmful consequences to the self and others (Sunderwirth & Milkman, 1991:422). As the innate part of the brain becomes dependent on its source of reward centre stimulating hormones, the cortical areas become obsolete. A

person becomes consumed with the pleasurable experiences, losing touch with reality and their moral values (Barlow & Durand, 2005:237).

A person can become addicted to chemical substances such as drugs and alcohol. Research supports that addiction to non-chemical substances such as pornography are equally prevalent (Diodge, 2007:105). Other examples of non-chemical substances are gambling, shopping and sex. According to Holden (2001:980), addiction can be the product of recurring, high-emotion, high-frequency experiences. There is evidence to support a physiological basis for all types of addiction. Physical changes in the brain have been noted in various addictions to narcotics, overeating leading to obesity, and sexual addiction or paedophilia (Diodge, 2007:107; Holden, 2001:981). The obsessive, continuous viewing of pornography is linked to sexual addiction (Suderwirth & Milkman, 1991:426; Briken, Hill, & Berner, 2008:33) and it has been postulated as being an addiction itself (Barborka, 2009:310).

Diodge (2007:106) gives the following explanation for the cognitive process pertaining to the exposure of severe forms of pornography:

“Hardcore porn unmasks some of the early neural networks that formed in the critical periods of sexual development and brings all these early, forgotten, or repressed elements together to form a new network, in which all the features are wired together. Porn sites generate catalogs of common kinks and mix them together in images. Sooner or later the surfer finds a killer combination that presses a number of his sexual buttons at once. Then he reinforces the network by viewing the images repeatedly, masturbating, releasing dopamine and strengthening these networks. He has created a kind of “neosexuality”, a rebuilt libido that has strong root in his buried sexual tendencies”

Addiction to pornography elicits the body's innate hormones to create dependency on the pleasurable experiences brought forth by viewing pornography (Barboka, 2009:310). As with all addictions, tolerance develops as a result of prolonged use or exposure. Pleasure reduces and the use of new and more intense materials is needed to continue satisfactory enjoyment. This 'excitatory-habituation' comprises the first stage in habituation paradigms of sexual deviancy (Zillman 2000:41). Thus, a tendency of compulsivity may develop which then not only affects the person's sexual discernment, but may also encourage sexual aspiration and behaviour (Mcbride, Reece & Sanders, 2008:110).

Zillman (2000:41) also indicates that a person's sexual desire becomes stronger with prolonged viewing of pornography, creating a cycle involving a continuous search for more intense material and heightening of sexual desire. Consequently, it becomes harder for the person to control his or her sexual behaviour (Adams & Robinson, 2011:33). As mentioned in the previous chapter, a person should express the ability to control instinctive motivations. It seems as if pornography may fume sexual desire to such a degree that a person may lose the ability to discern appropriate sexual notions from inappropriate sexual notions.

3.5.1 Pornography and sexual fantasies

Sexual fantasies are defined by Burton and Meezan (2004:53) as cognitive reconstructions or images of sexually pleasurable events or circumstances. Some authors believe that pornography provides a safe and legitimate opportunity for the expression of sexual fantasies (Diamond, 2009:304; Goodson, McCormick & Evans, 2001:115; Popovic, 2001:454). According to Conradie (2001:13), pornography creates a fantasy world where the consumer should be free to express and explore his sexual interests within the boundaries of his culture.

Cooper, Delmonico, Griffin-shelley and Mathy (2010:135) state that sexual fantasies are often presented as a motivational factor for consuming pornographic material. The perfect image or story according to the specific fantasy is often sought for realisation. However, Cooper et al (2010:135) further state that this motive often leads to frustration as it may become a long search for the detailed desire. Even if

the image or representation is found, it is often brief and temporary satisfaction before the individual creates and starts searching for a new intensification or variant on the theme. Even though individuals consume pornography for the fulfilment of a certain fantasy, it seems as if it is often unsatisfactory.

Briken et al (2007:139) state that sexual fantasies or urges may relate to excessive sexual behaviour as the individual who has these fantasies may struggle to suppress the urge to actualise their sexual ideals. These sexual fantasies may cause hindrance in occupational or social functioning of the individual, as the fantasy may become an obsession in the person's mind and motives. Gee, Ward and Eccleston (2003:46) developed a sexual fantasy function model (SFFM) to explain four (4) key functions that sexual fantasy fulfils. It is explained as follows:

- The first function is called the affect regulation function where the fantasy enhances the mood of the person
- The second function is the sexual arousal function where the fantasy serves as enhancement for sexual gratification and arousal
- The third function is the coping function where the person can escape reality to an illusion of perfect and pleasurable circumstances
- Lastly, modelling is considered a fantasy function where new sexual experiences are created as the person's sexual acts resemble the specific fantasies

Sexual fantasies may thus be satisfied by pornography and pornography may in turn create new sexual fantasies. (Häggström-Nordin et al 2005:104; Svedin et al, 2011:783; Brown, 2005:135). Certain sexual preferences are only developed after exposure to the sexual event (such as depictions from pornography) and may develop after modelling of the specific event took place (Beauregard, Lussier & Proulx 2004:153). Brown (2005:135) further states that deviant sexual behaviour may sometimes be substantiated by deviant sexual fantasies. This may include expressions of aggression, power and control.

Because of this proven correlation between sexual fantasies and pornography, one may question the impact of sexual fantasies on the life and cognitive functioning of the person who often fantasises about sex. It was stipulated in the previous chapter that the young adult male should avoid any intrusion into his social and occupational functioning. It can be concluded that pornography may cause excessive sexual thoughts and desires which may have an influence on his cognitive functioning.

3.6. PORNOGRAPHY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

As outlined in the previous chapter, education through schooling and labour in different varieties are regarded by Jekielek and Brown (2005:5) as predominant activities in order to secure future financial well-being of the young adult male as well as his family. The Internet has proven to be the most popular form of access to pornographic material (Coopersmith, 2006:2 & Paul & Shim, 2008:187). Research has shown that adolescents and young adults who are more educated consume more sexually explicit material compared to adolescents and young adults who are less educated (Peter & Valkenburg, 2011:102). This might be because the Internet is more accessible to those who are better educated and who have access to technology.

Those who are better educated also have a greater opportunity to be employed. Splinter (2010:6) surprisingly found that 70% of all Internet pornography websites are accessed during typical working hours which are between nine o'clock in the morning and five o'clock in the afternoon. The statement is then made by Splinter (2010:6) that business productivity and professional relationships should be affected by pornography consumption considerably. Mitchell and Wells (2007) in Svedin et al (2011:782) report that over consumption and deliberate use of Internet pornography are of the most reported problems affecting the mental health of both adolescent and young adult males. This frequent exposure may lead to the desire to buy or sell sex, experience a heightened sexual desire and premeditated thoughts of sexual encounters may occur while the person is at work (Svedin et al, 2011:782; Philaretou et al, 2005:158).

If the mental health of a person may be so severely affected, one can agree that business productivity and performance may be greatly hindered especially if pornography is accessed while the person is in the work environment. Splinter (2010:6) explains that the integrity of employees at work is challenged since Internet pornography is often concealed and this may lead to dishonesty toward the employer: "It is as much a theft of company assets, as is embezzlement, forgery or misappropriation of corporate property".

If an employee experiences preoccupied and inappropriate sexual thoughts that may be endorsed by pornography consumption, one can state that the desire to excel and achieve the highest level of career performance (as it is a common desire for all human beings to attain their full potential) may be hindered by pornography consumption (Barlow & Durand, 2005:21). Since it is expected of a young adult man to develop an interest in a form of work and pursue a career through the necessary study and training in order to earn an income to be able to support himself and a family, pornography might cause disconnection from this goal. This will inevitably influence young adults in adulthood concerning educational accomplishment and income and may become inactive or detached from autonomy as referred to by Jekielek and Brown (2005:8).

3.7. PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT

3.7.1 Pornography and sexual knowledge

Paasonen et al (2007:80) state that ignorance and innocence concerning sexual knowledge, techniques and activity are commonly viewed by society as embarrassing and apologetic. This belief may cause people to seek knowledge regarding sex in order to avoid humiliation actively. It was stated in the previous chapter that a young adult male should possess a sound sexual knowledge base concerning his own sexuality and the sexuality of a female sexual partner. However, it is crucial to have the ability to discern between inappropriate and beneficial information to accumulate this sound knowledge base. This task requires individual judgement and sometimes the rejection of certain sexual sources of information (Hunter et al, 2009:145-146).

According to Olmstead et al (2011:4) and Wallmyr and Welin (2006:295), men reported that pornography is a positive investment to gain sexual knowledge as it can be applied as an educational tool to study innovative sexual techniques and positions. However, men also stated that the motive for viewing pornography was primarily to improve or benefit the quality of an existing sexual relationship (Olmstead et al, 2011:4).

Hald (2006:580) found that great gender differences exist pertaining to preferences in pornographic themes as some men prefer to view sexual acts which may be characterised by women as extreme or unnatural. Such sexual activities include group sex of one man and many women, anal intercourse or sodomy, lesbian sex, oral sex, sadomasochistic practices, bestiality (sex with animals) and amateurs' sex. Zillman (2000:42) and Sessoms (2011:7) confirm that prolonged exposure to pornography may desensitise the consumer since exaggerated sexual activities that once were rejected and labelled as repulsive, gradually become more acceptable and even desirable. The acceptance of the sexual information gained from pornographic exposure, may lead to a clouded judgement of appropriate and inappropriate sexual knowledge. If a young adult male's motive for consuming pornography is to gain sexual knowledge, he may become fascinated and desires certain extreme acts that are not shared by his partner.

Sex is omnipresent in public texts and images yet it is confined to private lives in personal relationships. Paasonen et al (2007:77) state that there is clearly a contradiction between sexual messages in "public" compared to what occurs in "private". Since there is a lack of realistic knowledge on the subject of sexual activity of the "average", it may lead to high and unrealistic expectations and desires related to sex. It is clear that one cannot compare sexual acts in public to sexual intercourse in private, as it seems that these settings are contradicting each other. Pornography may consequently contribute to unrealistic and inappropriate sexual knowledge.

3.7.2 Pornography and sexual attitude

Males who frequently consume pornography are reported in numerous research studies to be more positive and have a liberal attitude concerning sex compared to males who do not consume pornography (Svedin et al 2011:786; Wallmyr & Welin 2006:292). Zillman (2000:42) states that sexual access is commonly presented by pornography as an objective to satisfy own sexual desires. Sex is often portrayed as innocent entertainment without the emotional or health consequences. Malamuth and Donnerstein (1984:145) also state that pornography inevitably has a subtle and long-term persuasion with regard to values and attitudes of consumers. Currently there is no evidence that would substantiate this statement as this hypothesis still requires some testing.

There is an ongoing debate among professionals about the possible negative attitudes men may develop towards women due to pornography consumption. Some previous research has found that pornographic depictions may be dehumanising and demeaning women (Diamond, 2009:309; Splinter, 2010:2; Barborka, 2009:307; Brooks, 1997:2). On the other hand, Diamond (2009:309) mentions that this critique is often first to be offered from those who contest pornography. Diamond (2009:310) further states that no research has confirmed the causality between pornography and calloused attitudes toward women.

Sexually explicit material may also place emphasis on external attractiveness or flaws of women. Sessoms (2011:6) refers to research conducted by Heider and Harp (2002:289) where over 200 online pornography websites were visited over a period of one (1) year. They found that intrinsic hypocritical messages regarding men and women were portrayed. If a woman would not be in her youth, beautiful or exceptionally slender built, a warning message would come on the screen before the consumer will have the opportunity to access the website. In contrast, no comment was made pertaining to the attractiveness of males and many male actors were older or overweight. Heider and Harp (2002:291) concludes that women were depicted as enthusiastic about sex and sexually aroused by any man, regardless of who he is, his appearance or whether she knew him.

It was stated in the previous chapter that the young adult male ought to refrain from believing that power and dominance in sexual relationships are acceptable for obtaining sexual gratification. The young adult male should strive for a mutual partnership in a relationship which is characterised by intimacy and care and not based on mere external beauty of his partner (Morris, 1997:215 & McGoldrick, 2005:243) It is evident that contrasting messages are sent through depictions in pornography and that consumption of such material may influence the sexual attitude of the young adult male.

3.7.3. Pornography and sexual behaviour

The definition of pornography stipulates that its' intend is to sexually arouse the consumer. Malamuth and Donnerstein (1984:4) found that males and females become sexually aroused by any form of pornography. Both subjective reports of arousal and physical reactions such as erections, genital temperature and blood pressure serve as evidence. However another prerequisite for masturbation is not only sexually explicit images, but also imaginative and cognitive processing of the consumer is required for this sexual provocation (Brown, 2005:135; Malamuth & Donnerstein, 1984:4).

Philaretou et al (2005:152) state that “pornographic images and movie clips are designed to stimulate and enrich an individual’s sexual fantasies and induce him to engage in masturbatory practices.” It seems as if sexual arousal is so desirable that it is one of the most frequent motives of males for consuming pornography. Wallmyr and Welin (2006:296) found that men bluntly stated that they watch pornography for the purpose of having an erection and masturbating. Hald (2006:580) mentions that compared to women, men who consume pornography used it considerably more frequently for sexual gratification when they are alone, such as for masturbation.

Further distinction is made between men who masturbate more regularly and men who have a lower frequency of masturbation. Hald (2006:584) states that men who masturbate more frequently would deliberately search for pornography more often and would be more prone to rely on sexually explicit material for the purpose of masturbation.

The assumption can be made that there is a circular relationship between pornography and masturbation. Some men may use pornography to obtain sexual gratification through masturbation and those who masturbate more frequently, with or without pornographic stimuli, may more frequently seek pornographic material. This tendency is explained by Beaugregard et al (2004:152) as the stimulant (which is the pornographic image), which initially leads to sexual provocation, increases in arousal elements if the same stimulant is later imagined while masturbating. Pornography therefore may increase the gratification of sexual activity.

Kingston and Malamuth (2011:1045) also refer to certain positive effects of pornography as research found that consumption of pornography leads to heightened gratification in sexual interaction (Weinberg, Williams, Kleiner & Irizarry, 2010:1393; Hald & Malamuth, 2008:616). Diamond (2010:29) provides a positive outcome of pornography especially for the purpose of masturbation. He regards pornography for the intent of masturbation as a readily accessible resource which provides an acceptable alternative for harmful illegal sexual activities. It seems therefore as if masturbation may be regarded as appropriate sexual behaviour in these circumstances.

Many authors believe that pornography promotes promiscuity and is associated with unprotected sexual activity (Hunter et al, 2009:141; Mancini, 2012:21). Almost 70 percent of adolescent boys who reported viewing pornography regularly in a study conducted by Svedin et al (2011:780-786) found that pornography inspired them to have the urge to try what they have seen depicted. Sessoms (2011:8) reported similar findings as men who daily viewed pornography had five (5) times more lifetime sexual partners compared to men who do not consume pornography. Svedin et al (2011:784) further states that the adolescent boys reported having penetrative sex three (3) times more often than boys who did not consume pornography. Pornography may therefore inspire young consumers to show inappropriate sexual behaviour which may have an influence on their sexual development.

In the previous chapter, mention was made to destructive masturbation or sexual activities when this behaviour starts serving as a substitute for other essential developmental activities such as meaningful social interactions or familial or community relations (Louw, et al 1998:407). Pornography may thus have an impact on the sexual behaviour of the consumer because the desire to be more sexually active and to masturbate more frequently may increase.

3.7.3.1 Pornography and aggressive behaviour

The connection between sexual arousal, pornography and sexually aggressive behaviour has been questioned and investigated by numerous researchers as pornography has been considered a motivational factor for sexually aggressive acts such as rape (Malamuth, Addison, & Koss, 2000:53; Sessoms 2011:8; Malamuth & Donnerstein, 1984:187). Malamuth and Donnerstein (1984:145) also state that “Pornography provides an environment where rape, women-battering and crimes against women is acceptable.” Kingston and Malamuth (2011:1045) mention that these findings about the fact that pornography may have an effect on sexual aggression will have an impact on legislation and public policy. It furthermore provides some knowledge for care workers and professionals who assess and treat sex offenders. Despite the findings of this research, it seems as if gap regarding the role of pornography in violent sex offence persists (Mancini, Reckdenwald & Beauregard, 2012:21).

