

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LONELINESS AND CYBERSEXUAL BEHAVIOR AMONG MALE STUDENTS WHO LIVE IN BOARDING HOUSES IN THE VICINITY OF GUNDARMA UNIVERSITY.

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Abstract

Individuals residing in boarding houses frequently experience feelings of loneliness due to their distance from family members. This sentiment often prompts them to seek methods of mitigating these feelings, engaging in a variety of activities that are both social and personal in nature. One such method that has gained significant popularity is the utilization of the internet, which includes engaging in cybersex activities. The primary objective of this study is to ascertain the existence of a correlation between loneliness and cybersex behavior. The study's sample population consists of 63 students residing in boarding houses. The scale employed in this study was the Cybersex Behavior Scale (ISST), and the Loneliness Behavior Scale was utilized. The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling. The findings of the study indicated a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.024$ with a significance level of 0.855 ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that the hypothesis, which postulated the existence of a relationship between loneliness and cybersex behavior among students residing in boarding houses, was rejected.

Keywords: Loneliness, Cybersex Behavior, Student, Boarding House.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era, information and communication technology has undergone rapid development, thereby facilitating the accessibility of various aspects of human life, including the sexual realm. The advent of the internet has introduced a new dimension to the fulfillment of biological desires, offering individuals a diverse array of erotic content, including images, videos, and conversations, accessible from numerous websites. Individuals who partake in viewing, downloading, trading, or engaging in role-playing in adult fantasies in chat rooms can be classified as exhibiting cybersex behavior (Young, 2008).

A number of cybersex phenomena have been documented on a global scale. One notable example is Indonesia, where there have been numerous incidents of rape attributed to the widespread consumption of pornographic content and other forms of sexual activities on the internet. A case in point is that of a student who was implicated in a rape incident involving his own girlfriend, as the assailant had been sexually aroused by viewing pornographic videos (Kamarberita, 2014).

Since 2005, Indonesia has consistently ranked seventh among the top ten countries in terms of pornography site access. In 2007, Indonesia ranked fifth, and in 2009, it ranked third. This trend is concomitant with the rise in the number of Internet users in Indonesia, which reached 55.2 million in 2011 (Hidayat, 2012).

According to surveys, approximately 5 to 15 million individuals access the Internet on a daily basis, with an estimated growth rate of approximately 25% every three months (Cooper, 2000). Furthermore, a survey conducted by Computerworld states that Internet users spend an average of approximately 9.8 hours per week and

visit more than 200 million websites. In 2001, an estimated 94 million individuals were utilizing the Internet (Cooper, 2000).

Furthermore, Cooper conducted a survey in April 1998. The results indicated that approximately nine million users, constituting approximately 15% of the online population, accessed one of the top five adult websites (Cooper, 2000). However, it is important to note that this figure does not encompass a variety of other adult websites or alternative internet platforms that may be utilized for sexual activities, such as email, new groups, and chat rooms. Conversely, a separate sample of online users in August 1999 found that a total of 31% of the online population visited adult sites (Leone & Beilsmith in Cooper, 2000).

A review of the aforementioned survey results indicates that cybersex is a viable solution for individuals seeking to engage in various sexual fantasies without resorting to prostitution services (Young, 2008). The appeal of cybersex lies in its capacity to access a myriad of adult sites freely and anonymously. This practice enables individuals to engage in cybersex without the concern of disclosing their identity, potentially influencing their professional and personal lives (Cooper, Delmonico, Eric, & Mathy, 2004).

The factors that contribute to cybersex addiction in individuals can be categorized into several domains. Primarily, the ease of accessing the internet has played a significant role in the development of this addiction. The ability to seek pleasure without the concern of contracting sexually transmitted diseases has also been a contributing factor. Additionally, the absence of fear regarding the disclosure of personal information to the community has been a contributing factor. The affordability of these activities has also been a contributing factor, as has the ability to engage in fantasy without the concern of it being in conflict with community norms. (Adhiatma, 2010).

Preliminary research conducted through interviews indicates that the motivations for engaging in cybersex are primarily related to feelings of boredom, strong curiosity, addiction, and feelings of loneliness. Individuals experiencing these motivations often report feelings of loneliness due to their limited ability to adapt to the environment. Additionally, these individuals assert that engaging in cybersex can enhance their confidence in interacting with individuals in the virtual realm.

