

MESTRADO PSICOLOGIA DA JUSTIÇA E DESVIÂNCIA

EVIDENCE ON THE PREDICTING ROLE OF RAPE MYTH ENDORSEMENT ON HENTAI PORNOGRAPHY CONSUMPTION FREQUENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between hentai pornography consumption and

the endorsement of rape myths. Hentai, a genre of pornography with animated characters,

has gained popularity in Western cultures. Research suggests that pornography consumption

may desensitize individuals and perpetuate rape myths, contributing to sexually aggressive

behaviors. Rape myths encompass deeply ingrained cultural beliefs that often rationalize,

deny, or downplay the seriousness of sexual violence.

Eligible participants were heterosexual, aged 18 or older, and pursuing higher

education. The study involved 906 respondents (533 males, 373 females) who completed an

online survey featuring the Scale of Beliefs about Sexual Violence (ECVS) and assessed

hentai consumption frequency.

Results revealed a positive association between all five dimensions of rape myths

and hentai consumption frequency. Notably, "Stereotyped Representations of Rape" and

"False Invulnerability" exhibited the strongest associations.

These findings highlight how distorted beliefs about sexual violence influence media

choices and emphasize the role of hentai pornography in reinforcing these beliefs. The study

underscores the importance of media literacy and education in challenging harmful

narratives, emphasizing the need for further research in this area of pornography.

Keywords: hentai, pornography; rape myths; sexual violence; frequency.

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RESUMO

Este estudo explora a relação entre o consumo de pornografia hentai e o endosso de

mitos sobre o violação. O hentai, um tipo de pornografia com personagens animados, ganhou

popularidade nas culturas ocidentais. Pesquisas sugerem que o consumo de pornografia pode

dessensibilizar indivíduos e perpetuar mitos de violação, contribuindo para comportamentos

sexualmente agressivos. Mitos de violação englobam crenças culturais profundamente

enraizadas que frequentemente racionalizam, negam ou minimizam a gravidade da violência

sexual.

Os participantes elegíveis eram heterossexuais, maiores de 18 anos e estudantes do

ensino superior. O estudo envolveu 906 participantes (533 homens, 373 mulheres) que

completaram uma pesquisa online que continha a Escala de Crenças sobre Violência Sexual

(ECVS) e avaliava a frequência de consumo de hentai.

Os resultados revelaram uma associação positiva entre as cinco dimensões dos mitos

de violação e a frequência de consumo de hentai. Notavelmente, "Representações

Estereotipadas do Estupro" e "Falsa Invulnerabilidade" apresentaram as associações mais

fortes.

Estas descobertas destacam como crenças distorcidas sobre violência sexual

influenciam as escolhas de conteúdo media e enfatizam o papel da pornografia hentai em

reforçar essas crenças. O estudo ressalta a importância da alfabetização mediática e da

educação para desafiar narrativas prejudiciais, enfatizando a necessidade de mais pesquisas

nesta área da pornografia.

Palavras-chave: hentai, pornografia; mitos de violação; violência sexual; frequência.

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RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude explore la relation entre la consommation de la pornographie hentai et

l'adhésion aux mythes du viol. Le hentai, un genre de pornographie mettant en scène des

personnages animés, a gagné en popularité dans les cultures occidentales. Les recherches

suggèrent que la consommation de pornographie peut désensibiliser les individus et

perpétuer les mythes du viol, contribuant ainsi à des comportements sexuellement agressifs.

Les mythes du viol englobent des croyances culturelles profondément ancrées qui ont

souvent pour but de rationaliser, nier ou minimiser la gravité de la violence sexuelle.

Les participants éligibles étaient hétérosexuels, âgés de 18 ans ou plus, et

poursuivaient des études supérieures. L'étude a impliqué 906 répondants (533 hommes, 373

femmes) qui ont rempli une enquête en ligne comprenant l'échelle des croyances sur la

violence sexuelle (ECVS) et évalué la fréquence de la consommation de hentai.