Significant attention has been given to the promotion of the rape myth which is often portrayed in pornography (Brown, 2005:137; Sessoms 2011:9). The rape myth is explained by Zillman (2000:42) as the situation in which women are depicted to be resistant to sexual intercourse initially, but once forced by penetration become aroused, have orgasm, eventually take pleasure and is thankful for the sexual encounter. Wyre (1992:236) is of the opinion that the rape myth is extremely dangerous as it may create the perception that the rape of women is acceptable. More than 90 percent of the rape encounters depicted in pornographic material represents women being raped, having an orgasm and enjoying the rape in the end: “The sex offenders use this to justify their actions of rape. The rape myth provides offenders with an excuse for raping women” (Wyre, 1992:236).

Mancini et al (2012:22) refers to a social learning effect or an imitation role of pornography. It was found that some offenders expressed the desire to replicate certain scenes from pornographic materials. Consequently, some violent pornographic suggestions may be utilised as a training manual to commit sexually aggressive acts (Hald, Malamuth & Yuen, 2010:16; Brown, 2005:136).

In contrast with the argument that pornography may play a role in promoting sexual aggression and rape of women, Diamond (2009:307) and Howitt (1995 in Brown, 2005:137) provides a justification for pornography as they state that pornography can be an acceptable substitute for aggressive behaviour (Kingston & Malamuth, 2011:1045). Research studies conducted by Longford (1972) in Britain and by McKay and Dolff (1985) in Canada, have shown no correlation between the increase in availability of pornography and an increase in sex crimes (Barborka, 2009:308). Diamond (2009:307) simply states that studies in various countries have shown that sex crimes declined rather than inclined with an increase of pornography availability. Mancini et al (2012:22) also refer to a recent study conducted by D'Amato (2006) in the United States of America where a correlation was found between an amplified accessibility of pornography over the past two (2) decades and a decline in the number of sex offences committed.

The possibility is considered pertaining to pornography fulfilling a displacement function for sex offenders. Diamond (2010:29) explains that an expression of sexual fantasies is typically found in pornography and once the fantasy is satisfied by viewing the acts in pornography, actual sexual activity may be hampered or restrained. Sexual aggression or tension may be released, preventing the potential offender to commit a crime (Mancini, 2012:22).

The debate regarding the relation between of pornography and sexual aggressive behaviour has dual convictions. It can be formulated as follows:

- On the one hand, researchers believe that pornography and especially violent pornography where the rape of women is depicted, promotes and inflames sexual aggression.

Kanuga and Rosenfeld (2004) and Zillman (2003 in Wallmyr & Welin, 2006:290) state that heterosexual pornography frequently represents male authority which generates females' submission and sexual delight. This male dominance or authority is often portrayed through aggressive gestures.

- On the other hand, researchers state that this causality between violent pornography and aggressive sexual behaviour have not yet been proven and that pornography condones rather than promotes sexual aggression and crime as the potential offender have a possible outlet and substitute for offence through pornography.

With regard to these contrasting views, Zillman (2000:42) provides a sound argument by stating that:

“The fact that erotica’s effects on sexual violence have not been established directly in causally compelling research (meaning measured by the actual commission of rape) has been used to argue that there is no evidence for harmful effects of pornography.”

This, according to Zillman (2000:42) is a false assumption. According to Mancini et al (2012:21) some jurisdictions stipulate certain conditions for convicted sex offenders with regard to parole or probation. A typical example of such a condition is the restriction of accessing or purchasing any pornographic websites or material. Even though research have not yet proven the causality between pornography and committing sexual offence, it seems that more experts believe in the possibility of violent pornography that may lead to sexual aggression and offence rather than considering the possibility that pornography may be a cure or substitute for sexual aggression.

It will not be accurate to assume that pornography exposure causes sexual aggression, however, pornography exposure may be considered as an individual risk factor which may gradually lead to sexually aggressive behaviour.

Beauregard et al (2004:159) confirms that developmental factors or individual risk factors together with the stimuli from pornographic exposure, may lead to deviant sexual behaviour.

3.8. PORNOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Pornography may be regarded as a sexual socialization instrument as it is mainly a solitude activity where the consumer is sexually educated (Peter & Valkenburg, 2011:1023). Svedin et al (2011:486) state that for this reason, social relationships of consumers of pornography may deteriorate. Special reference is made to adolescents who seek sexually explicit material and it is resulting in weakening bonds with parents or caretakers. Bonds with peers who do not share the same interest in sexually explicit material, may also weaken (Philaretou et al, 2005:158). The assumption is made that the quality of social relationships may deteriorate pertaining to significant others, regardless of age and that the same effects of weakening relations may occur between young adult males and significant others.

It was suggested that meaningful social relations will serve as a substitute for the urge to search for sexually explicit material (Philaretou et al, 2005:161). However, Peter and Valkenburg (2011:1023,1024) found that even though the consumption of pornography is mainly a private activity, the cause of this consumption is not related to an absence of social integration or because of social exclusion. Thus, pornography consumption may result in social exclusion, but social exclusion is not necessarily the cause of pornography consumption.

3.8.1 Pornography and the perception of permanent partnerships, relationships and sexual partners

It was stated previously that males consume pornography more often compared to females (Hald, 2006:580; Twohig et al, 2009:253; Häggström-Nordin et al, 2009:277; Paul & Shim, 2008:187; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2005:483). It is evident that the male partner in a relationship who consumes pornography does it privately without the knowledge of his sexual partner (Kernsmith & Kernsmith, 2009:594; Popovic,

2011:454). One then not only questions the possible impact of pornography on the male partner alone, but one has to include the possible effect of pornography on the sexual relationship or the marriage of the consumer.

According to Olmstead et al (2011:4), some young adult males have different explanations and perceptions regarding the function that pornography may fulfil in devoted romantic relationships. Positive effects of pornography on relationships are identified as positive attitudes about sex, improved sexual knowledge and performance during sexual activity. (Mckee, 2007; Rogola & Tyden, 2003 in Olmstead et al 2011:5) However, research with regard to the possible positive impact of pornography on romantic relationships, has proven to be limited as experts are more concerned with the possible negative impact of pornography on relationships and marriages (Olmstead et al, 2011:4). These authors have also found that when pornographic material is accessed with the motive of improving an existing sexual relationship, this may only be possible when both partners are consenting and decide to view these materials together.

Morgan and Morgan (2011:528) state that sexually explicit material may contribute to greater sexual skills and sexual gratification. However, it seems as if this gratification is more egocentric in nature and that it does not necessarily benefit the relationship or marital bond between partners. Some researchers have found that lower sexual- and relationship satisfaction are associated with pornography consumption (Morgan & Morgan, 2011:528). Some of the possible negative consequences of pornography that were stipulated by researchers pertaining to relationships and marriages include the following: weakening marital bonds and cohesion between partners, infidelity and diminished responsibility for sexual actions. These possible negative consequences of pornography will now be discussed separately.

- Weakening marital bonds and cohesion between partners

Splinter (2010:5) and Philaretou et al (2005:158) state that pornography may become a substitute for sexual intimacy with a partner which may lead to isolation and distance between partners.

Sessoms (2011:8) refers to weakening marital bonds as detachment where partners report that sexual intimacy becomes emotionally disconnected. Increasing dissatisfaction with their partner's physical appearance and sexual performance has also been reported (Sessoms, 2011:8). Bergner and Bridges (2002 in Olmstead et al 2011:4) also confirms Sessom's findings as the spouses of males who regularly consume pornography reported diminished sexual activity and intimacy, together with emotions of disloyalty.

Explanations for weakening cohesion between partners are also presented when idealistic sexual expectations for the relationship are demanded because of unrealistic depictions of pornographic material. Sexual requests may be made to a non-consenting partner and this may lead to unfulfilled sexual gratification when these sexual expectations are not met in the relationship by both partners (Lambert, Stillman, Olmstead & Fincham, 2009:26). This tendency of diminished attachment to relationship is summarised by Stulhofer, Busko and Landripet (2008:17) as follows:

“While the observed positive effects of sexually explicit materials were associated with the range of sexual experiences, the negative effects were related to relationship intimacy.”

Unmet sexual expectations may develop in sexual frustration and thus diminished sexual closeness with the partner.

Mancini (2012:21) further confirms that men who regularly consume pornography may become intolerant of their spouses' emotional needs as they may perceive pornography as instantaneous gratification without the effort to sustain a romantic relationship. This may lead to the objectification of women, as women sometimes are solely depicted as instruments through which sexual gratification can be obtained. However, Diamond (2010:30) strongly disagrees with this statement as he has conducted a study where a group of men were exposed to sexually explicit material. Their actions toward women after the exposure were compared to a group of men who had not been exposed to the sexually explicit material. He found that the men who were exposed to the sexually explicit material were more forbearing and accommodating of women compared to the control group.

Therefore, he states that “there was no detectable relationship between the amount of exposure to pornography and ill feelings or actions against women” (Diamond, 2010:30).

In the developmental phase of young adulthood, where long term relationships and marriage are quite predominant, it is necessary to consider the possible weakened bonds and cohesion between partners as a result of pornography consumption. It was mentioned in the previous chapter that weakening bonds and diminished support in a marital relationship may have detrimental effects on individuals.

- Infidelity

Olmstead et al (2011:23) comment on the supposed connection between infidelity and pornography consumption as two (2) views were expressed by numerous respondents who were accepting of pornography consumption: pornography consumption were not regarded as a form of infidelity and secondly, pornography consumption may serve as an adequate substitute for infidelity. Maddox, Rhoades and Markman (2011:443) showed that dedication to a relationship is stronger when couples view pornography together. However, Maddox et al (2011:445) later found that: “couples who view pornography together also reported more instances of infidelity compared with couples who did not view pornography.”

Marital bonds may subsequently weaken and the probability for unfaithfulness in the relationship may increase whether one or both partners view pornography. Less love and commitment in a relationship together with distrust may be created by pornography and it may lead to betrayal of one’s partner (Henline, Lamke, & Howard, 2007; Schneider, 2000; Stack, Wasserman, & Kern, 2004; Zillman, 2000; Zillman & Bryant, 1988 in Olmstead et al, 2011:21). Separation and divorce may be a result of the latter. Splinter (2010:5) found a correlation between extramarital affairs and pornography consumption, as those who have committed infidelity were 3.18 times more willing to consume pornography compared to persons who were faithful to their partners.

- Diminished responsibility for sexual actions

Sessoms (2011:7) found that males who consume pornography regularly showed a decline in liability of actions as this group, compared to a control group who do not consume pornography, was more accepting of non-marital cohabitation and having children without the commitment of marriage. Zillman and Bryant (1988 in Sessoms, 2011:8) also found a correlation between pornography consumption and a reduced desire to have children. Not only may consumers of pornography express more liberal views regarding cohabitation and having extra-marital children, but the aspiration of fostering a family through the bearing and raising of children, may diminish. Pornography consumption may cause the young adult male to neglect certain responsibilities that are part of the developmental phase. It seems as if pornography may foster the egocentric needs and sole gratification of an individual. This is the opposite of what the developmental tasks of the young adult male should include (Horwits, 1998:126).

3.9. PORNOGRAPHY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MENTORS IN SOCIETY

According to Hunter et al (2009:147), social functioning and competence will enhance in a community where pro-social attitudes are encouraged in meaningful peer relationships. This formation can occur with mentoring efforts. Mentoring is regarded as a constructive method in work around sex and relationships (Limmer, 2010:355). Limmer (2010:355) further states that “the young men in this study demonstrated the power and influence of the peer group in formulating values and regulating behaviour – it is these groups that are seen as the site for learning and it is these groups that have the credibility”. Mentoring may only have a positive influence if people in the community are inspired by the promising mentor. If the young adult male experiences trouble in any of the discussed developmental tasks, he may not be seen as credible to mentor anyone. So, if pornography should hinder any development of the young adult male, it may cause a lack in leadership in the community.

3.10. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the possible impact of pornography on the young adult male was discussed and eight (8) broad themes were identified which included: the possible impact of pornography on the psychosocial development, the gender identity development, the spiritual and moral development, mental health development, career development, sexual development and interpersonal development. Lastly, the importance of effective leadership in mentoring was discussed. The deduction is that pornography may cause impediments in the development of the young adult male in any one or all of the developmental tasks.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research study was to explore the perceptions of young adult males in South Africa regarding the impact of pornography on their lives. In Chapter one, the researcher introduced the study and included the research methods that served as a blue print for the planning of the intended study.

In chapters two (2) and three (3), the researcher conducted a literature review to provide a theoretical framework of relevant aspects pertaining to the study such as young adulthood as developmental phase (as explored in chapter two) and pornography as phenomenon and the possible impact it may have on the consumer's life (as explored in chapter three).

A theoretical framework regarding the developmental tasks of the young adult male that is necessary for successful functioning in society assisted the researcher to focus on key aspects that pertains specifically to this developmental phase which may be impacted by pornography consumption. A theoretical framework regarding pornography as phenomenon and the possible impact it may have on the consumer assisted the researcher to complete a critical review of current literature pertaining to this topic. Although the literature reviews were ongoing throughout the data collection, data analysis and synthesis phases of the study, it made the researcher sensitive to the controversial nature of the topic as the study included participants' own experiences and emotions. This significant knowledge base also prepared the researcher for the empirical process of the study.

In this chapter, the researcher will first elaborate on the study's methodology as introduced in chapter one, and then the researcher will attempt to provide an accurate account of the empirical findings. These findings include the participants' perceptions and are presented in narrative form.

4.2. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

4.2.1 Goal of the research study

The goal of this research study was to explore the perceptions of young adult males regarding the impact of pornography on their lives.

4.2.2 Objectives of the research study

The objectives of the study could be outlined as follows:

- To conceptualise a theoretical framework regarding the developmental tasks of the young adult male that are necessary for successful functioning in society by focusing on key aspects that pertains specifically to this developmental phase
- To conceptualise a theoretical framework regarding pornography as phenomenon and the possible impact it may have on the consumer
- To determine the perceptions of young adult males with regard to the impact of pornography on their lives
- To formulate conclusions and recommendations based on the outcome of the study and to present knowledge that can assist professionals during the helping process in dealing with young adults who are dependent on pornography.

4.3. THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Jansen (2010:3) explains that a research question directs the researcher to proper literary resources and supplies the researcher with a specific focus for data-collection. The research question thus also informs the reader what question the research is aiming to answer (Punch, 2000:6). The research question for this study could be formulated as follows:

What are the perceptions of young adult males with regard to the impact of pornography on their lives?

The researcher thus endeavoured not only to address the gap by looking specifically at the young adult developmental phase, but also to contribute to the existing scholarly debate regarding what effect regular pornography consumption may have on the consumer in general.

4.4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.4.1 Research approach

There are two (2) well-known and approved research approaches namely, the qualitative and the quantitative approaches (Fouché & Delpont, 2005:73). The researcher utilised the qualitative approach, as attempts were made to gain insight and explanations concerning the perceptions of young adult males regarding the impact of pornography on their lives. Creswell (2007:38) explains that qualitative research aims to understand the everyday actions of individuals' social existence and to gain a holistic idea, through exploration regarding the meaning that these individuals attach to this social existence. In other words, individuals' experiences, perceptions, and explanations are investigated.

The research study was thus qualitative in nature as the purpose was mainly to describe a situation, phenomenon, problem or event (Kumar, 2005:12).

4.4.2 Type of research

As the researcher focused on gaining knowledge about the possible impact of pornography on the young adult male, applied research was applicable for this study. There are two (2) types of research, namely basic and applied research. Fouché and De Vos (2005:105) state that applied research is the classification of functions or the use thereof in direct practical application. Basic research focuses more on empirical observations aiming at reformulating theory or the theoretical development of a discipline.

Applied research is the systematic planning for change in a problem situation and the focus is to formulate possible solutions for dilemmas in practice (Fouché & De Vos 2005:105). Babbie (1992:44) states that applied research corresponds with an intention to satisfy a need through specific facts and findings in practice.

