

Sexual Attitude towards Pornography of Convicted Rape Offenders

Pankaj Choubey^{1*}, Prof. (Dr.) Mamta Patel²

ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of the internet, smart phones and social media among young people means that pornography use is common. The study aims to know about the sexual attitude towards pornography of convicted rape offenders. This study was carried out at Eleven Central Prisons in Madhya Pradesh, India. The Non-Probability sampling design used the Purposive sampling method to collect the data. The tools used for the research work were the interview schedule and the sexual attitude scale. The researcher studied offenders' attitudes towards pornography under the Sexual Attitudes Scale. Offenders' levels of sexual attitude toward pornography were found to be average. Criminal behavior is the result of the learning process.

Keywords: *Offenders, Pornography, Sexual Attitudes.*

"Pornography is the theory – rape is the practice," says well-known feminist aphorism (Kutchinsky1991).

Sexual violence against women and children is generally recognized as a social and public health problem; however, it is a severe public health issue in India. The attitude one has toward sexuality or sexual behaviors is known as sexual attitude. Identified the internet as the most important source for getting information and the most trustworthy. Indian youth continue to have a limited understanding of sexuality. Therefore, the internet is a key source of information and is considered the most trustworthy among youth (Dutt & Manjula 2017). Compared to learning about sexuality through parents and family members, the youth mostly obtained information about sexuality from the Internet, friends, movies, newspapers, magazines, and books. Most of them turned to friends when it came to clarifying doubts, with parents being the least favored source. Likened to other sources, they considered the Internet the most dependable source of information, followed by friends and printed material (Avasthi et al., 1992). Pornography is sexually explicit material verbal or pictorial that is *primarily designed to produce sexual arousal in viewers* (Williams, 1981). Pornography has been an incredibly complex part of the social fabric across history. Our concepts of

¹Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Criminology and Forensic Science, Dr. HarisinghGour (Central) University, Sagar (M.P), India

²Professor, Department of Criminology and Forensic Science, Dr. HarisinghGour (Central) University, Sagar (M.P), India

*Corresponding Author

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pornography are ingrained within our own culture and perceptions of sexuality. Pornography involving children, since children are harmed in making such material, is obscene. One well-known example from the otherwise conservative Hindu culture is the Kama Sutra. Pornography's effects concern how pornography may influence men's attitudes toward women, possibly increasing violence toward women (**Christopher 2015**). The sexual impulse is an instinct like hunger and thirst. The reason for pornography's increasing importance in our society is that sex has become a more significant business than the music and film industries combined (**Abraham, 1997**). Sexual offender and Pornography research show a relationship between the crimes in the study by Padgett & Brislin Slutz (1989) report that patrons of adult theatres who view more pornography than college students who were also studied, more favorable attitudes toward women than college students, and attitudes toward women are not influenced by the type of exposure (**Holmes & Holmes 2009**). The government of India has banned access to at least 857 pornographic sites. The department of Electronics and Information Technology has asked the Department of Telecom to notify internet service providers to block access to 857 URLs under the provision of Section 79(3)(b) of the Information Technology Act, 2000, as the content hosted on these websites relate to morality, decency as given in Article 19(2) of the Constitution of India. This comes after the Supreme Court refused to order a ban on pornographic websites saying such an order would impinge on freedom (**INDIA TODAY, 2015**) According to **National Crime Records Bureau** 2020 statistics, in five states, Rajasthan has the highest number (6,051) and followed by Uttar Pradesh (3,065), Madhya Pradesh (2,490), Maharashtra (2,305), Kerala (2,044), rape cases reported among Indian states in 2020. Under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 total of 48,043 Cases was reported, and Uttar Pradesh reported the highest number (7,722), followed by Maharashtra (6,725) Madhya Pradesh (6,138) of rape reports among Indian states (**Crime in India, 2020**).

Section 292 of the IPC exclusively dealt with sale, distribution, public exhibition or circulation of any obscene book, drawing, painting, etc. It says that any such material would be considered to be obscene "if it is lascivious or appeals to the prurient interest or if its effect any one of its items, is, if taken as a whole, such as to tend to deprave and corrupt a person" who reads, sees or hears it.