Les résultats ont révélé une association positive entre les cinq dimensions des mythes

du viol et la fréquence de la consommation de hentai. Notamment, les dimensions

"Représentations stéréotypées du viol" et "Fausse invulnérabilité" ont montré les

associations les plus fortes.

Ces résultats mettent en lumière comment les croyances déformées sur la violence

sexuelle influencent les choix médiatiques et soulignent le rôle de la pornographie hentai

dans le renforcement de ces croyances. L'étude souligne l'importance de l'éducation aux

médias pour contester les récits nocifs et souligne la nécessité de poursuivre les recherches

dans ce domaine de la pornographie.

Mots-clés: hentai, pornographie, mythes du viol, violence sexuelle, fréquence.

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EVIDENCE ON THE PREDICTING ROLE OF HENTAI PORNOGRAPHY CONSUMPTION FREQUENCY AND RAPE MYTH ENDORSEMENT

Even though we know Hentai as a term that describes animated pornography, the word has been mistranslated from Japanese in Western cultures. Hentai is a short form for hentai seiyoku (変態性欲), which means "a perverse sexual desire". The word hentai solely means "transformation", "metamorphosis", or "abnormality". Accordingly, the word hentai became associated with animated pornography when anime and manga gained popularity in Western cultures in the 1990s. Even though its original meaning relates to sexual depravations and sexual perversions, this research aims to find if hentai, as animated pornography, is related to rape myths endorsement.

Sexual violence is a deeply concerning issue characterized by non-consensual, unwanted, and forced physical contact that inflicts harm upon its victims (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010). Experts in sexual violence emphasize that it constitutes a broad spectrum of behaviors, encompassing both physical and nonphysical acts (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010). This perspective challenges the prevailing notion that sexual violence is synonymous only with rape, defined as sexual intercourse or penetration without consent. Instead, it acknowledges that sexual violence takes various forms, including coercion, using force, and disregarding indicators that intimacy is not consensual (Berkowitz, 1992). Carvalho and Sá (2017) contend that any behavior that curtails an individual's free will should be a cause for concern. Sexual violence is a multifaceted issue that transcends a single act and encompasses a wide range of behaviors that violate personal autonomy and well-being. Recognizing the full scope of sexual violence is essential for effectively addressing and combatting this pervasive problem.

Before delving into the relationship between pornography and hentai, it is imperative to address the concept of market violence against women and the evolving portrayal of women in contemporary digital culture. This discussion is crucial for contextualizing the broader societal dynamics at play.

The term "market violence" has been introduced in a growing body of literature to illuminate how capitalism and market forces can perpetuate oppression and victimization, particularly affecting the most vulnerable individuals globally (McVey et al., 2020). In the realm of market-driven depictions of women, a concerning facet of structural violence emerges, one that aims to construct a compliant figure—a "willing slave," as described by Fırat (2018) — who serves as subservient to the market's interests (Fırat, 2018). These portrayals, often disseminated through media and digital platforms, contribute to sustaining dominant narratives

that may marginalize minority groups (McVey et al., 2020). Moreover, scholars have raised significant concerns regarding the impact of representational violence. While it may not inherently prompt individuals to become violent, it can foster a propensity among the targeted population to condone or support violent actions (Dholakia & Reyes, 2018). Fundamentally, this discussion underscores the complex interplay between market dynamics, gender portrayals, and media's potential influence on societal attitudes towards violence.

Humans have long been attracted to sexual imagery, and pornography has drastically changed its accessibility over the course of these past years, starting with magazines peep booths, to being sold as cassettes and DVDs, and then, the internet (Worthen, 2021, p.353). Now, the internet is home to most pornography. Similarweb (2020) shares that 10% of the 50 most-visited "adult" websites contain Hentai. As its popularity is rising, it is pertinent to study its impact on the population since there are no norms of reality and no rules of impossible or regulations of minimum age to represent people in those animes (Miles, 2020; Worthen, 2021). Hentai was created to overcome the legal obscenity regulation and cultural norms in Japan since it was obscene to show pubic hair and anal penetration, giving birth to many subgenres of pornography and fetishism such as tentacle erotica and content where children are designated as sexual objects (Worthen, 2021). Miles (2020) even describes a "third sexual orientation" designated by some Japanese activists as people who are only attracted to manga/anime fictional characters, disregarding the feeling of attraction to "...'real' flesh-and-blood people".