The researcher offered possible recommendations for practice pertaining to young adult males in intervention settings, who report regular pornographic consumption.

4.4.3 Research design

The result of a phenomenological study is the universal portrayal of the phenomenon as seen directly through the eyes of individuals who have experienced it personally (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005 in Delpont, Fouché & Schurink, 2011:305). The researcher made use of a phenomenological strategy as attempts were made to understand how pornography impacts the life of young adult males who are or have been consuming pornographic material regularly.

Mouton (2001:55) describes the research design as a blue print for the planning of the research process. The *New Social Work Dictionary* (2004:53) defines a research design as the map of a research project through which the product is achieved logically. Creswell (1998 in Fouché, 2005:269) identifies five (5) strategies of investigation that can be applied in the design of a qualitative research study, namely: biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case studies.

Merriam (1998:15) explains that the focus of a phenomenological strategy is the essence of a specific phenomenon or the experiences of individuals. Fouché & Delpont (2005:72) states that a phenomenological study attempts to interpret the meaning that individuals attach to their daily lives. Thus, in this study the meaning that young adult males attach to the exposure of pornography was clarified and interpreted.

4.4.4 Research methods

4.4.4.1 Study population and sampling

4.4.4.1.1 Study population

Strydom (2005:193) defines a population as a group of persons in which all the dimensions of interest to the researcher are represented. Since this study required young adult males with prolonged personal experience with regard to pornography consumption, the population for this study was regarded as all young adult males in Pretoria who have been exposed to pornography and have been or are consuming pornography regularly.

4.4.4.1.2 Sampling

A sample refers to a small segment from the population (Strydom, 2005:193). Therefore, the sample has exactly the same characteristics as the population from which the sample was drawn. This is a key requirement for a sample is it should be representational of the whole population that is being studied (Mouton, 1996:135).

Distinction is made according to Strydom (2005:196) between two (2) sampling forms, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling was applicable for this study. However, Maree and Pietersen (2010:177) state that non-probability sampling, where not all individuals of the population have the same chance for being selected to partake in the study, should cautiously be considered as important conclusions drawn from the population may be biased. Strydom (2011:231) also notes that the likelihood for selecting a particular individual in non-probability sampling is not known because the researcher is not familiar with the size of the population or the members of the entire population.

The phenomenon of pornography investigated is sensitive and controversial in nature, the researcher was not familiar with all young adult males in Pretoria who view pornography regularly and a database for these males did not exist. The opportunity for non-probability sampling was evident. As Nieuwenhuis (2010:79) declares: "sampling decisions are therefore made for the explicit purpose of

obtaining the richest possible source of information to answer the research questions.”

4.4.4.1.2.1 Non-probability Sampling method

Snowball sampling is frequently applied in situations where the population for the study is difficult to locate (Maree & Pietersen, 2010:177; Strydom & Delpont, 2011:393). Snowball sampling has thus specific relevance and ample value in qualitative research, since it is aimed at the discovery of hard-to-reach individuals to be included in the study. Snowball sampling seemed to be the effective sampling method to be applied in this study.

Snowball sampling is one (1) of the four (4) key types of non-probability sampling methods, together with convenience sampling, quota sampling and purposive sampling (Maree & Pietersen, 2010:177). Strydom and Delpont (2011:391-394) add other types of non-probability sampling methods such as theoretical sampling, deviant case sampling, sequential sampling, key informant sampling and volunteer sampling.

Snowballing is the approach of a single person or participant that is involved in the phenomenon to be investigated and meets the criteria for the specific study. After information is required and obtained from this person, he or she enables the researcher to locate other members of the same population (Babbie, 2007:185). Because the first person consigns the researcher to other associated cases, the sampling frame is chosen consisting of individuals who make up the sample until a satisfactory number of cases have been incorporated into the study (Strydom & Delpont, 2011:393).

The researcher contemplated that snowball sampling will be performed in a successful manner as she had access to a small number of young adult males who had prolonged personal experience with pornography consumption.

These individuals were part of a religious group, but they indicated that they were willing to participate in the study on an individual basis and not as a member of this

specific religious group.

They also claimed to be acquainted with possible participants for this study outside the group in Pretoria region. They were thus able to refer these other similar cases to the study until data saturation occurred.

The criteria that were used to select the sample were the following:

- Participants have to be young adult males between the ages 18-29 years
- Participants must have prolonged personal experience with pornography consumption or regular exposure to pornographic material. Prolonged experience is regarded as recurrent exposure to pornographic material over a period of at least six (6) months. Barlow and Durand (2005:364) consider behaviour as habitual when it has been reoccurring for six (6) months or longer.

The researcher continued to select participants in the snowball sampling manner until data saturation has occurred and the same themes and findings started repeating themselves (Strydom & Delpont, 2011:393). However, the researcher aimed to include at least twenty (20) participants for this study, but data saturation occurred after fifteen (15) interviews were conducted.

4.4.5 Data collection methods and pilot testing

4.4.5.1 Data collection method

The researcher was required to plan both for the recording or collection of data, as well as for the retrieval of data for analysis purposes. Merriam (1998:75) explains that in-depth interviews are applicable in specific situations where the researcher does not have enough information pertaining to the phenomenon to formulate relevant questions, as is the case regarding the impact of pornography in this study.

Interviewing is one of the predominant methods of data collection in qualitative research (Greeff, 2005:287). The goal of the research must lead the researcher in choosing the most effective type of interviewing method. Distinction is made between unstructured (also known as in-depth interviewing) and semi-structured interviewing (Greeff, 2005:292). Taylor and Bogdan (1998, in Darlington & Scott, 2002:50) state that in-depth interviewing is especially appropriate when a phenomenon cannot be observed directly. By having an interview with a participant one includes the description of experience as well as the participant's reflection on a specific experience. Young adult males could not be observed while they are being exposed to pornography, but their thoughts, perceptions and feelings regarding the theme could be explored. The interviews were therefore explorative in nature and preliminary questioning was not applied (Merriam, 1998:75).

The goal of this type of interview was not to gain specific answers or to test hypothesis, but to grasp the experiences of individuals as well as the meaning they attach to these experiences (Greeff, 2005:292). Darlington and Scott (2002:48) view individuals as experts with regard to their own experiences; therefore, they are the best information sources to obtain insight concerning a specific phenomenon.

As the researcher regarded in-depth interviewing, as the most applicable form of data collection for this research study, the theme for the interview centred on the following open ended question that was directed at the participants:

What are your perceptions as a young adult male, with regard to the impact of pornography on young adult males' lives?

4.4.5.2 Pilot testing

The *New Social Work Dictionary* (1996:70) defines a pilot study as the process where the research design is tested for the planned investigation.

Strydom and Delpont (2011:395) regard four (4) aspects of a pilot study as crucial to be included in any qualitative research. It is the literature review, the experience of experts, the feasibility of the study, and the testing of the data-collection instrument. The researcher performed a thorough literature review on the theme of the study and requested professional opinions from experts in the field in order to identify themes for further exploration and to ensure valid investigation of the phenomenon.

In terms of the testing of the data-collection instrument the following definition for a pilot study is provided by Strydom (2005:206): “A small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments, and analysis are adequate and appropriate.” Since the data-collection method for this proposed study was in-depth interviewing where one open-ended question was asked to the participants, the researcher made use of a pilot test in order to ensure that this open-ended question provided adequate opportunity for the participant to respond unreservedly. This pilot study tested whether themes from the participants’ responses from the open-ended question could be accumulated. Two (2) participants were selected according to the snowball sampling technique for pilot testing purposes only and the knowledge gained from the pilot test was not included in the study.

4.4.6 Data-analysis

Schurink, Fouché and De Vos (2011:403-419) refer to Creswell’s (2007:150) spiral analysis and interpretation of data that serves as a guideline in the process of qualitative data analysis, classification and interpretation. The following steps, which may overlap, are summarised under three (3) main phases and each one was followed by the researcher.

Phase 1: Preparing and organising the data

During this phase, the researcher planned to record the data that should proceed in as naturalistic as possible in terms of the setting and respect for the research participants’ sensitiveness. Audio recordings of each interview were made to ensure that information was retained (Greeff, 2005:298).

Field notes were taken either during, or directly after the interviews to ensure that the data collection proceeded as accurately as possible (Greeff, 2005:298). Written and verbal informed consent from the participants for the recording of the data was obtained before the interview or recording commenced.

Data-collection and preliminary analysis was the following step in the process where the preliminary analysis was regarded as a twofold approach. The first aspect of analysis occurred immediately after the collection of data, which was through the recordings and field notes in the immediate environment where data collection had occurred. The second aspect of analysis occurred afterwards, away from the interview environment. The researcher then had the task of transcribing the recorded data and to manage it by organising it into file folders, index cards and computer files (Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:404).

The next step in the phase of preparing and organising the data was the reading and writing of memos, where the researcher reviewed the transcripts by reading and rereading it. The entire database was explored and, by making relevant notes in the margins of the field notes and the transcripts, the researcher became familiar with the data in preparation for the next phase in the analysis process.

Phase 2: Reducing the data

Patton (2002:432 in De Vos 2005:335) states that qualitative analysis transforms data into research findings. Categories, themes and patterns are now highlighted from the database and coded together (Creswell, 2007:150-155, De Vos, 2005:336-338, Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:137). It is the process of ordering and structuring and meaning is attached to the gathered data (De Vos, 2005:333). The emergent understandings were tested and the researcher searched for alternative explanations to evaluate the usefulness and the centrality of the social phenomenon that was studied (Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:415). The patterns that seemed obvious were critically challenged and the researcher ensured scientific value of the research findings.

Taylor and Bogdan (1998:144 in Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:416) state that the researcher should develop typologies (also known as conceptual frameworks where phenomena are classified according to common characteristics of other phenomena) to be able to make theoretical associations between occurrences and to develop clear theoretical understandings. “The researcher thus interprets data by giving them meaning or making them understandable from the point of view of the people being studied.” (Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:417).

Phase 3: Visualising, representing and displaying the data

The researcher presented the data, during the final phase of the data-analysis and interpretation, in a complete research report (De Vos, 2005:339). The relationships in the findings as well as categories and themes were presented to the reader in this synopsis.

4.7. INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS

In this section, the researcher will provide an analysis and interpretation from the data that was collected. The perceptions of young adult males with regard to the impact of pornography on their lives will now be interpreted according to certain themes and categories.

The researcher conducted in depth interviews with fifteen (15) young adult males in Pretoria. All of the participants are between the ages of 18 and 29 who have prolonged personal experience with pornography consumption. However, the participants represent different characteristics in terms of the following:

- They represent different racial groups
- They have various religious and cultural convictions
- They come from different neighbourhoods with different social-economic statuses in Pretoria
- They differ in marital status as some are single, married, in a relationship and engaged to be married

- They differ in sexual orientation
- They differ in highest level of education as some passed grade 12, some are studying and some are employed part time as well as full time.

The researcher will first introduce all fifteen (15) participants by means of a detailed table which provides certain basic information of each participant.

Basic information of participants (Table 1)

<u>Participant A:</u>					
<i>Age</i>	<i>Relationship Status</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Moral/Belief system</i>	<i>Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure</i>	<i>Duration of pornography consumption</i>
26	In a relationship with a girl for a year. He plans to marry her	Accountant in Pretoria	Outspoken Christian	He was sixteen (16) years old. He saw movie with friends out of curiosity and started thereafter to download pornographic videos from the Internet when he was alone	From 16 to 25 years of age. That is a period of nine (9) years. He would consume pornography every two (2) weeks. He stopped consuming pornography after he has committed himself to his first and current long term relationship.

Participant B:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
22	In a relationship with a girl for a period of seven months	Financial management student in Pretoria	Outspoken Christian	He was fifteen (15) years old when a friend showed him pornographic pictures and videos. He started thereafter to download it from the Internet when he was alone	He has consumed pornography from 15 to 22 years of age. That is a period of seven (7) years. He would consume pornography once every two (2) weeks. He stopped consuming pornography after he committed himself to his current relationship.

Participant C:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
21	In a sexual relationship with a girl for five and a half years. He plans to marry her	Student in law and in call centre management in Pretoria	No religious affiliations	He was five (5) years old when he and his friends would steal their father's pornographic videos out of curiosity. He started downloading pornographic videos from the Internet at the age of fifteen (15) years.	From the age of fifteen (15) years. He is still currently consuming pornography. That is for more than six (6) years with one to two (2) week intervals.
Participant D:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
19	In a relationship with a girl for a period of four (4) years	Electronic technician from Pretoria	Outspoken Christian	He was 13 years old when he watched pornographic videos with a	He had been consuming pornographic materials with friends and

				friend out of curiosity	alone for a period of four (4) years. That was until he was 17 years of age. He chose to stop consuming pornography due to moral beliefs.
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Participant E:

Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
28	Now married for four (4) years	Church leader in Pretoria	Outspoken Christian	He was 10 years old when a friend's older brother introduced him to pornographic pictures.	He started consuming pornography at the age of 10 years. He then stopped temporarily at the age of sixteen (16) years. He started consuming again up to the age of 26 years. That is a

					period of thirteen (13) years. He stopped consuming pornography due to moral and religious beliefs.
Participant F:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
19	He is single and believes in a permanent relationship	Mechanical assistant Johannesburg. He lives in Pretoria	Outspoken Christian	First exposure to pornography was at the age of 12 years when a friend brought it with and they watched it together.	He watched pornography form 12 to 18 years of age. He stopped consuming pornography due to Christian and moral beliefs.

Participant G:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
26	Not currently in relationship but wants to get married someday. He believes in a permanent relationship.	Pharmaceutical analyst in Pretoria	No religious affiliations	He started to view pornography at the age of 13 years. He found it by accident in his father's alcohol cabinet.	He consumed pornography from 13 years of age and is still consuming pornography currently. That is for more than thirteen (13) years.
Participant H:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
28	Not in a relationship but would like to get married in the future.	Electronic engineer in Pretoria	Outspoken Christian	Started consuming pornography at the age of 13 years when a friend from school introduced it to him.	He consumed pornography from 13 to 26 years of age. That is a period of thirteen (13) years. He stopped consuming pornography

					due to religious and moral beliefs
Participant I:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
29	Married for a period of 5 years.	Mechanical engineer in Pretoria	Outspoken Christian	Started consuming pornography at the age of 12 years. He saw a sexually explicit scene from a movie by accident and started to download pornographic material thereafter.	He stopped consuming pornography at the age of 24 years. He was exposed to pornographic material for twelve (12) years. He stopped consuming pornography due to religious and moral beliefs.

Participant J:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
22	Not in any relationship.	Personal assistant in Pretoria	No religious affiliations	He started consuming pornography at the age of 11 years when he saw sexually explicit photos from a computer drive	He still enjoys pornographic material and especially that of gay men. That is for a period for more than eleven (11) years.
Participant K:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
29	He is engaged to be married for five (5) years and has a baby.	IT assistant in Pretoria	No religious affiliations	He started consuming pornography at the age of 11 years. He borrowed video tapes from friends.	He started to consume pornographic material at the age of 11 and is still watching pornography currently. That is for more than eighteen (18) years

Participant L:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
29	Engaged to be married for three (3) and 'n half years.	IT assistant in Pretoria	No religious affiliation	He started consuming pornography at the age of five (5) years. He and his friends discovered pornographic books by accident.	He is consuming pornography for 24 years and still watches pornographic material.
Participant M:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
26	Engaged for five (5) years.	IT assistant in Pretoria	No religious affiliation	He started consuming pornography at the age of 10 years. He watched videos with his friends.	He is consuming pornography for more than sixteen (16) years and he is still watching pornographic videos currently.

Participant N:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
29	In relationship for four (4) years	IT assistant in Pretoria	No religious affiliation	He started consuming pornography at the age of 13 years at a friend's house where they watched pornographic videos	He is still consuming pornographic material for more than sixteen (16) years
Participant O:					
Age	Relationship Status	Occupation	Moral/Belief system	Age of first exposure to pornography and motive for exposure	Duration of pornography consumption
27	He is not in a relationship currently, but he would like to be in a committed long term relationship	IT assistant in Pretoria	No religious affiliation	He started consuming pornography at the age of 10 years. His parents had a pub and he was constantly exposed to strip shows and sexual scenes.	He is still consuming pornographic material for more than seventeen (17) years.