As posited by Yulianti (2009), the motivation behind cybersex behavior is multifaceted, encompassing factors such as feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem, and challenges in regulating sexual impulses. Additional sources have identified other motivations for engaging in cybersex, including the release of stress, depression, despair, anxiety, loneliness, and moral conflict.

One of the factors that has been identified as a contributing element to this phenomenon is the experience of loneliness. Loneliness is defined as an unpleasant experience that occurs when a person's network of social relationships is significantly lacking either quantitatively, such as having no friends or few desirable friends, or qualitatively, such as feeling that the relationships one has are less satisfying than expected (Taylor, Peplau, & Sears, 2006).

According to Russell (Taylor, Peplau & Sears, 2012), the experience of loneliness is influenced by three distinct aspects. First, personality, which is defined as a psychophysical system that determines the characteristics of behavior and thinking. Secondly, social desirability is defined as the desire for a social life that aligns with one's preferences and the social environment. Finally, depression is identified as a contributing factor to loneliness, arising from an insurmountable sense of self.

Meanwhile, Weiss (Sears, Freedman & Peplau, 1992) distinguishes two types of loneliness based on the loss of certain social provisions experienced by a person. Emotional loneliness arises from the absence of intimate affection figures, such as those given by parents to their children. Social loneliness occurs when individuals lose a sense of social integration or integration in a communication, which is usually given by friends or coworkers.

According to Sears, Freedman, and Peplau (1992), loneliness is influenced by multiple factors. Firstly, individuals with past experiences, such as the loss of parents due to death or divorce, exhibit heightened sensitivity to feelings of loneliness. Secondly, socioeconomic status has been identified as a contributing factor. Individuals who are married are less likely to experience loneliness, while those with low economic status are more likely to be lonely. The third factor is age. While societal norms often suggest that older age groups are more susceptible to loneliness, research by Parlee challenges this notion, demonstrating that the highest levels of loneliness are experienced by adolescents and young adults, while the lowest levels are observed among the elderly. The final factor to be considered is personality. Individuals experiencing loneliness have been observed to exhibit introverted and shy tendencies, as well as heightened self-consciousness and reduced assertiveness.

A notable demographic that is susceptible to feelings of loneliness is students residing in boarding houses. This sentiment is particularly pronounced among students who reside alone in the boarding house, distanced from their parents. Research conducted through interviews with students residing in boarding houses has revealed that feelings of loneliness are particularly pronounced during periods when students are not engaged in activities and are alone in their rooms, a condition that is exacerbated during holiday seasons. This heightened sense of loneliness can lead to the pursuit of activities to occupy their leisure time. One such pursuit is cybersex. This behavior, initiated by the pursuit of sexual content, often leads to the development of cybersex addiction.

The findings of research conducted by Shaw and Gant (2002) demonstrate a positive correlation between feelings of loneliness and problematic internet usage, including cybersex. Consistent with the findings of Shaw and Gant, Yoder, Virden, and Amin (2005) demonstrated a significant correlation between loneliness and cybersex behavior. Conversely, the phenomenon of cybersex behavior has also been found to be associated with feelings of loneliness. Additionally, Martin and Schumacher (2003) have asserted that loneliness is associated with internet users, including those engaging in cybersex. Individuals experiencing feelings of loneliness are more prone to developing internet-related problems, which can impact their daily functioning, including social interactions in real-life settings. The subjects in this study were male students residing in boarding houses.

The concept of "young adulthood" is a multifaceted one, encompassing various aspects of personal and societal development. According to Levinson (1986), young adulthood commences at 17 years of age and concludes at 45 years of age. This period is characterized by a surge in energy and optimal bodily function. However, it is also marked by frequent contradictions and stress. The transition from adolescence to young adulthood is characterized by a significant shift in identity and role expectations. This developmental stage is characterized by the initiation of major life decisions, such as choosing to engage in employment or to enter into matrimony (Santrock, 2011). A notable phenomenon that emerges during this period is the prevalence of cybersex among young adults who opt to engage in sexual activities while maintaining their chastity (Santrock, 2011). This phenomenon is particularly salient during this period of heightened sexual activity among individuals (Lefkowitz & Gillen, as cited in Santrock, 2011).

A study by Michael (Santrock, 2011) revealed that 54% of young adult males reported thinking about sex daily or multiple times per day. In contrast, 67% of females reported thinking about sex only a few times per week or month.