Section 293 of the IPC makes it illegal to sell, distribute, and exhibit or circular obscene objects to anyone under the age of 20 years, and Section 294 makes it a crime to do any obscene act or sing obscene songs in any public place.

Section 67 of the Act makes it illegal to publish or transmit "obscene material" in electronic form. This material, it says, can be anything which is "lascivious or appeals to the prurient interest or if its effect is such as to tend to deprave and corrupt" people who watch it, read or hear it. Anybody who does this can be punished with a three-year jail term along with Rs 5 lakh as fine.

Section 67A of the IT Act provides the punishment for publishing or transmitting material containing sexually explicit acts, etc., in electronic form. Anyone who "publishes or transmits or causes to be published or transmitted" any sexually explicit material can be punished with a jail term of five years along with Rs 10 lakh as fine (**Jain, 2013**).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Math et al. studied in 2014 to examine the relationship between the consumption of pornography and the subsequent increase in sexual violence, thus testing the hypothesis that

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an increase in consumption of pornography is related to increased sexual crime in the Indian scenario. However, the comparison of pre liberalization and post-liberalization growth of rape rates was insignificant. Therefore, the results presented need to be interpreted with extreme care and caution. Nevertheless, the results from this study suggest that easy access to pornography did not have a significant impact on rape rates and crime rates against women.

In 2011 Seto and his colleagues examined the criminal histories and recidivism rates of online sexual offenders, especially child pornography offenders, using two meta-analyses. Seto and his colleagues found a total recidivism rate with a sexual offence in general of 4.6%, 2.0% recidivism with a contact sexual offence and 3.4% for their first child pornography offence. The findings support low recidivism rates for contact sexual offences within a particular group of online offenders.

Seto & Eke, 2015 in their research work on 266 adult male child pornography offenders that 11% committed a new sexual offence, 3% a new sexual offence against a child, and 9% committed a new child pornography offence. To predict sexual recidivism among this group of offenders, they developed a risk checklist, Child Pornography Offender Risk Tool (CPORT), which includes seven significant predictors of offender age, prior criminal history, contact sexual offending, failure on conditional release, an indication of sexual interest in children, more boy than girl child pornography and other child-related content.

Goller et al., 2016 study is a national cohort study of all individuals in Switzerland convicted of an illegal pornography offence. Reconvictions were ascertained using criminal records from the Federal Office of Justice of Switzerland, leading to 4612 offenders, consisting of 4249 illegal pornography offenders and 363 dual offenders. Comparison of 3-year reconviction rates showed that only 0.2% of the unlawful pornography offenders were convicted of contact child sex offences, whereas 2.6% of the dual offenders were reconvicted. The illegal pornography offenders were also significantly less likely to be convicted of further pornography offences or other sexual offences.

Kant and Goldstein 1973 studied three groups "Normal," "users," and incarcerated rapists. They found that sex offenders all reported less exposure to pornographic material than did the other group. The most important finding is that sex offender, not only adolescents but also adults, see less pornography than do normal and or users (**Holmes & Holmes 2009**).

Kutchinsky (1971) interviewed a representative sample (N=398) of the Danish population regarding four different sexual crimes: (1) exhibitionism, (2) peeping, (3) "physical indecency" toward women, and (4) "physical indecency." toward girls child molestation. In addition, subjects were asked to report their reactions if they or a member of their family were to become a victim of one of these offences. He concluded that much of the reported decrease in exhibitionism and physical indecency toward women could be explained by the decreased likelihood of the victim reporting the crime (**Murrin & Laws 1990**).

Lim et al. 2017 conducted a cross-sectional online survey in a convenience sample of Victorians aged 15 to 29 Years recruited via social media. Ever viewing pornography was reported by 815 of 941 (87%) participants. The median age at first pornography viewing was 13 years for men and 16 years for women. Younger age at first pornography viewing was associated with male gender, younger current age, higher education, non-heterosexual identity, younger age at first sexual contact and recent mental health problems. Pornography use is common and associated with some health and behavioral outcomes.

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Objectives of the Study

- To know about the Sexual attitude towards pornography of convicted rape offenders.

METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out at all Eleven Central Prisons in Madhya Pradesh, India. Total 400 samples have been collected from the Sagar, Hoshangabad, Bhopal, Ujjain, Indore, Barwani, Gwalior, Rewa, Satna, Narsinghpur, and Jabalpur prisons. The convicted rape offenders were being taken as a study purpose. The personal background, hobbies, habits, reasons for conviction and Sexual attitude was studied by pre-designed and pre- tested Interview schedule and Sexual Attitude scale. In Non-Probability sampling design, Purposive sampling method was used to collect the data. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) Software shown through diagrams and tables by using frequencies.

Sexual attitude scale: This sexual attitude scale was prepared by Dr. Amit Abraham, who has done work on sexuality and sexual attitudes. Attitude scale responses will help investigate attitudes towards sex behavior in two dimensions - favorable or unfavorable. The S.A.S. provide for measures of attitude in five areas of human sexuality, i.e., Premarital sex scale (PSS), Polygamy Scale (PS), Pornography Scale (PGS), Lesbianism Scale (LS), Homosexuality Scale (HS). The researcher has used only one dimension in his study because of the male respondents

RESULT

Table 1: Personal information of offenders by selected background characteristics

	Frequency	Percent %
1. Religion:		
Hindu	355	88.8
Muslim	37	9.3
Sikh	3	0.8
Christian	3	0.8
others	2	0.5
Total=	400	100.0
2. Caste:		
General	90	22.5
OBC	124	31.0
SC	100	25.0
ST	86	21.5
Total=	400	100.0
3. Residence:		
Urban	93	23.3
Rural	307	76.8
Total=	400	100.0
4. Marital Status:		
Unmarried	223	55.8
Married	161	40.3
Divorce	4	1.0
Separated	9	2.3
other	3	0.8
Total=	400	100.0

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5. Family status:		
Nuclear family	128	32.0
Joint Family	272	68.0
Total=	400	100.0

The researcher studied convicted rape offenders based on the facts and found that 76.8% of the offenders were from rural areas, and 23.3% were from urban areas. Family background found that 68% of the offenders belonged to the joint family system and 32% to the nuclear family system. Based on marital status, it was found that 55.8% of the offenders were unmarried and 40.3% were married, followed by divorced 1% and 2.3% of the separated or 0.8% of the widower. Based on caste, it was found that an equal proportion of the criminal tendency can be seen in all the caste classes. In the case of caste, nearly 31% (OBC) Other Backward Class, 21.5% (ST) Scheduled Tribes, 25% (SC) Scheduled Caste and 22.5% General Category. Based on religion, it was found that the highest number of offenders, 88.8% came from the Hindu religion and the other 9.3% were Muslims, Followed by Sikhs, Christian, and Buddhism. The study found more differences between married offenders in this crime by unmarried offenders. The study of **Shaw and McKay in 1942**, in an urban area in Chicago, found that the rise in crimes due to social change is no longer reflecting nor accommodating. The majority of respondents come from a joint family system. The absence of appropriate resources and basic needs led to the rise of a single-family system, giving rise to various crimes in society and leading to the family's disorganization.

Diagram 1: Level of education of the offenders (in %)