4.8. PORNOGRAPHY AND PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

4.8.1 Pornography and self-value

4.8.1.1 Unrealistic focus on physique: Big sexual organs and muscular bodies

Seven (7) participants (participants A, C, D, E, G, I and L) made mention of the physique of men in pornographic movies. They perceive that there is always a prominent focus on the muscular body form and large sizes of the men's sexual organs in pornographic videos. Participant L stated that men, and specifically younger men, are very much concerned about the size of their sexual organs. The comparison between that, which is portrayed in sexually explicit movies and own body and sexual organs, is inevitable.

Participant L referred to special criteria of porn stars that are typically idolised by viewers. He says that:

“There are a lot of women in porn videos, and only a select few guys who make it. So if you have seen the same actor in four or five movies, you see him as your idol and you want to be like him.”

Previous research states that images of a perfect physique are often presented where the body is portrayed as a flawless design product. These images of the body are sometimes attained through diets, exercise or surgery. Attractive features are accentuated with the help of hair and body styling and make-up (Paasonen, Nikunen & Saarenmaa, 2007:96).

Even though these depictions are artificial, it is not presented as such and may serve as a standard whereby an individual evaluates himself. According to Morris (1997:209), the male sexual organ is often perceived as the very centre of love, procreation, offspring, passion, sex and lust. If a man applies the above mentioned standards depicted in pornography such as the perfect masculine body, the large penis and the sexual skills and he himself falls short in any way from this standard, which is most likely to happen, it may impact negatively on his self-concept.

4.8.1.2 Self-confidence

Five (5) participants (participants A, B, D, E and G) reported a lack of self-confidence and a low self-esteem due to this comparison of pornographic actors' physiques.

Participant G stated that:

"It can damage your self-esteem. I have seen it happening: if you feel you have a body which you did not choose and you are stuck in that body, you can feel hopeless."

Participant L stated that a man's sexuality and his ability to have a sexual or loving relationship are grossly determined by his physique and how he views himself. He explained it as follows:

"You want to become part of the very luring world. It becomes sad if you do not look like a porn star. It is so difficult to fit into the criteria of that world and in the end it is a big letdown."

Five (5) participants (participants B, C, H, K and L) reported the opposite of a low self-esteem, as they are of the opinion that pornographic exposure lead to heightened self-confidence. They perceive pornography to be a substitute for depressed feelings and moods. The correlation was that if a man cannot have the ideal sexual experience, because of some bodily defect, at least he has pornography to make him feel better.

According to Peter and Valkenburg (2011:1017), the diverse and extreme sexual activities often depicted in pornography, provides intense experiences and sensations for the consumer. A sense of euphoria and feelings of delight are commonly experienced by consumers while watching pornographic materials. (Philaretou, 2005:158). However participants B and H were of the opinion that

satisfaction is only temporarily, because it would provide brief moments of pleasure and they both stated that it lead to more depressed moods.

Participants B, E and H reported depressed feelings and a sense of hopelessness which has according to them, lead to more aggressive consumption of pornographic material. Participant H described his experience as follows:

“There were times where I would become very depressed. Pornography was part of the whole process or cycle. Feelings of meaninglessness and uncertainty caused me to search more actively for pornographic material. Pornography was more of a coping mechanism during the depression, because it provided moments where I felt good about myself.”

In support of this statement, Peter and Valkenburg (2011:1017) showed a significant relationship between low life satisfactions or depression and pornography, as sexually explicit materials were more frequently viewed by adolescents and adults who reported to be less satisfied with their lives.

4.8.2 Pornography and the development of a gender-identity (masculinity)

4.8.2.1 Sexual performance

Fourteen (14) out of the fifteen (15) participants referred to messages or standards of what a true man ought to be which they derive from pornographic material. According to all of them, masculinity can be linked directly to sexual performance. Two (2) categories in terms of sexual performance can be highlighted where the one category is the man’s ability to postpone ejaculation as long as possible during sexual intercourse. The other category is the man’s ability to give his sexual partner orgasms.

Participant C responded in the following manner:

“I always look at my watch when I am having sexual intercourse. I look at the time I begin and again at the time I finish. It is a big issue for any man as he measures his masculinity according to the time he can hold it in. Men talk about it; it is a big issue for them.”

With regard to giving his partner sexual pleasure, participant C stated the following:

“Pornography makes you want to be a porn star. Even if you cannot be that person, as long as you try to come close to that type of performance, you are satisfied. As long as you can do a woman like they do, you feel good about it. You would even want to stop watching porn, because you know you are there.”

These perceptions are supported by Morris (1997:210) as he is of the opinion that manhood is commonly connected to the capability to perform sexually. Pornography often encourages extreme sexual performances by men (Peter & Valkenburg, 2006:656).

4.8.2.2 The Use of substances to enhance sexual performance

Three (3) participants (participants C, L and M) made specific reference to certain drugs or substances such as alcohol, ecstasy, marijuana and cocaine which are illustrated and used in pornographic movies to increase sexual performance and stamina.

Participant L is the only participant who admitted that he used all of these drugs just one (1) time to test the results. His findings were positive, but he also stated that he will not use it again. He elaborated as follows:

“There are certain drugs which you are exposed to through watching porn. It is advertised. There are lots. Dagga for example makes a man able to keep on much longer. Normally you would be able to go for two to three minutes, but with dagga you can go for 20 minutes.”

Participant C has the following perception:

“I think that male porn stars use certain medicines to improve their performance. So I do not think that a man can perform sexually without medication.”

With the response of the participants it is evident that certain drugs such as dagga, alcohol, ecstasy, marijuana and cocaine plays a major role for increased performance to imitate pornographic scenes and its duration.

However, this theme is original, as the researcher did not find supporting literature regarding the role of pornography in advocating for certain substances to enhance sexual performance.

4.9. PORNOGRAPHY AND MORAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

The following categories can be formulated from the participants' perceptions regarding moral and spiritual development:

- Feelings of guilt and shame because behaviour does not correlate with belief in terms of what is 'right' and 'wrong'
- Moral beliefs are associated with certain boundaries in terms of the level and severity of pornographic exposure
- Pornography and masturbation can serve as a more acceptable act and can become a substitute for actual 'sin', in other words, sexual intercourse with a partner
- Moral beliefs are a motivational factor to stop pornographic consumption deliberately.

The researcher will elaborate on each of these categories according to the participants' experiences.

4.9.1 Feelings of guilt and shame because behaviour does not correlate with belief in terms of what is 'right' and 'wrong'

All fifteen (15) participants, regardless of their religious affiliations, reported initial feelings of guilt or shame after pornographic exposure. For some participants these feelings did not persist.

For the majority of the participants, nine (9) participants, these feelings caused severe distress and lead to decisions to discard pornographic material, even if it was for brief or temporary intervals.

Participant E stated the following:

"I would feel guilty, I was a Christian man and I am not supposed to struggle with these types of things. When I was in that moment of watching porn it was satisfying and pleasurable, but afterwards I always felt like a dog and that really ate me from the inside."

Participant F experienced the same reactions:

"I think for me being a Christian the feelings of guilt became overwhelming every time after I have watched it. As a Christian, I knew that it was wrong and that feeling of shame will prohibit me for a bit to not look at it soon again."

Sessoms (2011:11) also states that males who claim to be religious suffer from extreme distress from pornography consumption because their convictions are not reflected in their behaviour.

Seven (7) out the fifteen (15) participants further elaborated on the impact of feelings of guilt and shame as they mentioned that they spiritually felt distance between them and God after exposure to pornography. Participants D, E and H explained that their confidence to pray or to talk to God was hindered by feelings of condemnation and sin.

These experiences are supported by Splinter (2010:5) and Sessoms (2011:10) as they found evidence that church attendance decreased by approximately 26 percent since Internet pornography was introduced in a specific community and the most reported effect of pornography is a weakened relationship with God.

4.9.2 Moral beliefs are associated with certain boundaries in terms of the level and severity of pornographic exposure

Seven (7) participants gave a moral explanation as a boundary or limit for consuming all levels and grades of pornographic material. Statements such as “it is gross”, “it is just wrong”, “I was disgusted by that” were used to describe their repulsion in certain forms of sexually explicit material. The other eight (8) participants, who also indicated to have no religious affiliations, showed no boundaries in their preference of pornography consumption and would watch all varieties of sexually explicit material.

Some of the comments from the participants, who indicated to limit their consumption of pornography due to moral beliefs, are the following:

Participant A stated:

“No, I will never watch hard core porn. I have stumbled upon it once or twice but then I would feel so very guilty and know that it is just wrong. I am talking about anal sex and rape and stuff.”

Participant B also stated:

“Moral values prohibit a person to move to a different level of pornography. You get various types of pornography like sex with animals and junk. People who do not have moral values will look at stuff like that and will find it entertaining.”

Participants E and F also mentioned that the level of gratification and their interest in further pursuit of sexually explicit material diminishes the moment they are exposed to material which they regard as morally wrong.

The researcher did not find supporting literature to substantiate the role of moral values as an inhibitor for consuming various levels of pornography and regards this information as valuable to the existing knowledge base concerning this phenomenon.

4.9.3 Pornography and masturbation can serve as a more acceptable act and can become a substitute for actual ‘sin’, in other words, sexual intercourse with a partner

The majority of participants indicated that they believe that masturbation while watching pornography is morally wrong. However, the same participants also believe that actual sex with a partner is a worse sin compared to pornography consumption. They justified their pornography consumption as a way to abstain from physical sexual intercourse with a partner.

Participant N has the following opinion:

“Pornography is a safe backup because you can go lock yourself in a room and watch it and satisfy your own needs. Compared to going outside where it is unsafe and coming back sick.”

Participant G has a similar view as he states that:

“Men lust. It is a fact. So it gets physically uncomfortable when you do not do something about it. Pornography facilitates that. I will rather do it than to push myself to such extent that I just want to go out and sleep with a girl.”

Participant B stated:

“Maybe because the young man has a moral value not to go and sleep with a girl, he will look at pornography because it does not feel so wrong. To sleep physically with a girl is much worse than to look at pornography.”

4.9.4 Moral beliefs are a motivational factor to stop pornographic consumption deliberately

Six (6) participants indicated that they are currently no longer consuming pornographic material because of moral convictions. Three (3) other participants used moral beliefs as a motivational factor to try to stop consuming pornography.

Even though participant L did not share in any moral or religious convictions, he also has the perception that such a conviction will keep him from consuming pornography in the future. He stated that:

“I think it is impossible to stop looking at pornography. Unless you are attacked by some Christian group and are forced to get saved, I do not think that I will ever stop.”

4.9.5 Pornography and racism

Three (3) participants referred to certain prominent stereotypical messages derived from pornography regarding race. A black participant made the following statement:

“It is funny but you get pornography where there are animals involved. I think the last one that I have seen is a lady with a horse. What I have noticed is that it is always white women in those clips. It is always white ladies that want to experiment up to that extent.”

Sessoms (2011:6) notes that racial stereotypes are often endorsed through specific pornographic material and names racism as a pertinent theme of pornography which may have a definite impact on the values and principles of a person who consumes pornography on a regular basis.

The same participant as referred to above, together with two (2) other black participants, stated that they believe that all black men have a fantasy to have sexual intercourse with a white woman. Although they mentioned that they have not yet had sexual intercourse with a partner from a different race, they still have the desire to fulfil their fantasy.

Participant N gave the following explanation:

“In the beginning it was only white porn that was available. Later, I always watched and collected black porn, or black on white. I watch cross-racial pornography to satisfy a fantasy. For me it is just to do the hell out of a white woman. Most of the white ladies that you would see have got nice tiny butts.”

He further elaborated on his fantasy by saying that he will not buy sex from a white prostitute, but that he requires a “*real live situation with an extremely decent white lady.*” He concluded with the following statement:

“I have not had intercourse across the racial border and I am getting old. I do not count coloured women. She must be pure white.”

These statements are supported by literature as men and women are portrayed as more aggressive towards a different race partner compared to a same race partner. A white man would for example treat a black woman more harshly compared to a white woman and a black man would respond less intimately to his partner compared to a white man (Sessoms 2011:7).

4.10 PORNOGRAPHY AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

The following themes could be derived from the participants’ perceptions which pertain to their cognitive development:

- An increase in sexual thoughts after pornographic exposure
- Participants find it difficult to forget sexual images depicted in pornography and can easily recall them
- Sexual images are saved as fantasies where a person can ‘get lost in it’.

Each of these themes will now be discussed separately.

4.10.1 Pornography and an increase in sexual thoughts

All of the participants perceive that pornography exposure leads to an increase in sexual thoughts directly after the exposure and for a period after the exposure. Some participants reported that they excessively fantasise about sex and the images they have seen depicted in pornography during and in their daily routine.

Comments were given such as: *“after you have seen a pornographic video, you cannot stop thinking about it”,* and *“If pornography is in your head, it stays there –you think about it all the time.”*

Participant G experienced it as follows:

“There was a time when I would sit at school and start thinking that three o’clock I will get home and my parents will be home at four o’clock. I have between three and four o’clock to watch pornography and I will fantasise about it the whole day.”

Participant F also reported that he would make time during the day to connect to the Internet constantly with his cellular telephone just to see if there has been a new pornographic video uploaded which he has not seen yet. He would repeat this search three (3) to four (4) times per day during his normal routine.

Participant N is of the opinion that if someone experiences inappropriate sexual thoughts at a specific time during the working day, that he must rather act on that impulse and try to have sex at that point in time in order to attend to that sexual urge.

He explains it as follows:

“So when you see flashes or clips in your mind when you are trying to study then you need to get laid. Then come back and see if you can study.”

4.10.2 Participants find it hard to forget images and can easily recall them

Ten (10) participants elaborated on the experiences regarding inappropriate sexual thoughts in their daily routine. Statements such as *“pornography made a mental imprint on my brain and I struggle to forget these images”* were made. They reported that anything will trigger those sexual images and that they do not have control over the time or place where they will think about it. Certain sexual activities such as masturbation, will increase these specific sexual thoughts.

It has long been argued by scientists that the person becomes addicted to the released hormone, and therefore is motivated to seek activities that will result in the pleasurable effect continuously (Barboka 2009:309; Sunderwirth & Milkman, 1991:421).

“By viewing the images repeatedly, masturbating, releasing dopamine and strengthening sexual networks the consumer has created a kind of “neosexuality”, a rebuilt libido that has strong root in his buried sexual tendencies” (Diodge, 2007).

Participant A reports the following regarding his experience of what he calls “a mental imprint”:

“Another thing that made it difficult for me to just stop looking at pornography is because I have a good memory. I can honestly say that there is nothing that I have seen in pornography, whether it is photos or movies which I have entirely forgotten. I can even now recall each and every one of them. It stays with me. At times, it becomes so bad that I cannot think of anything else. Then I tell myself that I am already watching pornography in my mind in anyway, let me just relieve the freaken’ temptation and watch it again.”

Similar to participant A, participant E experiences the following after he has stopped watching pornography completely for four (4) years:

“It left a scar. A mental thing. Can the Lord deliver you and make you forget certain images? Yes, absolutely. But the human brain is powerful. Fantasies have a manner to haunt you. Pornography made an imprint in my brain. Every now and then certain images will play in my mind. I believe I am mature now to deal with it by shaking it out of my head, but I really wish it was not there.”

Participant H describes his deliberate effort to forget certain sexually explicit images as an active battle. He read a book and studied how the brain forms a memory and

attempted to teach himself to forget those images. However, he indicated that the sexual drive obtained from his exposure is still present today.

4.10.3 Sexual images are saved as fantasies

Six (6) participants referred to reoccurring sexual images which are processed as fantasies or video clips. These fantasies typically play in the mind of the pornography consumer and the participants stated that they can easily “get lost” in a “fantasy world.”

They stated that their current reality will be replaced by certain scenes and story lines derived from pornographic movie clips and that they sometimes will spend considerable time in that fantasy world.