In light of the aforementioned discussion, it can be posited that a correlation exists between loneliness and cybersex behavior, particularly among a subset of males who engage in cybersex more frequently than females. Consequently, researchers are interested in conducting research on whether there is a relationship between loneliness and cybersex behavior in male students who reside in boarding houses around Gunadarma University. The hypothesis in this study is that there is a relationship between loneliness and cybersex behavior in male students who live in boarding houses around Gunadarma University.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study involved 63 male students using a non-probability sampling technique. The cybersex behavior variable was measured by the internet sex screening test (ISST) scale, which was adapted and modified from Delmonico and Miller (2003) based on aspects of cybersex behavior. This scale totaled 34 items with assessment criteria ranging from 1 (very unsuitable) to 5 (very suitable). Conversely, the loneliness variable was gauged employing a loneliness scale meticulously compiled by the researcher, drawing upon the aspects delineated by Bruno (2000). This scale encompassed a total of 41 items, with scoring criteria ranging from 1 (highly unsuitable) to 5 (highly suitable).

The researchers employed quantitative techniques, namely the Pearson Correlation analysis method, to analyze the data. They used SPSS version 16 for Windows for this purpose.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the cybersex behavior questionnaire, 34 items were assessed for their ability to discriminate between different behaviors. Of these items, 31 exhibited adequate item discrimination power, while the remaining 3 items were deemed invalid. The item correlation range for these items was from 0.321 to 0.692. Subsequently, a reliability test was conducted on the cybersex behavior scale, resulting in a reliability coefficient of 0.923. Concurrently, the loneliness questionnaire's 41 items were assessed, revealing 27 items with adequate item discrimination power and 14 items deemed invalid. The item correlation range for these items was from 0.363 to 0.755. Additionally, the reliability test results on the loneliness scale demonstrated a reliability coefficient of 0.933.

The present study employed bivariate correlation techniques in its hypothesis testing, with the results of the data analysis indicating a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.024$ and a significance value of 0.855 ($p > 0.05$) between loneliness and cybersex behavior.

These findings suggest that there is an absence of a relationship between loneliness and cybersex behavior among male students residing in boarding houses around Gunadarma University. Consequently, the hypothesis proposed in this study was rejected due to the significance value obtained being greater than 0.05. The results of the hypothesis test or correlation between the two variables can be observed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Results of Hypothesis Test

		Loneliness	Cybersex
Cybersex	Person Correlation	0.024	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.855	
	N	63	63
Loneliness	Person Correlation	1	0.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.855
	N	63	63

This contradicts research conducted by Yoder, Virden, and Amin (2005) and several previous studies that found loneliness to be related to cybersex behavior and may be a precipitating factor for cybersex behavior.

However, the results of this study align with those of previous research conducted by Hidayani (2015). Discrepancies in results can be attributed to cultural factors in Indonesia, where customs and traditions persist and individuals are compelled to adhere to cultural norms and values in their behavior and attitudes. According to Azwar (in Riyanti & Prabo, 1998), the culture that develops in an individual's environment has a significant influence on attitude formation. Culture exerts a strong influence on an individual's attitudes toward various aspects of life, often unconsciously. In addition to cultural influences, other pathological symptoms, including anxiety, depression, and obsessive-compulsive disorder, have been identified as contributing factors to cybersex behavior (Brand et al., in Schiebener, Laier, & Brand, 2015).

Religion exerts a significant influence on individual attitudes and behaviors. According to Azwar (in Riyanti & Pravo, 1998), educational institutions and religion, as a system, have the capacity to influence an individual's attitudes.

The findings reveal that students who experience feelings of loneliness exhibit average levels of cybersex behavior. However, the results indicate that loneliness is not the primary factor driving this behavior. Instead, other factors appear to be more significant influences on students' engagement in cybersex.

According to a survey conducted by Shaver and Rubeinstein (in Brehm, 2002), social activities, the establishment of social contacts, passive activities, and less constructive interlude activities are undertaken to alleviate feelings of loneliness.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate an absence of a correlation between loneliness and cybersex behavior among students residing in boarding houses surrounding Gunadarma University. This absence of a relationship may be attributable to variations in cultural, religious, and other pathological factors. The implementation of social activities, the cultivation of social connections, the engagement in passive activities such as television viewing, sleep, crying, and the engagement in less constructive interlude activities such as shopping, have been identified as strategies employed to mitigate feelings of loneliness.

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