Ortega-Brena (2008) offers a profound analysis of hentai's erotic imagery, framing it as a form of sensorial voyeurism. This unique lens directs viewers' attention to the sensations that mirror real-world experiences despite the absence of any tangible reciprocity or physical connection between the depicted images and reality. In simpler terms, hentai immerses its audience in a realm devoid of physical interaction or transgressions into the corporeal world.

Within this distinct sphere, viewers are allowed to explore and engage in fantasies that often traverse explicit, unconventional, and socially taboo terrain. It becomes a realm where desires deemed dirty, abnormal, or illicit can be safely contemplated and experienced.

Of paramount significance is the role of sexuality and the portrayal of sexualized bodies within this construct. Ortega-Brena elucidates that it is an experience "...where sexuality and sexual bodies are commodified, meant to sensually and sexually arouse and yet remain unpossessed and unattainable" (Ortega-Brena, 2008).

Given the compelling evidence, it becomes evident that the large body of literature indicates men as the predominant perpetrators of sexual violence (Messman-Moore & Salim, 2019). Extensive research conducted over the years has consistently spotlighted the young

college male population as having a proclivity for harboring coercive sexual attitudes and exhibiting aggressive sexual behaviors towards women (Rapaport & Burkhart, 1984; Rapaport & Posey, 1991; Muehlenhard & Linton, 1987). It is crucial to note, however, that while males are often identified as perpetrators, a substantial body of research has also underscored their potential vulnerability as victims of sexual violence incidents (Berkowitz, 1992; Carvalho & Nobre, 2015; Zalewski et al., 2018). In this context, it is imperative to acknowledge that alongside male victims at the hands of other males, there exists a percentage of women who are also implicated as perpetrators. These multifaceted dynamic underscores the critical importance of conducting a comprehensive study encompassing both genders within the realm of sexual violence for this thesis.

Substantial evidence in the field suggests that the consumption of pornography may serve as a potential predictor of sexual violence within young populations (DeKeseredy & Corsianos, 2015; Rostad et al., 2019; Stanley et al., 2016; Ybarra & Thompson, 2018), with a particular focus on males (Rostad et al., 2019). A comprehensive body of research encompassing meta-analyses, cross-sectional investigations, longitudinal studies, and experimental inquiries consistently reports findings indicating that pornography consumption can lead to desensitization among its consumers. This desensitization, in turn, correlates with an increase in negative attitudes toward women and fosters the perpetuation of rape myths, physical assault, and coercive behaviors (Allen et al., 1995a, 1995b; Chan et al., 2011; Wright et al., 2015; Ybarra et al., 2014).

Rape Myths are described as being cultural beliefs that justify, deny or downplay sexual violence (Gerger et al., 2007). These types of myths are harmful to society because they may increase the tendency to commit rape and decrease reports of those crimes (Bohner et al., 2009; Frese et al. 2004). Research about sexual violence – especially among young male students – reports that the higher rape myth acceptance they have, the more tolerance is demonstrated for sexual harassment (Poerwandari et al., 2019) and the more likely they are to commit sexual assault (Martinez et al., 2018). Furthermore, research from Bohner et al. (2009) reports that having high levels of rape myth acceptance leads them to blame the victims and minimize their trauma, rejecting the idea of the perpetrator being the main agent of sexual violence. The prevailing body of literature overwhelmingly indicates a correlation between exposure to pornography and rape myth endorsement (Allen et al., 1995b; Bergen & Bogle, 2000; Flood, 2009; Oddone-Paolucci et al., 1997). This study aimed to explore the potential for rape myth endorsement to to account for the frequency of participants' pornography consumption, specifically focusing on hentai.