Participant E describes it as follows:

“I will log into the Internet at ten o’clock in the evening and start watching pornographic movies and then five or six hours later I will snap out of a big black hole, not realising what I have done for so long.”

Participant A perceives that isolation can be a result of men’s fantasies:

“Their fantasies can become their reality where they escape from daily struggles.”

Previous literature supports these statements as Diodge (2007:106) found that pornography exposes early and repressed sexual experiences of an individual to create a heightened and combined sexual catalogue within the consumer’s brain. These catalogues are stored as images and any sexual stimuli gained from pornography add to the network of the catalogue. This catalogue can become so fuelled, that the consumer may find it hard to suppress it. The catalogue can further become an entity in the consumer’s imagination where he may experience sexual arousal and euphoria (Diodge, 2007:106). It is therefore evident that sexual fantasies can serve as an escape in the consumer’s brain where he can experience exhilaration and thus reports that he “escapes to a fantasy world.”

4.11. PORNOGRAPHY AND ADDICTION

4.11.1 Perception that pornography consumption is an addiction

All fifteen (15) participants referred to pornography consumption as an addiction. Most of them compared it to drugs or alcohol. The motivations for their statements could be summarised under three (3) main categories, namely:

- *Category one*: the first exposure to pornographic material leads to an active search and desire for more pornographic material.

This category refers the perception that when a young man, regardless of his age, is exposed to pornography for the first time, more exposure and a heightened desire for more exposure is inevitable thereafter. All the participants reported that their first exposure to pornography lead to an active and deliberate search for more sexually explicit material. This search occurred whether they perceived it as right or wrong, or whether the exposure occurred in the company of friends or while they were alone.

Previous research reports support this experience as a person may become easily consumed with the pleasurable experiences, that the person may become dissociated with reality or moral beliefs. These pleasurable experiences then become the urge to be satisfied repeatedly (Barlow & Durand, 2005:22).

Participant D stated the following:

“It happened to me when I was young and with friends. We were watching these porn videos and they were also watching me. I was the only one who got an erection and they laughed at me. When you want to masturbate, the guys will then just excuse themselves and that is what makes you want to look for more pornography and better stuff.”

Participant N had a similar experience when he explained his first encounter with pornography as follows:

“My reaction to pornography the first time was nice, fun and funny actually. We were at a friend’s house and we all got hard-on’s. Then after that I wanted to get that same feeling again.”

- *Category two:* this category refers to the fact that progression always occurs in variety and in the level of exposure to pornography.

All of the participants mentioned progression in their pornography exposure. They reported that they will quickly become bored with one (1) pornographic video and that variety in actors as well as in sexual moves are sought to uphold the same level of gratification.

Previous research found that pornographic tolerance develops as with any addiction with prolonged exposure. “Pleasure reduces and the use of new and more intense materials is needed to continue satisfactory enjoyment ” (Dioge, 2007:106).

Participant F reported that:

“In the moment I will not watch one video. I will watch as many as it takes to satisfy me.”

Five (5) participants stated that their quest for variety will not go beyond the level of their preference. If they preferred to watch soft core pornography, they will not search beyond that, but will only seek for diversity in terms of women and sexual scenes.

However, the majority, ten (10) participants reported that their quest for variation went beyond one (1) level in pornographic videos. Their quest for variation will include hard-core videos, which will reveal more explicit sexual penetration, anal penetration, aggressive sexual behaviour, and orgies where more than two (2)

persons are having sexual intercourse at the same time. These participants said that after their exposure to more sexually explicit material, they found little or no interest or gratification in their previous levels of exposure.

- *Category three:* even with deliberate attempts to discontinue pornographic exposure, participants find it extremely difficult to do so.

Fourteen (14) of the fifteen (15) participants mentioned that they should surely reach a point in their lives where they would stop completely with the consumption of pornography. However, only four (4) out of all the participants succeeded in their attempts to discontinue watching pornographic movies completely for more than four (4) months. Although they had very different motives for wanting to stop consuming pornography, all of them referred to it as a kind of battle to fight. They would use words such as *“it left a scar”* or *“even after four years without looking at it, I am still tempted each day.”*

Six (6) participants reported that they are actively trying to stop watching pornographic videos for various reasons, but they are failing in their attempts to do so.

Five (5) participants stated that although they believe that there will be a point where they will not watch pornographic movies anymore, they are not ready to make such a commitment yet. The majority of them stated that men need it at a certain stage in their lives.

According to previous research, it is clear that addiction creates a dangerous mix of uncontrolled, prolonged erratic behaviour despite its harmful consequences to the self and others (Suder & Milkman, 1991:422). A person can become addicted to chemical substances such as drugs and alcohol, but research supports that addiction to non-chemical substances, are equally evident (Diodge, 2007:108).

4.12. PORNOGRAPHY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Twelve (12) participants are of the opinion that pornography easily hinders a person to function optimally during his career development, whether it is in his preparation for a career, during his studies, or whether it is in the work place itself. These participants describe pornography consumption as exciting and a readily counterfeit for less interesting activities as to a study or work. They state that a person who consumes pornography can easily lose interest in certain obligations regarding his career. Some perceptions of participants are the following:

Participant B stated that:

“I think if you are supposed to study and you get bored, then you will look at a pornographic video. Then, on the long run, when you are supposed to study you will begin to do it more and more.”

Participant C has the following opinion:

“Pornography will influence you in your everyday activities. If you must sit the whole day to study or work... nobody wants to do that the whole day, so why not go down load pornographic videos.”

Participant D had the following experience:

“Your brain works overtime. If you saw a porn movie last night with the most beautiful woman, guaranteed, you will think about her and fantasise about her all day long. Then you cannot wait to go home and look at her again. For sure, it steals away your concentration and you will make mistakes in your work. It can cause me to lose my job.”

A statement is made by Splinter (2010:6) namely that business productivity can be affected considerably by pornography consumption. If an employee experiences preoccupied and inappropriate sexual thoughts that may be endorsed by

pornography consumption, one can state that the desire to excel and achieve the highest level of career performance (as it is a common desire for all human beings to attain their full potential) may be hindered by pornography consumption (Barlow & Durand, 2005:21).

This will inevitably influence young adults in adulthood concerning educational accomplishment and income and may become inactive or detached from autonomy as referred to by Jekielek and Brown (2005:8).

4.13. PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT

4.13.1 Pornography and sexual knowledge

All the participants referred to pornography as a rich source of sexual knowledge. The majority of the participants have the perception that it is vital for a man to have at least to a certain degree, knowledge about sex.

When participant I elaborated on his primary motive for watching pornography, he specifically stated that he experienced a lack of information and education about sex and that pornography was the only source that provided this information to him.

Participant C also stated that:

“Your father will not teach you how to have sex. So you yourself want to know it. The Internet is there to teach you how to do it, so why would you not go and look to know what sexual acts there is to do and how to do it?”

Participant A, F and B expressed a fear of being uninformed when they are expected to have sexual intercourse.

Participant A stated that:

“Not having had sex with my girlfriend yet, I think, and it is sorry to say that in some instances, pornography can be helpful, because you have a limited idea, let me be

blunt, about positions. So, then you are not entirely clueless about everything and what to do. At least then you have some vague idea, because you have seen it in pornographic videos.”

Participant F also mentioned that he does not want to look or feel like an “idiot” when he will have sexual intercourse for the first time. Pornographic exposure reassured him in this regard.

Six (6) participants applauded pornography for the knowledge that they have gained and some participants mentioned that they would not have been the “man” they are today if they have not been exposed to pornographic material.

Paasonen et al (2007:80) state that ignorance and innocence concerning sexual knowledge, techniques and activity are commonly viewed by society as embarrassing and apologetic. This belief may cause people to seek knowledge regarding sex in order to avoid humiliation actively. According to Olmstead et al (2011:4) and Wallmyr and Welin (2006:295) men reported that pornography is a positive investment to gain sexual knowledge as it can be applied as an educational tool to study innovative sexual techniques and positions.

4.13.1.1 Sexual knowledge: Reality versus illusions

Despite the fact that all the participants regarded pornography as a valuable source to obtain sexual knowledge, only three (3) participants consider pornography as a true reflection of reality. That indicates that twelve (12) participants believe that pornography is an illusion.

However, participant K stated:

“I think it is real. Pornography is reality. It is. All the fun of those things, it is real.”

The remaining twelve (12) participants used words such as: “false”, “fake” and “illusion” to describe that the setting that is portrayed in pornography is not a representation of reality. Some of the comments were:

Participant B was of the opinion that:

“No. I think pornography creates a false perception of what sex is and in a relationship it can cause disappointment.”

Participant J stated that:

“Pornography cannot be real. I mean it is actors in front of a camera. It is not cameras that are hidden in somebody’s home where you can see the real thing.”

Participant I explained that:

“Now that I am married and started having sex myself, I see that there is a vast difference between pornography and reality”

Participant O believes that:

“Pornography is highly overrated. You see it and it looks fun and exciting, even though they fake it, it does not look fake to the viewer.”

Paasonen et al (2007:77) state that there is a clear contradiction between sexual messages in “public” compared to what occurs in “private” and since there is not realistic knowledge regarding sexual activity of the “average”, it may lead to high and unrealistic expectations and desires regarding sex. Pornography may thus contribute to unrealistic and inappropriate sexual knowledge.

4.13.2 Pornography and sexual attitude

4.13.2.1 Pornography and the desire to fulfil own egocentric sexual needs – without interest in a relationship

Ten (10) participants mentioned that exposure to pornography created the desire to experience and experiment sexually with that which they have seen depicted. This desire has proven to be a motive to fulfil and pursue own sexual gratification, but that there is no interest in a sustainable relationship with a partner. Participant N stated that he just wanted to get sex from women and then move on. Participant K mentioned that after he has watched pornography he would *“just go out and grab a girl, do my thing and grab another one, do my thing and leave.”*

Participant E stated that pornography made him experience such intense sexual urges that he made plans to peek through the neighbour’s bathroom window when the girl was taking a bath or shower. Later in his life, he pursued relationships with girls just to see how far he can push them sexually.

Participant D has the perception that pornography provokes a man to hurt a woman by experimenting with the amount of times he can penetrate her. He stated that such an attitude of a man resembles a desire for his own sexual pleasure.

Participant L also stated that:

“Everything we learnt from pornography helped us at University. It was the easiest thing to pick up girls. You know exactly what to say and do, and once you are alone with her you know what to do to make her come back.”

When asked if the fact that the girl will come back implied that he is in a relationship with her, he denied it and said that the more girls he got, the better.

“The moment it would start to get more serious, you would scale down.”

Participant J stated that:

“The thing is pornography gives you the perception that it is only about the physical act. About stimulation and getting it over and done with.”

Literature supports these perceptions as Zillman (2000:42) states that sexual access is commonly presented by pornography as an objective to satisfy own sexual desires. Sex is often portrayed as innocent entertainment without the emotional or health consequences. Morgan and Morgan (2011:528) further state that sexually explicit material may contribute to greater sexual skills and sexual gratification. However, it seems as if this gratification is more egocentric in nature and that it does not necessarily benefit the relationship or marital bond between partners.

4.13.2.2 Pornography and the attitude towards women

Twelve (12) participants have the perception that pornography leads to the objectification of women, where women are seen as sexual instruments to satisfy the males' sexual needs. Phrases were used such as *“women's bodies were created for sexual pleasure”* and *“I believed that women are only there to make you feel better about yourself and that made pornography okay.”*

Participant A, L and C elaborated more on this specifically, when they included that pornography has conditioned them to look at a woman and immediately picture how good she would perform on a sexual level.

Mancini (2012:21) found that such an attitude may lead to the objectification of women as women sometimes are solely depicted in pornography as instruments through which sexual gratification can be obtained.

4.13.2.3 Pornography and perceptions of women as sexual beings

Five (5) participants mentioned that their perceptions regarding what women experience as sexually enjoyable, have been influenced by the exposure of pornography.

Participants N and O stated that they are convinced that more women compared to men actively consume pornography. Participant N said that women just pretend to be disgusted by pornography. Other messages derived from pornography as reported by participants include the following:

- Women are more sexually active than men and masturbate more often (Participants N and L)
- Women always enjoy sex and are always ready for intercourse (Participants O, D, L, I, and C)
- Women do not have moral values (Participants I and N)
- Women enjoy rough sex and always prefer variety (Participants M, O and D).

Morris (1997:215) and McGoldrick (2005:243) found in their research that young adult males should strive for a mutual partnership in a relationship which is characterised by intimacy and care and not based on mere external beauty of his partner. It is evident that contrasting messages are sent through depictions in pornography and that consumption of such material may have an effect on the sexual attitude of the young adult male.

4.13.3 Pornography and sexual behaviour

4.13.3.1 Pornography and masturbation

All of the participants reported that they find pornography arousing and that it has always lead to sexual behaviour being acted out in the form of masturbation.

Participant A stated the following in support of the statement above:

“All the times I have watched pornography I have acted on it and I have masturbated. Get it over and done with. I mean that is the whole point of it. You watch pornography to get aroused, you satisfy yourself, it is over.”

Twelve (12) participants stated that masturbation and thus the relief of sexual energy, is their primary motive to watch pornography.

Researchers in this field described pornography as an intent to sexually arouse the consumer. Malamuth and Donnerstein (1984:4) found that males and females become sexually aroused by any form of pornography. Hald (2006:580) mentions that compared to women, men who consume pornography used it considerably more frequently for sexual gratification when they are alone, such as for masturbation.

Participant N stated that:

“When I am horny it is then when I start thinking: ‘Let me play a movie and sort myself out.’ Then life should continue.”

All the participants reported that pornography creates the desire to experience sexual gratification. Nine (9) participants reported that masturbation was not satisfactory enough and they obtained actual sex from a willing partner for that sexual experience. The remaining six (6) participants stated that masturbation fulfils a function to prohibit them from actually having “casual” sex with a person.

Participant F stated the following:

“I would rather watch more pornography in order to have sex with the computer screen than to risk the exposure.”

Participant N has the following view:

“Pornography is a safe backup because you can go lock yourself in a room and watch it and satisfy your own needs. Compared to going outside where it is unsafe and coming back sick. So I think I will always keep pornography stashed somewhere for that reasons.”

Participant E further elaborated on this and explained that the desire for sex was inflamed by pornographic exposure and that it caused him and his male friends who watched it together to grow weary of self-stimulation. He described his experience as follows:

“The sexual desire grew so big in us because of the explicit videos. We became tired to sexually stimulate ourselves. In the end we started to stimulate each other -orally and with our hands. It was a terrible experience in my life, because immediately the questions came from within me: ‘am I gay, a moffie?’ If someone would find out about it, it would have been the end of my life.”

4.13.3.2 Pornography and unprotected sexual activity

Many authors believe that pornography promotes promiscuity and is associated with unprotected sexual activities (Hunter et al, 2009:141 & Mancini, 2012:21).

Participants L and K stated that pornographic videos propagate sexual intercourse without condoms or other forms of contraception. Participant L is of the opinion that if a man can only be stimulated for a short period before he reaches his sexual peak, then much gratification is lost with a condom.

Nine (9) participants have the perception that pornography promotes dangerous sex without precaution against sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV and AIDS.

According to previous research, pornography may thus have an impact on the sexual behaviour of the consumer as the desire to be more sexually active and to masturbate more frequently may increase.

4.13.3.3 Pornography and sexual aggression

According to five (5) participants, violent images of sex often portrayed in pornographic material will cause the viewer to act more aggressively during sexual intercourse.

Participant O stated that a man who is exposed to too much pornography, will inevitably force his own will on his partner and he will not care if she gets injured or not. He gives the following explanation:

“You see the video and then you think it is the correct way to do it and you do not care if the girl screams from agony.”

Participant D is of the opinion that because pornography exposure is always escalating to more explicit and rougher material, one will surely advance to the consumption of hard core pornography and one will find it arousing. He said that his friend told him how he enjoys watching pornography when women scream. When asked if they scream because of sexual pleasure he replied:

“No they scream because of pain – as if they are being raped. Now, he likes to watch women get hurt. You see, they watch it there on the computer and on television and then they want to try it with their own girl friends.”