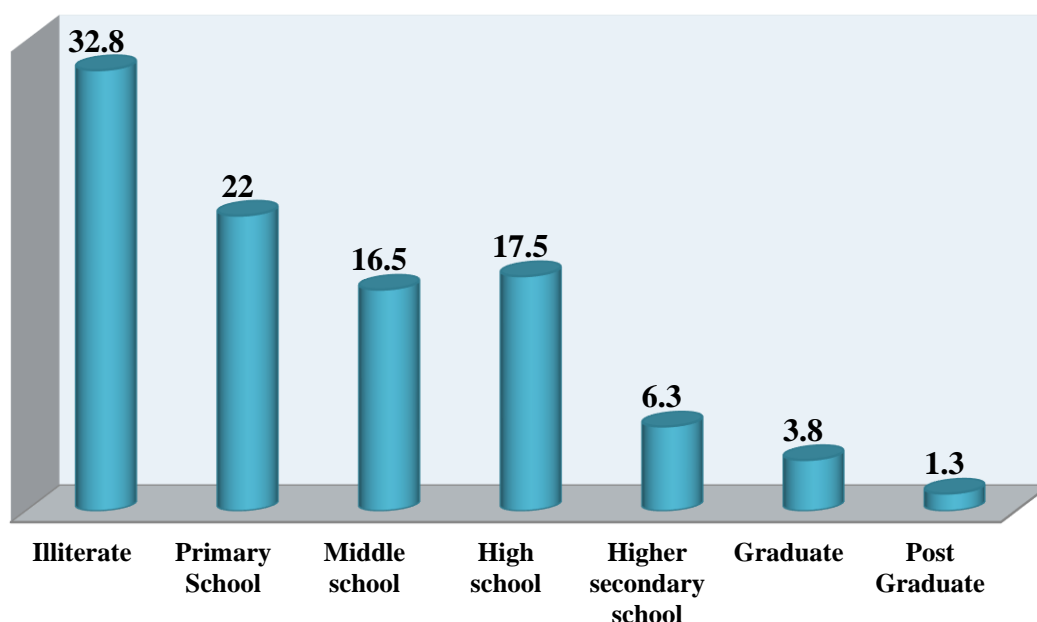


Diagram 1 reveals the educational qualification of the offenders. The highest number of offenders were 22% who received primary level of education, 16.5% middle school level, 17.5% high school, 6.3% higher secondary school, 3.8 per cent graduate, and 1.3% post-graduation level education, whereas 32.8% were found uneducated. Education helps in the mental and intellectual development of the person, and in the absence of this, personal development is not possible.

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Diagram 2: Offenders age at the time of crime (in %)

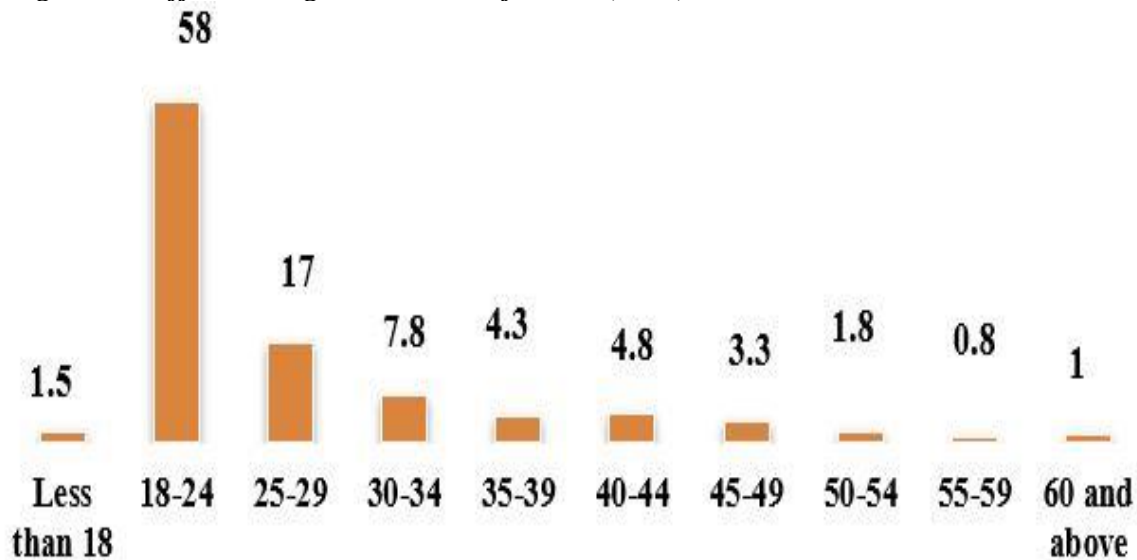
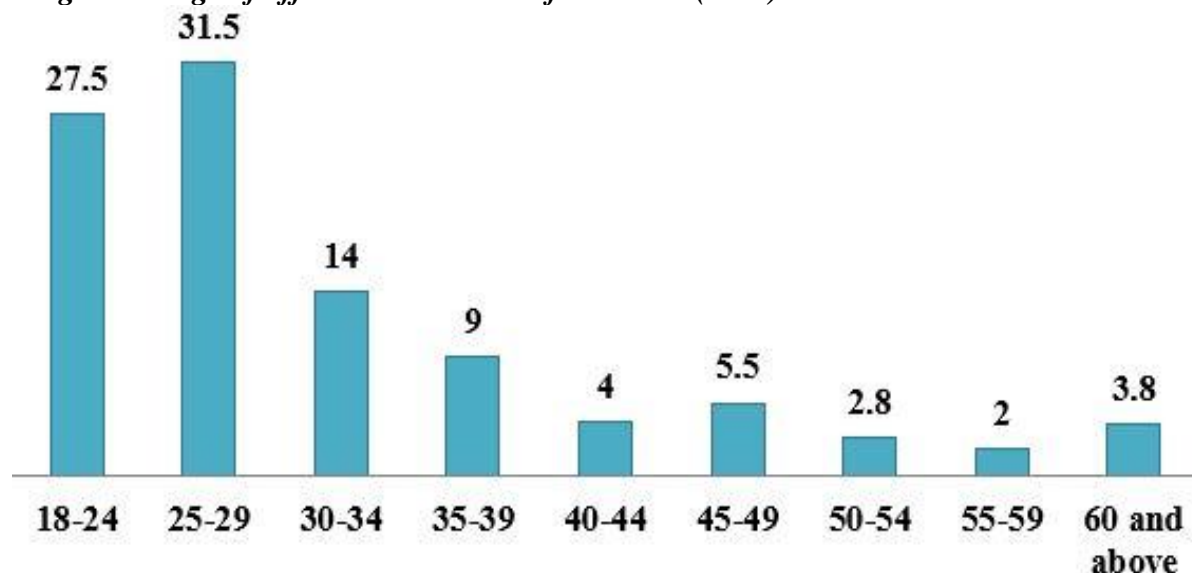