Participant L stated the following in support of Participant D's statement:

“One night I found a website that was about humiliation. It is not as bad as it sounds. It is when a girl would say that she wants to be part of the humiliation, and then she will be bound. Everyone in the room will see what is being done with her. It is something that I would like to participate in. It is basically a live show.”

Malamuth and Donnerstein (1984:145) also state that “pornography provides an environment where rape, women-battering and crimes against women is acceptable.” Significant attention has been given to the promotion of the rape myth which is often portrayed in pornography (Brown, 2005:137; Sessoms 2011:9).

Participant I, M and O referred to certain pornographic material where women are depicted enjoying forced penetrative sexual intercourse. Zillman (2000:42) explains that the rape myth is where women are depicted as initially resistant to sexual intercourse, but once forced by penetration become aroused, have an orgasm and eventually take pleasure and is thankful for the sexual encounter. Some offenders in this previous study expressed the desire to replicate certain scenes from pornographic materials, thus utilising some violent pornographic suggestions as a training manual to commit sexually aggressive acts (Hald et al, 2010 & Brown, 2005:136).

4.14. PORNOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

4.14.1 Pornography and general relationships

There are two (2) different opinions regarding the effect of pornography on relationships in general and it can be summarised as follows:

- Damage and dissociation in social relationships because of secrecy
- Social relationships as accountability or buffer against pornographic exposure.

These two (2) opinions will now be discussed.

4.14.1.1 Damage and dissociation in social relationships because of secrecy

Twelve (12) participants reported that pornography consumption lead to damage and dissociation in significant relationships because of attempts to keep their

consumption of pornography a secret. The majority of these participants reported feelings of isolation and tension if someone would find out what they are doing.

Participant H stated that he avoided social interaction and explained that:

"I can say that I lived alone and by myself, even in my parents' house. I tried to stay undercover by isolating myself. The fear of being caught with pornography made me take such drastic measures."

Participant B also stated that he refrained from discussing his pornographic experience with any person, because of a guilty conscience and because society says that watching pornography is wrong.

Research in this field indicates that pornography may be regarded as a sexual socialisation instrument because much knowledge regarding sex is gained through this exploration and it is mainly a solitary activity of the consumer (Peter & Valkenburg, 2011:1023). It is also reported by Svedin et al (2011:785) that it is for this reason that social relationships of consumers of pornography may deteriorate.

Participants A, E, F, J and L said that even though they experienced isolation from significant relationships and they refrained from talking about their pornographic activities openly, they will seek certain individuals who are also consuming pornography and will casually joke about their own experiences. They will continue sharing laughter and casual conversation about pornographic material with these individuals who share in the same experiences.

However, Peter and Valkenburg (2011:1023,1024) found that even though the consumption of pornography is mainly a private activity, the cause of this consumption is not related to an absence of social integration or because of social exclusion.

4.14.1.2 Social relationships as accountability or buffer against pornographic exposure

On the contrary, four (4) participants mentioned the crucial role of significant relationships as a substitute for pornography consumption. When their friends, parents or wives knew about their urge and tendency to consume pornography, they acted as an element of accountability to assist the participants to avoid exposure.

Participant H stated that he joined an all-male group at church and that he realised that men need other men to hold each other accountable for sexual purity. Existing research were found to be insufficient pertaining to the role of social relationships as a buffer for pornographic exposure.

4.14.2 Pornography and intimate relationships

The researcher refers to intimate relationships as any permanent agreement between two (2) consenting partners to be in a relationship. The terms, “marital relationship” and “permanent couple relationship” will thus be used interchangeably. Whether the intimate relationship is sexual or not, eight (8) participants reported that being part of a committed relationship, served as a motivator for them to end pornography consumption.

4.14.2.1 Intimacy versus lust in the context of a permanent couple relationship

- Expectation that women must act as porn stars

There are two (2) contrasting opinions of participants regarding their perceptions of intimacy in the marital or long term relationship. The majority of the participants, namely eleven (11) participants, have the desire to replicate sexual behaviour derived from pornographic scenes in their sexual or marital relationship. On the contrary, four (4) participants have no desire to imitate pornographic scenes due to specific convictions regarding intimacy in a permanent or marital relationship. The researcher will first discuss the former perceptions of the majority of the participants.

When participants expressed their desires to imitate pornographic scenes with their partners, they elaborated on their expectations that women or wives must act as the women depicted in the pornographic movies.

Participant C stated the following about his expectation:

“I sometimes want to arrive home with only one knock at the door and then a beautiful girl must open the door for me with sexy underwear and then we must just start to do it. You want to feel aroused sometimes when you walk through the door. You understand, she must bang me against the wall with a short skirt. I mean that is what you see in pornographic videos and I want to experience that myself.”

Participant O explained it as follows:

“What he sees he will obviously want to try. If he sees sex in the shower then he will think that he wants to try it. So in a relationship or marriage it can have a good influence because there is always something new to experiment with. Girls always want something new. So pornography can help him to keep it new.”

The following was said by participant D:

“Well, say they always had sex in one manner. It was fine and satisfying for them. Now he watches pornography and sees wow, new, exciting moves, like anal penetration. Now, he wants to try it and his wife does not. He will then get angry with her.”

According to Lambert et al (2009:26) idealistic sexual expectations for the relationship are quite often demanded due to unrealistic depictions of pornographic material. Sexual requests may be made to a non consenting partner and this may lead to unfulfilled sexual gratification, as these sexual expectations are not met in the relationship by both partners.

The contrasting view in this regard held by participants E, I, A and H, reflects that sexual intercourse in a marital relationship can and should not be compared to

pornography. They all stated that the level of intimacy is different from that of lust which is, according to them, the prominent drive of pornography.

Participant E referred to his wife as his *“innocent farm girl”* and even though he reported to be highly aroused by pornography, he firmly stated that he did not want to see any sexually explicit behaviour from his wife. He perceives that sexual scenes from pornographic movies are only superficial sex, but that sex with his wife is sacred and on *“a much deeper intimate level.”*

4.14.2.2 The relation between pornography and weakening bonds and cohesion between partners

According to the majority of the participants, there are four (4) main reasons for the weakening of bonds and cohesion between partners due to pornography consumption. These reasons include:

- Weakening bonds due to secrecy and distrust. Pornography is often consumed without the knowledge or even approval of the spouse or sexual partner.

Participant C stated the following:

“I feel a little embarrassed about myself. Then I would delete all my videos from my cellular phone and I would be clean for a month. Only until she is not there for a month then I would download new pornographic videos again. I will make sure that I hide it so that she does not find out.”

When participant C was asked about the effect on his relationship, he stated that it has no effect according to him, as he can keep the secret to himself.

Participant D is of the opinion that wives are bound to discover when their husbands are consuming pornography due to the fact that pornography costs money. He says the following about it:

“Men spend their money excessively on pornographic videos. It is there where conflict arises between husbands and wives. The wife wants to know where he spends his money. He does not want to admit it. She becomes suspicious. They fight. He feels bad. He goes search for more pornography.”

Sessoms (2011:8) refers to weakening bonds as detachment where partners report that sexual intimacy becomes emotionally disconnected. This disconnection can easily be caused due to distrust or suspicion between partners.

- Weakening bonds due to wives who withdraw from the relationship and male partners who become dissatisfied with their partners' physical appearance and sexual performance

This is the second reason for weakening bonds between partners according to seven (7) participants as they mentioned that women will compare themselves to the women depicted in pornography and they will think that their husband or partner makes the same comparison. Feelings of unworthiness may cause women who know that their partner is consuming pornography, to withdraw physically and emotionally, from the relationship which causes weakening bonds.

According to these seven (7) participants, when their female partners would discover that they are consuming pornography, their wives will feel that they are not satisfying their male partner's sexual needs and that they are not good enough for them. It seems as if this perception is not held by the female partners only, but that men who consume pornography sometimes do make that comparison with their sexual partners and will agree that their own partners are not good enough for them sexually.

Participant C, K, M and N admitted that they have sought for other sexual relations outside of their existing commitment because they were convinced that their sexual partners are lacking in some way to provide them with sexual pleasure.

They all mentioned that pornography is so exciting and that their partners are withholding them from sexual gratification if they are not interested in applying some

of the skills which are depicted in pornographic scenes. In support of this perception, ten (10) participants directly referred to infidelity as a consequence of pornographic exposure.

Participant O stated the following in this regard:

“Because you always see something different and something better about sex, you want to do it better and even with someone else if your partner does not want to.”

Previous literature has found that increasing dissatisfaction with pornography consumers’ partners’ physical appearance and sexual performance may be a result of heightened sexual stimulation due to such exposure (Sessoms, 2011:8). Idealistic sexual expectations for the relationship may be demanded because of unrealistic depictions of pornographic material. Sexual requests may be made to a non consenting partner and this may lead to unfulfilled sexual gratification, as these sexual expectations are not met in the relationship by both partners (Lambert et al, 2009:26). Some participants perceive that pornography is blatantly promoting infidelity and that unfaithfulness in a committed relationship is the third reason for weakening bonds between partners.

- Weakening bonds between partners because pornography is blatantly promoting infidelity and it is causing partners to be unfaithful to the relationship

The third reason for dissociation between partners is that six (6) participants perceive that pornography is blatantly promoting infidelity and that it leads to unfaithfulness in the relationship. They stated that the scenes in pornographic videos often depict sexual intercourse between strangers or a married husband or wife who has sex with someone else who they barely know.

These six (6) participants made mention of this message in pornography and stated that sex between strangers are depicted as enjoyable and exciting. Some of their comments include:

Participant G:

“There are very few porno movies that will actually show an emotional connection between the partners. The storyline is always superficial between strangers. Someone will phone the plumber and so on and it will look like fun and something that you would want to try.”

Participant A stated that:

“Pornographic movies never show sex within a marital relationship. In the movies I have seen they always have this role play type of things where the husband will cheat on his wife, or it is two total strangers who are having passionate sex.”

In his study, Splinter (2010:5) has found a correlation between extramarital affairs and pornography consumption. He found that those who have committed infidelity were 3.18 times more willing to consume pornography compared to persons who were faithful to their partners. Maddox et al. (2011) also confirm that marital bonds may weaken and the probability for unfaithfulness in the relationship may increase when a partner consumes pornography.

- Weakening bonds due to male partners' loss of interest in sexual intercourse with their partners

A fourth reason for dissociation between partners according to the majority of participants is that men satisfy their sexual need through pornography and masturbation and they start to prefer pornography over sexual intimacy with their partners. Nine (9) participants referred to the sexual fulfilment they derive from watching pornographic material. They stated that men gain sexual pleasure through masturbation while watching pornography to such an extent that they lose interest in sexual intercourse with their partners.

Participant E stated the following regarding his experience of dissatisfaction of his marital relationship:

“Pornography is an easy substitute to fulfil one’s sexual desires. I still find myself after being married, lying in bed with my wife. She experienced orgasm, I also did, but I will still ask myself the question: ‘was that it?’”

Mancini (2012:21) found that men who consume pornography may perceive pornography as instantaneous gratification without the effort to sustain a romantic relationship. Pornography may easily become a substitute for sexual intercourse with a partner.

4.15. PORNOGRAPHY AND THE DEVELOPMENT TO BE A MENTOR IN SOCIETY

At the conclusion of the interviews, the researcher asked the participants to give a message to the community or even to their own future children with regard to pornographic consumption.

All of the participants stated that pornography exposure is inevitable and regardless of their own experiences, positive or negative, they admitted that they will not be able to convince someone, or even their own children to abstain from such exposure.

Eight (8) participants said that they will expose their own children from a very young age to sexually explicit material as a means of educating their children sexually.

Even though participant N mentioned how he despises his mother for exposing him to sex from a young age, he stated the following about pornographic exposure to young children:

“You need to expose children to it. Otherwise your boy will go to school and he will get the wrong impression about sex. I do not know what age will be appropriate to start exposing the child to it, probably in primary school. So I will show it to him and explain what sex is all about. He can go then and become naughty with the information, but if that happens, at least you have tried to educate him.”

Participant E is of the opinion that pornography consumption has robbed him from being an effective mentor in society and he stated that:

“I wish I did not make those decisions in my life. It is a struggle even till this day and I know that there could have been other ways to help people without me having to go through all of it. It is not nice as a man to acknowledge that you have a weakness. A man wants to be strong: for his wife, for his children, for his friends and for the community. Pornography is definitely a means to eliminate your strength.”

It seems as if all of the participants perceive that they are not able to encourage someone to abstain from pornography consumption. Participant E’s explanation is that pornography has robbed him from the role of being an example to society. However, Participant N’s opinion is different, because he stated that he will expose his child from a young age to sexually explicit material. It seems as if none of the participants view themselves as mentors in society that are motivated to inspire communities in any way.

Only one (1) participant, participant H, described his experience with a role model who had a positive impact on his life and he was inspired to fulfil a similar role for someone else:

“I met an active male role model who invested in me and walked this journey with me. It was almost like an accountability partner – someone who had invested in me and I did not want to disappoint him. I want to do good and refrain from watching pornography.”

Participants H and E were the only two (2) participants who mentioned a desire to become a mentor in their community. Participant H specifically stated that he is ready and feels obliged to act as a role model for younger men who also struggle with pornography consumption.

According to Limmer (2010:355) mentoring is regarded as a constructive method in work around sex and relationships. Mentoring may only have a positive influence if

people in the community are inspired by the promising mentor. If the young adult male experiences trouble in any of the discussed developmental tasks, he may not be seen as credible to mentor anyone. Thus, if pornography should hinder any development of the young adult male, it may cause a lack in leadership in the community.

4.16. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher formulated certain themes and categories which could be derived from the participants' perceptions regarding the impact of pornography on their lives. These themes and categories will enable the researcher to provide conclusions and recommendations' regarding the impact of pornography on the young adult male's life. These conclusions and recommendations will follow in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This study sought to explore the perceptions of young adult males regarding the impact of pornography on their lives. The intention of this study was to seek a sample of young adult males who have had prolonged exposure to pornography, or who have been consuming sexually explicit material regularly, their perceptions of how this behaviour impacts their lives.

Emerging technologies have caused cybersex or electronic pornography to raise severe social and legal questions including issues of access, content, privacy, and morality (Coopersmith, 2006:13). Despite the increase in the accessibility and exposure to pornography and the growth of the industry, some authors have labelled pornography as a social issue and have fought for legal restrictions since 1973 (Perrin et al, 2008:12). For the purpose of this study, pornography is regarded as the explicit illustration of sexual activities through literature, films or photography that intends to provoke sexual stimulation or arousal.

Bryant and Brown (1989, in Peter & Valkenburg, 2006) found that the first encounters with pornography usually occur during adolescence, but that consumption of pornography often continues into adulthood. Young adulthood is the critical developmental phase between adolescence and adulthood where specific developmental tasks need to be completed, for optimal functioning in society. The researcher anticipated that if young adult males fail for some reason to complete certain developmental tasks during this life phase it may have a significant impact on their lives as adults.

A theoretical framework of the developmental tasks that are necessary for a young adult male to function successfully in society allowed the researcher to focus on key

aspects that pertain to this developmental phase. Chapter two (2) provides this theoretical framework.

A theoretical framework regarding pornography as phenomenon and the possible impact it may have on consumers assisted the researcher in completing a critical review of current literature pertaining to this topic. This was discussed in chapter three (3).

The researcher undertook a qualitative, applied research study which enabled her to explore the perceptions of young adult males who have had prolonged experience to pornography consumption. Fifteen (15) young adult male participants were purposefully selected and in-depth interviews were conducted to explore their perceptions of the impact of pornography on their lives. The researcher anticipated that the knowledge gained from this exploration will provide new insights and inform professionals in the therapeutic setting about the impact of pornography.

In this chapter, conclusions and recommendations will be made based on the research findings that were obtained during the empirical process as described in chapter four (4). It is concluded that professionals in any therapeutic setting, such as social workers and psychologists, should be empowered with knowledge that can assist them during the helping process when treating young adults who are dependent on pornography, or who experience any of the effects of pornography consumption that was discussed in chapter four (4).

The context for these conclusions and recommendations will be provided through an evaluation of the goal and objectives of the research study which were formulated in chapter one.

5.2. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

As the goal and objectives of the research study has guided the researcher throughout the research process, it is imperative that the conclusions of the study are also formulated according to the study's goal and objectives.

The goal of this research study was to explore the perceptions of young adult males regarding the impact of pornography on their lives. The objectives of the research study included specific, time limited steps that the researcher took to ensure that the goal of the research study was achieved. The first two (2) objectives were to conceptualise a theoretical framework by conducting a literature review that pertained to the following two (2) aspects:

- The developmental tasks of the young adult male that are necessary for successful functioning in society
- Pornography as phenomenon and the possible impact it may have on the consumer.

A sound foundation for the empirical process was provided by these literature reviews.

The third objective pertained to the goal of the empirical process as it was to explore the perceptions of young adult males with regard to the impact of pornography on their lives. This objective could be achieved as the structured research process, as discussed in chapter four (4), were followed.

The fourth and final objective for the research study was to formulate conclusions and recommendations based on the outcome of the study and to present knowledge that can assist professionals during the helping process when dealing with young adult males who are dependent on pornography or who are experiencing any of the effects of pornography consumption as discussed in chapter four (4). The researcher will focus on the achievement of this objective in this chapter.

5.3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The empirical process was an enriching experience for the researcher. The participants were willing to discuss and share their perceptions and experiences regarding the impact of pornography on their lives with the researcher. The researcher was continuously reminded of the ethical considerations, which were discussed in chapter one, as the research topic was extremely sensitive and

personal for the participants. However, none of the participants experienced or reported any harm because of participating in this study. The majority of the participants expressed gratitude for the opportunity to share their perceptions with the researcher as they explained that it assisted them to understand themselves and their behaviour.

Conclusions from the participants' perceptions regarding the impact of pornography on their lives will be formulated according to the empirical findings in certain themes. Where it is applicable, the researcher will also formulate recommendations underneath specific conclusions of this study. Further recommendations will then be made in conclusion of this chapter.

5.3.1 PORNOGRAPHY AND PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

5.3.1.1 Pornography and self-value

- **Unrealistic focus on physique: big sexual organs and muscular bodies**

Based on the focus placed on the male physique by pornographic material the following conclusions can be drawn:

- ✓ Male consumers of pornography sometimes derive criteria about the physique of a man from depictions in pornographic material. These criteria are also referred to as attributes and include two (2) aspects of the male physique, namely: big sexual organs and muscular body forms.
- ✓ Consumers may idolise certain male actors from pornographic movies who possess these attributes. The researcher's interpretation of consumers' tendency to idolise is that consumers of pornography may aspire to become or to look like an actor from a pornographic film. Thus, a comparison with the self and the male actors from pornographic movies is made.

- ✓ Previous research has indicated that presentations of the actors' physiques in pornographic movies are often artificial. Male consumers of pornography are then often comparing themselves to unrealistic standards.

- ✓ In chapter two (2) it was stated by Gerdes et al (1998:527) that the young adult male should establish an identity and take responsibility to define his own sense of self. This means that the maturing adult cannot bluntly accept all standards from society. The ability to discern between enriching and demeaning messages from society is required for a satisfying life with a high self-esteem. This developmental task of the young adult male may be hindered as he may accept the standards from pornographic depictions as reality. Discernment between enriching and demeaning information is lost due to a personal comparison to an unrealistic ideal.

- ✓ Due to this comparison to an unrealistic ideal, the young adult male may become aware of his own physical flaws and it may lead to a diminished self-esteem.

- **Self-confidence**

The following conclusions are formulated with regard to the association between pornography and self-confidence:

- ✓ Two (2) perceptions pertaining to pornography consumption and self-confidence were identified by the researcher. The first perception is that pornography consumption may lead to a low self-esteem and low self-confidence because of the comparison that is discussed above. The second perception is that pornography causes arousal and excitement and it can serve as a remedy or coping mechanism for depressed moods. Thus, self-confidence can enhance through the arousal and excitement that is instigated through pornography exposure.

- ✓ Research supports that diverse and extreme sexual activities often depicted in pornography provide intense experiences and sensations for the consumer. Feelings of delight are commonly experienced by consumers while they are watching pornographic materials (Peter & Valkenburg, 2011:1017 & Philaretou et al, 2005:158). It was then mentioned that these feelings of delight are temporary and are only experienced in the moment when the consumer is viewing the sexually explicit material.

- ✓ The conclusion can be drawn that a young adult male who experiences a lack of self-confidence and a low self-esteem may consume pornography to enhance depressed moods and to gain self-confidence. Since this gratification is only bound to the short period when the consumer is viewing the material, it may lead to more aggressive consumption of pornography to maintain the same level of gratification.

- ✓ Therefore, pornography is not a substantial coping mechanism for depressed moods or low self-confidence, as there is no reported positive long term effect of pornography consumption to enhance self-esteem or to gain self-confidence.

Recommendation: The researcher recommends that therapeutic opportunities are created for young adult males who have a low self-esteem, a lack of self-confidence or depressed moods as these individuals have shown to be susceptible to pornography consumption. These therapeutic opportunities can be created through awareness campaigns where resources in the form of therapeutic assistance and life skills training are made available.

5.3.2 PORNOGRAPHY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GENDER IDENTITY (MASCULINITY)

- **Sexual performance**

Sexual performance is a predominant component of masculinity which is emphasised in pornographic material. The following conclusions are derived from the participants' perceptions:

- ✓ The researcher found that masculinity is often associated with two (2) conquests during sexual activity which are, firstly, the ability to postpone ejaculation for as long as possible and secondly, the ability to give his sexual partner orgasms. These two (2) requirements are derived from pornographic material and young adult male consumers often believe that their masculinity can be proven or justified when they meet these requirements at least to a certain extent.
- ✓ Sexual performance may then become a predominant motivator to prove manhood or masculinity.

Some young adult males will exercise and train their bodies to meet these requirements in order to improve on existing sexual performances. It may cause the young adult male to pursue multiple sexual conquests and neglect other aspects of developing a gender-identity.

- ✓ The conclusion can be made that exposure to pornography may lead to perceptions that masculinity could only be proven through sexual performance. This may hinder the completion of the developmental task to develop a gender-identity. As stated in chapter two, the prerequisite for the development of masculinity is the development of autonomous and independent functioning.

- **The use of substances to enhance sexual performance**

The following became evident regarding the use of substances for the enhancement of sexual performance:

- ✓ Pornographic material will sometimes promote certain substances for the enhancement of sexual performances. Postponed ejaculation is shown to be a direct result of the use of certain substances.
- ✓ Some young adult males are inspired to use these substances in order to obtain the desired sexual effect.
- ✓ Therefore substance abuse may be an indirect result of pornography consumption.

Recommendations: The researcher recommends the legal restriction of any form of pornography where substances are used.

- Young adult males should be made aware of the consequences and side-effects of all substances.
- Young adult males should be empowered to develop a gender-identity by focusing on skills to develop autonomous and independent functioning.

5.3.3. PORNOGRAPHY AND MORAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

5.3.3.1 Feelings of guilt and shame because behaviour does not correlate with belief in terms of what is 'right' and 'wrong'

- ✓ Some consumers of pornography experience feelings of guilt and shame due to the exposure to pornography. These feelings may cause distress as it may escalate to spiritual condemnation.

- ✓ The interpretation is made that consumers of pornography in South Africa often internalise the moral belief or conviction that pornography is “wrong”. Disagreement between what the consumer believes to be morally wrong and his actions in contradiction of that belief, creates tension. Levert (2007:160) states that whatever values the young adult male chooses to incorporate into his own moral belief system, his behaviour and actions should substantiate his belief system. The young adult male should take responsibility to formulate his own values and principles and align his behaviour accordingly.

- ✓ It is therefore concluded that pornography may impact the young adult male’s moral and spiritual development as there is often strain when behaviour does not reflect the young adult male’s belief system. Moral and spiritual growth is hindered by this tension and feelings of condemnation, making it almost impossible to achieve autonomy in moral and spiritual growth.

5.3.3.2 Moral beliefs are associated with certain boundaries in terms of the level and severity of pornographic exposure

- ✓ This study found that consumers of pornography who claim to have certain religious or moral convictions were hindered by their convictions to consume all levels or forms of pornography. They reported repulsion of certain sexual acts if it was in contrast with their moral beliefs. The consumers who have no outspoken religious convictions will also exercise no boundaries or limits in the levels or forms of pornography consumption.

- ✓ This means that moral beliefs can have a significant influence on an individual where arousal may easily turn into repulsion when certain acts do not correlate with the consumer’s belief system.

- ✓ Moral or religious beliefs are consequently a definite inhibitor of all levels of pornographic material

5.3.3.3 Pornography and masturbation can serve as a more acceptable sexual act and can become a substitute for actual 'sin', in other words, sexual intercourse with a partner

- ✓ This study found that the same young adult males who believe that pornography consumption is wrong, will label sexual intercourse with a partner as a worse sin. That is, according to them, when sexual intercourse occurs out of marriage and the partner is not the legally married wife of the young adult male. The other participants of the study, who consume pornography and do not have an outspoken conviction that pornography consumption is morally wrong, indicated that sexual intercourse with any or many sexual partners are acceptable.
- ✓ For the group who have outspoken moral convictions, it means that pornography consumption can be viewed as a more acceptable act to hinder a person from having sexual intercourse outside of the personal boundaries which he believes in. Pornography subsequently becomes a substitute for actual 'sin' according to their belief system.
- ✓ It is concluded that moral or religious beliefs may prevent a person from having casual sexual intercourse, as pornography consumption may be a substitute for intercourse with a partner, or in other words, casual sex.

5.3.3.4 Moral beliefs are a motivational factor to stop pornographic consumption deliberately

- ✓ In this study it became evident that moral and religious convictions are the most common reason presented by pornography consumers for discontinuing pornography consumption.
- ✓ It means that moral and religious beliefs which are internalised by a person may become a motivational factor for the person to take responsibility to deliberately change behaviour.

- ✓ The conclusion is that moral or religious beliefs are factors that encourage behavioural change as pornography consumers are motivated to stop pornography consumption deliberately.

5.3.3.5 Pornography and racism

- ✓ It was found in this study that consumers of pornography sometimes derive specific stereotypical messages regarding race from pornographic material. Some of these messages convey that certain races should be treated sexually in a different or less intimate way compared to other races.
- ✓ This means that stereotypical perceptions regarding certain races may be formed which can influence the person's sexual behaviour towards the specific race. Some of the participants elaborated on their desire to mimic aggressive sexual behaviour with a certain different racial partner.
- ✓ It is concluded that certain pornographic material propagate stereotypical and racial messages which may become an impediment to the development of the young adult male. Pornography with possible stereotypical messages regarding race and ethnicity may cause hindrance regarding the acceptance of others or the acceptance of differences in others (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005:29).

Recommendation: It is recommended that pornography with specific racial or stereotypical messages should be legally restricted.

5.3.4 PORNOGRAPHY AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

5.3.4.1 Pornography and an increase in sexual thoughts

- ✓ Consumers of pornography reported that they experienced an increase in sexual thoughts after the exposure to pornography. These sexual thoughts

are sometimes inapt and irrepressible. Some participants reported an urge to act on these thoughts such as to masturbate or to attempt to have sex with any partner as a means to reduce the sexual thoughts.

- ✓ This means that consumers of pornography may lose control over their thoughts. These thoughts may lead to inappropriate behaviour.
- ✓ Pornography may therefore affect the thoughts of a person to such an extent that it may become inappropriate and uncontrollable.

5.3.4.2 Participants find it hard to forget images and can easily recall them

- ✓ It became evident in this study that some consumers of pornography find it difficult to forget certain images which they have seen in sexually explicit material.
- ✓ It means that pornographic exposure may have a long term influence on the consumer's thoughts which may also be experienced as uncontrollable. If the young adult male attempts to forget certain images which he has seen deliberately and he fails to do so, it may cause distress as it can easily be triggered and reoccur.
- ✓ Pornography may impact the long term memory of the young adult male as he may lose autonomy in his thinking or cognitive processing.

Recommendation: The researcher recommends that young adult males who experience distress due to their perceived inability to forget certain pornographic images, be identified. Therapy may be offered to such individuals who may request therapeutic intervention.

5.3.4.3 Sexual images are saved as fantasies

- ✓ It was found that consumers of pornography may formulate fantasies which consist of pornographic images and certain scenes from pornographic videos. Literature also supported the creation of a “fantasy world” as it was stated that new networks and neurological pathways are formed in the brain where a person can consciously or subconsciously recall those images.
- ✓ This means that consumers of pornography may become conditioned to access that part of their brains where these fantasies are formed, more often than other parts of their brain. This may explain their statements that: *“they escape to their fantasy world, or a big black hole, without knowing where the time has gone.”*
- ✓ The conclusion is made that sexual images which are often derived from pornographic depictions are processed as sexual fantasies which may alter thought processing of the consumer of pornography. This may impact the cognitive functioning of the consumer of pornography.

5.3.5. PORNOGRAPHY AND ADDICTION

5.3.5.1 Perception that pornography consumption is an addiction

It was found in this study that there is a link between pornographic consumption and addiction. The participants’ perceptions can be presented in three (3) categories:

- **Category one:** the first exposure to pornographic material leads to an active search and desire for more pornographic material.
- ✓ This means that dependency on more pornographic stimulation is evident after the first exposure to pornographic material.

- ✓ It is concluded that pornography can be addictive after the first exposure.

Recommendation: It is recommended by the researcher that people in general and professionals in the therapeutic field are made aware of the addictive nature of pornography. Collaborative effort should be taken by adults to protect young children from any pornographic exposure as far as possible.

- **Category two:** this category refers to the fact that progression always occurs in variety and in the level of exposure to pornography.
 - ✓ All of the participants reported that they quickly become bored of one pornographic video and that they will continuously seek variety in order to obtain the same level of sexual gratification. Some participants indicated that they will not seek material beyond certain personal boundaries in terms of the levels of pornography. Other participants reported that their exposure escalated to such a degree that they were no longer aroused by their first exposure.
 - ✓ This means that sexual satisfaction which is gained through pornography exposure is only temporary and that the consumer may become obsessed with maintaining that same level of gratification by consuming more and different pornographic material. The consumer of pornography may become blunted to initial sexual stimuli.
 - ✓ In conclusion it can be stated that pornography is addictive as consumers show encouragement for more and various sexual exposure.
- **Category three:** even with deliberate attempts to discontinue pornographic exposure, participants find it extremely difficult to do so.
 - ✓ This means that persons who consume pornography lose their ability to control their behaviour and pornography is thus addictive. When the young

adult male is confronted with the fact that he is dependent on pornography to such a degree that it is beyond his control, he may experience feelings of hopelessness and shame.

Recommendation: The researcher recommends that therapeutic resources are made available to young adult males who report that their consumption of pornography is beyond their control and they wish to stop this behaviour.

5.3.6 PORNOGRAPHY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ Consumers of pornography have the perception that a person who consumes pornography can easily lose interest in certain obligations regarding his career. Pornography can become a counterfeit for less interesting activities such as to a study or to work.
- ✓ This means that the developmental task of the young adult male that pertains to career development may be hindered. It was stated by Fumer (2005:216) that it is expected of young adult men to develop an interest in a form of work and pursue a career through necessary study and training in order to earn an income to be able to support himself as well as a family.
- ✓ The conclusion can be made that pornography may affect the career development of a young adult male as it may cause him to neglect his pursuit of a career and financial independence.

5.3.7 PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT

5.3.7.1 Pornography and sexual knowledge

- ✓ It was found that consumers of pornography gain excessive knowledge regarding sex and that they perceive that young adult men should have certain knowledge about sex.

- ✓ It means that many consumers of pornography regard the knowledge that they gain from pornographic material as valuable.
- ✓ Pornography is therefore a proven source for acquiring sexual knowledge.