Diagram 2 explains the age of the offender at the time of the crime. In any criminal event, the conviction of the accused and the details of his age are essential for determining the punishment. According to the picture, the highest number of offenders (58%) are aged 18–24 years, and the lowest (1%) are aged 60 years and above. Some offenders (1.5%) were under the age of 18 at the time of the crime, but there are some offenders 25–29 years (17%), 30–34 years (7.8%), 35–39 years (4.3%), 40–44 years (4.8%) 45–49 years (3.3%) 50–54 (1.8%) and 55–59 years (0.8%) of age have also been found.

Diagram 3: Age of offender at the time of interview (in %)



In Diagram 3, it was found that this crime was committed by mostly youth 18-29 years age group. Whereas 3.8% of the age 60 and above which shows the seriousness of the crime. **Amir (1958 & 1960)** studied rape and rapist in Philadelphia. He found the median age of the Philadelphia rapist was 23, but the largest age group among rapists was the 15-19-year-olds. Amir found most rapists were unmarried. However, that could be due to their young age. He also found that the older rapist, the younger the victim. It could be that they easily victimized the victim (**Rawat, 2017**).

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Diagram 4: Use of mobile phone by offenders

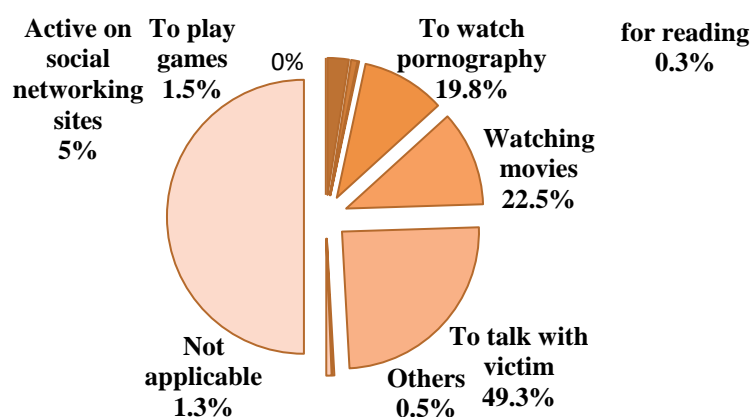


Diagram 4 is related to the use of mobile phones by offenders. The use of the mobile phone is one of the most important needs of the day, but due to its wrong uses, it also has negative effects. As shown in the diagram, nearly half (49.3%) of the offenders used mobile phones to talk to the victim of this crime, and the lowest, 0.3%, used mobile for study purposes. Apart from these, 22.5% of the offenders used to watch most of the movies on mobile, 19.8% of the offenders used to watch pornographic movies, 5% of the offenders were busy on social media, 1.5% was playing games on mobile, 1.3% is not applicable and 0.5% offenders who used mobile for other purposes.

Diagram 5: Use of mobile phone for watching pornographic movies (in %)

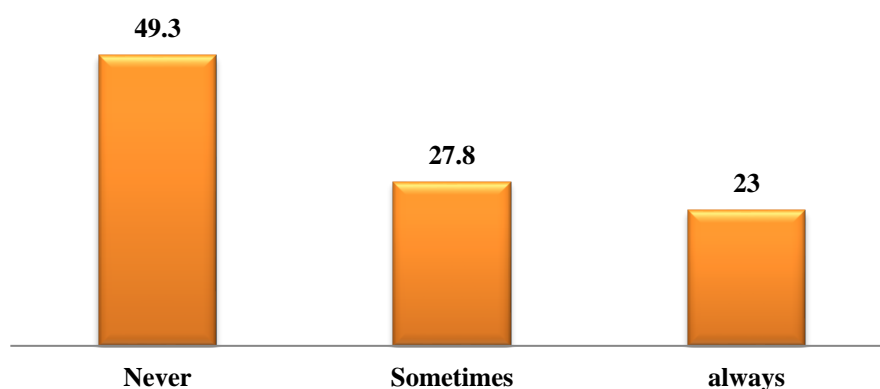


Diagram 5 shows that 23% of the offenders always used mobile phones to watch movies or literature related to pornographically. Another 27.8% of the offenders sometimes used this type of literature, and 49.3% of the offenders had never seen such literature on mobile phones. Pornography literature is easily available on the mobile phone through the Internet, due to which the study and viewing of them repeatedly for the fulfillment of sexual desires has a greater effect on their mental and physical health, which was done through the determination and measuring of sexual attitude.

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Table: 2. Offenders attitude towards pornography

S.No.	Statements Favorable	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Undecided (2)	Disagree (1)	Strongly Disagree (0)
2	Pornography is not obscene	01	12	133	37	217
3	Sexuality explicit literature should be openly available in the market	-	29	117	35	219
6	Pornography should be legally used for sex education	01	17	151	17	214
8	Pornographic female nudes are part of art	01	18	168	19	194
9	X-rated films should be screened in picture halls	01	51	134	26	188
11	Pornography gives creative sexual ideas	01	09	165	13	212
14	Pornographic advertisements for condoms are justified	204	16	155	24	01
15	Sexy advertisements are appealing	-	22	158	12	208
	Total Score	836	522	2362	183	1453

S.No.	Statements Unfavorable	Strongly Agree (0)	Agree (1)	Undecided (2)	Disagree (3)	Strongly Disagree (4)
1	Pornography dehumanizes men and women	-	181	142	19	58
4	Obscene nudes bring feelings of distaste	01	112	121	21	145
5	Government should ban all Pornographic magazines	01	261	119	02	17
7	Pornography perpetuates bad attitude towards women	02	104	131	12	151
10	Posters carrying obscene pictures should be strictly banned	03	224	128	05	40
12	Pornography corrupts and injures public morals	02	13	201	05	179
13	Film censor board should not pass sexually explicit scenes	-	228	133	08	31
16	Pornography is indecent representation of women	-	17	156	09	218
	Total Score	09	1140	2262	243	3356

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Table 2 shows that the offenders gave answers based on the favorable and unfavorable types of statements based on questions. In the study, the Sexual Attitude Scale was used by the researcher to find out the sexual attitudes toward the Pornography of the offenders. The favorable attitude towards Pornography by the statements of the offenders that they were agreed that Pornography is not obscene (3.5%), Sexuality explicit literature should be openly available in the market (7.24%), Pornography should be legally used for sex education (4.5%), Pornographic female nudes are part of art (4.75%), X-rated films should be screened in picture halls (13%), Pornography gives creative sexual ideas (2.5%), Pornographic advertisements for condoms are justified (55%), Sexy advertisements are appealing (5.5%).