5.3.7.2 Sexual knowledge: Reality versus illusions

- ✓ Despite the fact that pornography is regarded as a proven source for acquiring sexual knowledge, it was also found in this study that the majority of pornography consumers have come to realise that the illustrations in pornography pertaining to sexual intercourse are mere fiction and far from true reflections of reality.
- ✓ This means that consumers of pornography, who have not realised that some of the depictions are false, are acquiring sexual information that is based on mere illusion. Zillman (2000:42) and Sessoms (2011:7) confirm that prolonged exposure to pornography may desensitise the consumer as exaggerated sexual activities that once were rejected and labelled as repulsive, gradually became more acceptable and even desirable.
- ✓ Therefore, pornography is not an appropriate source of sexual knowledge and exposure to pornography may hinder the sexual development of the young adult male. As the developmental task is to acquire certain knowledge pertaining to sex, Morris (1997:215-216) formulates it as follows: “there is an absolute necessity of young adult males to acquire a thorough and informative sexual knowledge base both pertaining to themselves and the sexuality of their female sexual partner.” However, the key to the successful completion of this developmental task is the ability to discern what information is appropriate and beneficial to the sexual knowledge base of the young adult male and to disregard false, misleading or persuasive sexual information.

5.3.7.3 Pornography and sexual attitude

The following themes could be identified pertaining to pornography and sexual attitude:

- **Pornography and the desire to fulfil own egocentric sexual needs – without interest in a relationship**
 - ✓ The majority of the participants reported a desire to experience and experiment sexually with that which they have seen depicted in pornographic material. This desire has proven to be a motive for fulfilling and pursuing own sexual gratification, but that there is no interest in a sustainable relationship with a partner.
 - ✓ This signifies that young adult males may become selfish in pursuing sexual gratification.
 - ✓ Boutellier (2000:446) stipulates that a developmental task of the young adult male is that egocentric motives for own sexual gratification should develop into intimacy and care both for himself and his partner. It seems as if pornography may obstruct the acquisition of this developmental task when the young adult male desires own egocentric sexual needs.

- **Pornography and the attitude towards women**
 - ✓ It seems as if there is a tendency for consumers of pornography to be influenced in their attitudes towards women as women may be viewed as instruments through which sexual gratification can be obtained.

- ✓ This means that there are certain messages pertaining to women that are derived from pornographic material that influences the consumer in such a way that his attitude towards women may become negative.
- ✓ It is concluded that pornographic material may influence the consumer's attitude towards women.

- **Pornography and perceptions of women as sexual beings**

- ✓ Examples of certain perceptions regarding women that have been derived from pornographic material include the following as the participants stated that:
 - Women are more sexually active than men and masturbate more often
 - Women always enjoy sex and are always ready for intercourse
 - Women do not have moral values
 - Women enjoy rough sex and always prefer variety.
- ✓ It indicates that explicit assumptions about women are often derived from pornographic material and applied to women in general.
- ✓ Pornography may thus have an impact on the perceptions a consumer of pornography might have of women.

5.3.7.4 Pornography and sexual behaviour

Three (3) forms of sexual behaviour, which may be influenced by pornography consumption could be identified, namely:

- **Pornography and masturbation**

- ✓ It was found in this study that consumers of pornography are always sexually aroused while they are watching pornography and that sexual

behaviour in the form of masturbation is always a direct result of exposure to sexually explicit material.

- ✓ This sexual behaviour is interpreted in such a way that pornography fulfils a specific sexual function for the consumer. Some participants of the study confirmed this interpretation as they mentioned that masturbation during exposure to pornography assists them in relieving sexual tension.

- ✓ It can be concluded that pornography enhances the sexual desire of the consumer of pornography and that it can be classified as an aid to masturbate. Previous research has found that masturbation is detrimental when it replaces social interaction and other activities of the male's normal functioning (Briken et al, 2007:131; Louw et al; 1998:407). It is clear that sexual behaviour is detrimental when it hinders the acquisition of any other developmental task.

Recommendation: It is recommended that detrimental sexual behaviour such as excessive masturbation that is in any way prohibiting a person from functioning normally, should be identified and professional assistance should be provided.

- **Pornography and unprotected sexual activity**

- ✓ Participants of the study have the perception that pornography promotes dangerous sex without precaution against sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV and AIDS. The actors in pornographic videos are never shown using contraception such as condoms.

- ✓ The interpretation is made that consumers of pornography are so motivated to obtain as much sexual gratification as possible, that they may neglect precaution in terms of their own sexual health.

- ✓ Pornography may thus lead to unprotected sexual activity.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the fact of pornography playing a role in unprotected sexual activity is addressed and that the community should be kept informed regarding the possible consequences of unprotected sexual activity such as HIV and AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies.

- **Pornography and sexual aggression**

- ✓ It was found in this study that the consumption of pornography often escalates to various levels where sexually aggressive acts against women are depicted as enjoyable –both for the male and for the female partner. Some participants indicated that they take pleasure in viewing pornographic material where women are raped or treated violently.
- ✓ If some young adult males enjoy viewing sexually aggressive acts against women, it means that they become sexually aroused when they see that the women are treated violently. When women are depicted enjoying the conduct, it may create a perception that sexually aggressive acts against women are acceptable.
- ✓ The conclusion is made that pornography may promote sexual aggression.

5.3.8 PORNOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

5.3.8.1 Pornography and general relationships

Two (2) possible roles of pornography consumption in general relationships were highlighted. They are:

- **Damage and dissociation in social relationships because of secrecy**

- ✓ It was found that significant relationships of the young adult male, such as parent relationships, sibling relationships or significant friendship relationships may become distant due to the consumer of pornography's attempt to keep his consumption of pornographic material a secret.

It means that consumers of pornography prefer to view pornographic material privately and do not want to make their behaviour known to significant others.

- ✓ It can be concluded that the consumer of pornography may isolate himself from significant relationships and that these relationships may be affected due to secrecy.

Recommendation: The researcher recommends that all people in general and professionals in therapeutic settings are informed of the impact of pornography on significant relationships of persons who consume pornography. Families should be encouraged to offer support when they become aware that a family member is consuming pornography and that the person becomes distant in the relationship.

- **Social relationships as accountability or buffer against pornographic exposure**

- ✓ In this study it was found that some participants were motivated by significant relationships to stop consuming pornographic material.
- ✓ This indicates that significant relationships fulfil a prominent role for certain consumers of pornography that they will alter certain behaviour due to the value that is attached to the relationship
- ✓ Therefore it is concluded that certain relationships can become a motivational factor for some consumers of pornography to discontinue pornography consumption.

Recommendation: It is recommended that professionals realise the value of significant relationships in the lives of consumers of pornography. If the person who consumes pornography wishes to discontinue pornography consumption, significant relationships of that person should be considered to assist the person in a supporting manner in his desire to alter his behaviour.

5.3.8.2 Pornography and intimate relationships

- **Intimacy versus lust in the context of a permanent couple relationship**

- ✓ It became evident in this study that some consumers of pornography have the desire to imitate pornographic scenes with their partners. The participants elaborated on their expectations that women or wives must act as the women depicted in the pornographic movies.

However, some participants who are married perceived that sexual intercourse with their wives or permanent partners are vastly different from sex depicted in pornographic material. They identified it as intimacy in a marital relationship versus egocentric lust in pornographic material. These participants with the latter perception were the minority.

- ✓ This means that the majority of consumers of pornography often compare intimacy in a marital or permanent partnership relationship to depictions in pornographic material.
- ✓ Morgan and Morgan (2011:528) state that sexually explicit material contributes to greater sexual skills and sexual gratification. However, it seems as if this gratification is more egocentric in nature and that it does not necessarily benefit the intimate sexual relationship or marital bond between partners. It seems as if sexual intimacy includes other crucial components pertaining to the relationship factor which is neglected in pornographic material. It can be concluded that pornographic depictions of sex are in some way different from sexual intimacy in a marital or permanent partnership relationship.

Recommendation: The researcher recommends that couples should be educated regarding the difference between pornographic depictions of sex and sexual intimacy within a marital or permanent partnership relationship. Couples should be empowered to determine and negotiate which components of sexual intimacy are important to them and strive to include those components in their relationship. This recommendation is supported by previous research as it was stated that young adulthood is a period which is characterised by preparation for long term committed relationships as the young adult explores and decides, together with his or her partner what characteristics and qualities they regard as desirable in their relationship (Jekielek & Brown, 2005:13 & Olmstead et al, 2011:3).

- **The relation between pornography, weakening bonds and cohesion between partners**

- ✓ In this study it became evident that there is a relationship between pornography, weakening bonds and cohesion between partners who are in a permanent relationship. The following four (4) reasons for the weakening of bonds between partners were present with the participants:

- Weakening bonds due to secrecy and distrust. Pornography is often consumed without the knowledge or even approval of the spouse or sexual partner.
- Weakening bonds due to wives who withdraw from the relationship and male partners who become dissatisfied with their partners' physical appearance and sexual performance.
- Weakening bonds between partners because pornography blatantly promotes infidelity and encourages partners to be unfaithful to the relationship.
- Weakening bonds due to male partners' loss of interest in sexual intercourse with their partners.

- ✓ This means that consumers of pornography may derive certain messages from pornographic depictions which may influence their perceptions regarding their female partners or which may cause them to become dissatisfied with their current relationship. Female partners may, in turn, withdraw from the relationship, because they perceive that their partners become dissatisfied with them or with the relationship. Female partners may also withdraw from the relationship because their male partners may pressurise them to perform certain sexual acts which are derived from pornographic depictions. Infidelity may be a result of these weakening bonds between partners.
- ✓ The conclusion can be made that weakening bonds between partners which may be instigated by pornography consumption, may cause distress for the young adult male. Horwits et al (1998:125) state that “problematic relationships with spouses are among the most powerful predictors of distress in community populations and may have detrimental effects on mental health.”

Recommendation: The researcher recommends that the public in general should be informed of the possible impact of pornography consumption on permanent relationships. Couples who experience weakening in their cohesion or bonds due to certain identified factors of pornography consumption should be offered therapeutic assistance.

5.3.9 PORNOGRAPHY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MENTORS IN SOCIETY

- ✓ The process of developing into a mentor in society is one of the developmental tasks of a young adult male. It was found in this study that only two (2) participants had the desire to fulfil a mentoring role in their community. It became evident that consumers of pornography are often fatalistic about pornographic exposure as they indicated that everyone will be exposed to pornography and that nothing can be done to hamper such exposure. They also mentioned that they will expose their own children to such material as a way of sexual education.

- ✓ The assumption can be made that pornography consumption may deprive a young adult male of a desire to contribute constructively to his community.

5.4. FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Training for professionals

Apart from the recommendations that were made with regard to certain conclusions in the text, the researcher is of the opinion that service providers in the helping professions need to be trained. It was emphasised in chapter one (1) that a new age of sexual compulsivity and addiction was entered by the accessibility of technology. The necessity to investigate the dominant influence of the Internet and to educate clinicians, the public, and the church accordingly is evident.

Without education and training, therapists may be more likely to generate treatment plans based on personal opinion” (Ayres & Haddock, 2009:75).

- Social workers and other professionals in the therapeutic field need to be informed of the possible impact of pornography on consumers. This will assist them in understanding the dynamics of such behaviour when they are confronted in the therapeutic field, with young adult males who consume pornography.
- Social workers and other service providers need to be trained in certain skills when dealing with some of the effects of pornography consumption. This training can include:
 - Skills to address pornographic addiction (as described in)
 - Skills to facilitate cognitive development by overcoming hindrances in cognitive processing, due to pornography consumption (as described in)

- Skills to facilitate reconciliation between partners in a permanent relationship who report weakening cohesion in the relationship or infidelity (as described in)
- Training for professionals can take in the following ways:
 - The Department of Social Development (DSD) can include training for social service providers on how to identify and address certain effects of pornography consumption during service delivery. These programmes can form part of the Department's Family Perseverance Programmes.
 - Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) can host workshops for social workers where, professionals who have specialised experience in the field concerning treatment of some of the effects of pornography consumption, are invited. These professionals can form part of a training team and collaborative learning can be facilitated.
 - Programmes, based on intervention strategies regarding the effects of pornography, can be included for undergraduate social work students as a way to promote continuous education of universities. Post graduate courses can also be offered to encourage students to conduct continuous research regarding the social phenomenon of pornography consumption.
- Well informed professionals can educate the community about the impact of pornography on consumers in order to address some of the effects of pornography consumption on young adult males.
- An educated community in this regard will be aware of the possible detrimental effects pornography exposure may have and will attempt to restrict young children from such exposure.

5.4.2 Further research

- Social workers and other service providers in the helping professions, should stay proactive and continue to conduct research in the field of sexual behaviour and pornography consumption. This will assist them as service providers to facilitate the necessary change and prevent certain effects of problematic sexual behaviour.

The researcher recommends that further research should focus on the following themes:

- ✓ **The South African context:** Scientific studies pertaining to the impact of pornography in the South-African context have shown to be limited. Further research could focus predominantly on the South-African context. It was also determined that this context is unique and the conclusions from this study pertaining to the impact of pornography, were different from other studies conducted in other countries. This will ensure that the knowledge gained from such studies will be applicable to the unique milieu.
- ✓ **The impact of pornography on permanent relationships:** Specific exploration can be done regarding the secrecy that evolves in intimate relationships due to pornography consumption. The role of pornography addiction in the dynamics of couple relationships (specifically during the young adult developmental phase) can be explored in depth.
- ✓ **The role of pornography in parent-child relationships with specific reference to sex education.** The first encounter with pornography usually occurs during adolescence and this research study has shown that the age of first exposure decreases with the increase in technology accessibility. It is therefore necessary to explore the effect of early exposure to pornography with regard to parent-child relationships.

- ✓ **The impact of pornography on career development:** this was a pertinent theme in this research study and it was found that higher educated individuals are more likely to consume pornography in comparison to less educated individuals. The researcher has identified the need to explore the impact of pornography in the work place specifically. This information will benefit employee assistance programmes in any company.

Continuous scientific articles concerning all of the above themes need to be published in order to inform and sensitise professionals continuously.

5.4.3 Intervention strategies

The following intervention strategies are recommended by the researcher:

- Intervention can occur in the form of community engagement programmes where community awareness projects can be facilitated to inform the communities of the possible effects of pornography consumption. Individuals, who experience some of the effects of pornography consumption, can be introduced to resources available to address some of these effects.
- Group intervention can be facilitated in the form of support groups for individuals who require support in overcoming some of the effects of pornography consumption. These groups need to be facilitated by a trained professional.
- The researcher already made mention of individual therapy above, but would like to place emphasis on marital counselling to be offered by professionals for couples who experience trauma due to pornography consumption.

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Faculty of Humanities

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INFORMED CONSENT
OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Researcher: Ms C. Hodgetts

Name of institution: University of Pretoria

Name of participant : _____

Date : _____

1. Title of the study:

The perceptions of young adult males regarding the impact of pornography on their lives

2. Purpose of the study:

The purpose of this study is to seek with a sample of young adult males who have prolonged exposure to pornography, or who have been consuming sexually explicit material regularly, their perceptions of how this behaviour impacts their lives.

3. Procedures:

The researcher will conduct an interview with the participant where the question will be asked:

What are the perceptions as a young adult male, with regard to the impact of pornography on young adult males' lives?

The interview will be approximately 1 to 2 hours.

4. Risks and discomfort:

There are no known risks or discomfort associated with this research study. If the participant should experience any distress because of the content of the interview, the researcher must be informed immediately. The participant has the right and may choose to withdraw from this study at any time.

Debriefing will occur directly after the interview and should further conversation or therapy be requested by the participant, then the researcher will refer the participant to a qualified social worker.

5. Benefits:

There are no direct benefits to the participant for participation in this study. However, participation in this study might contribute to a better understanding of the impact of pornography on young adult males and service delivery to young adult males who are frequently exposed to pornography.

6. Financial compensation:

The participant will not gain financially or in any other way from this study.

7. Confidentiality:

The interview will be audio recorded and notes will be taken during the interview to ensure precision of data that is collected. All information will be viewed as confidential. The results of this study may be published in professional journals or presented at professional conferences, but the identity of the participant will not be revealed.

8. Questions:

Should the participant have any concerns or questions regarding this research study, the researcher, Ms Chani Hodgetts may be called at 083 942 5404.

I hereby give my consent to participate in this research study.

This document was signed at _____ on the
_____ day of _____ 2012

.....

Signature

.....

Researcher signature

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University of Pretoria

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