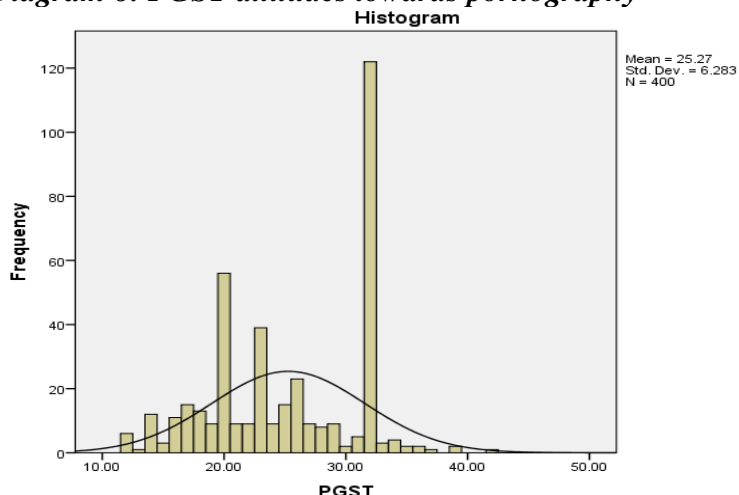
On the other hand, The unfavorable attitude towards Pornography by the statements of the offenders that they disagreed with Pornography dehumanizes men and women (19.25%), Obscene nudes bring feelings of distaste (41.5%), Government should ban all Pornographic magazines (4.75%), Pornography perpetuates bad attitude towards women (40.75%), Posters carrying obscene pictures should be strictly banned (11.25%), Pornography corrupts and injures public morals (46%), Film censor board should not pass sexually explicit scenes (9.75%), Pornography is an indecent representation of women (56.75%).

Table 2.1: Offenders level of sexual attitude

Sr. No.	Raw score Range of Sexuality Scale Pornography Attitude	Percent	Grade	Level of Sexual Attitude
1	53 & above	00	A	Extremely High
2	46 to 52	00	B	High
3	40 to 45	0.25	C	Above Average
4	30 to 39	35.75	D	Average
5	24 to 29	18.25	E	Below Average
6	17 to 23	37.5	F	Low
7	16 & below	8.25	G	Extremely Low
	Total =	100		

In table 2.1, 35.75% of the offenders had an average level of sexual attitude. It was found that 37.5% of the offenders had a low level of sexual attitude, and 8.25% of offenders had an extremely low level of sexual attitude, and only 0.25% had an above-average level of sexual attitude. Offenders' attitudes may be changed overtime period.

Diagram 6: PGST attitudes towards pornography



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In the histogram, it shows that the highest no. of offenders had an average pornography attitude. The mean score of the graph is 25.27 and probes that below-average attitudes toward pornography.

Table 3: Offender's age at the time of crime and Pornography attitude

		Age at the time of Crime	Pornography attitude (PGS)
Age at the time of Crime	Pearson Correlation	1	.213**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
PGS	Pearson Correlation	.213**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

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

The above table 3 shows that Offender's age at the time of crime and Pornography attitude is significantly related to each other. As it is the significance with .000 Level.

DISCUSSION

This work shows that most of the offenders belong to the Hindu religion. There are no more differences in General, OBC, SC/ST categories of the caste of offenders. 76.8% of offenders were residing in rural areas. Only 55.8% of the offenders were unmarried rest of the others belong to a married group. It shows that only sexual desire was not the main motive of this crime; it may be extra sexual desire; revenge, a live-in-relationship concept, the influence of pornographic effects, sudden attraction, and personal fun may be a sexual desire by the victims. The highest no. of offenders belongs to the less than 18 to 34 years of age group, i.e., 85% during the crime commission. Regarding sexual attitudes toward pornography, 55% of offenders were favor pornographic advertisements for condoms are justified. 56.75% of offenders were not favoring pornographic being an indecent representation of women.

CONCLUSION

The study found that offenders used to see pornographic materials on mobile phones prior to the crime. Under the influence of this type of pornographic literature, offenders who committed this crime may be one of the reasons, among others. In this research work, the researcher studied the attitudes of offenders towards pornography under the Sexual Attitudes Scale. Offenders' level of sexual attitude toward pornography was average in 1/3rd of the cases. From this, it is concluded that there has been a change in their behaviour due to the non-availability of mobile phones and pornographic material inside the prison. Changes can be brought in the behavior of criminals through various correctional programs being run in the prison. The vocational training, yoga, meditation and other activities change the attitude of the prisoners inside the prison.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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