Given this historical context and the intricate relationship between rape myths, pornography consumption, and attitudes toward sexual aggression, this study aims to explore a unique perspective: Can the endorsement of rape myths be employed as a predictive factor for the frequency of pornography consumption among study participants? This inquiry seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics between these constructs and their potential implications in contemporary society. By examining the role of rape myths in shaping pornography consumption habits, this research sheds light on the mechanisms through which these harmful beliefs persist and influence behavior.

Furthermore, we will have five hypotheses within this study:

- H1- There is a positive relation between the dimension of Stereotyped Representations of Rape and the frequency of hentai consumption.
- H2- There is a positive relation between the dimension of Victim Provocation and the frequency of hentai consumption.
- H3- There is a positive relation between the dimension of Victim Consent and the frequency of hentai consumption.
- H4- There is a positive relation between the dimension of False Invulnerability and the frequency of hentai consumption.
- H5- There is a positive relation between the dimension of False Allegations and the frequency of hentai consumption.

Methodology

1. Participants

This study conducted research by collecting a total of 3,663 responses through an online questionnaire. To reach this participant pool, the study utilized social media, survey-sharing websites, and email channels for promotion. The promotional materials deliberately emphasized the study's focus on sexuality and hentai, while avoiding specific research goals. This strategic approach aimed to mitigate potential biases stemming from social desirability, ensuring the authenticity of participant responses. Importantly, all participants volunteered to take part in the study, and measures were implemented to safeguard the confidentiality of their data. No personally identifiable information was collected from the participants. Participants could access the survey online via the Qualtrics survey tool, and it typically required approximately 15 minutes for completion. In the end of the survey, participants were expressed

gratitude for their cooperation, but no debriefing was provided. Furthermore, no compensation was offered for their study participation.

Throughout the course of the survey, a notable number of participants dropped out, leading to the removal of 1,583 responses. These exclusions were primarily due to participants failing to provide relevant information concerning the study's key variables. To meet the study's inclusion criteria, participants had to identify as heterosexual, be currently enrolled in higher education as college students, be at least 18 years old, and provide informed consent. Consequently, an additional 50 participants who did not meet these criteria were excluded.

Participants with over 10% of missing values were eliminated, equivalent to excluding 18 participants, as substantial missing data can adversely affect study outcomes (Bennett, 2001). Additionally, three more participants were eliminated due to providing low-quality responses that included elements like internet trolling.

The final sample analyzed in this study consisted of 906 participants, accounting for approximately 59.9% of the initial pool of 1,512 participants. Participants who had never engaged with hental were excluded from the analysis. Within this final sample, 533 participants identified as male (58.8%), while 373 identified as female (41.2%). A significant portion of the sample reported being single (91.6%), and the majority of participants were pursuing bachelor's degrees (64.9%). The mean age of this sample is approximately 22 years (M= 22.14, SD= 5,12). See appendix A.

This study received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the University of Porto in 2022.

2. Measures

2.1. Hentai Pornography

Prior to presenting the questionnaire, it appeared a brief definition of what hentai is. The definition was "To use hentai means to intentionally view, read, or listen to (a) pictures, videos, or movies that depict nude animated characters, or animated characters having sex; or (b) written or audio material that depicts nude animated characters, or animated characters having sex". To assess the frequency of hentai pornography use, participants were asked, "in the last year (last 12 months), how often did you use hentai pornography?" They could select from 11 possible responses, ranging from "never" to "more than 7 times a week". This measurement was subsequently transformed into a dummy variable to use in mediation/regression models, with the 50th percentile as the cutoff (0 = "Once in the last year" to "Once a month"; 1 = "2-3 times a month" to "More than 7 times a week").

2.2. Sexual Violence Beliefs Scale (ECVS)

The Sexual Violence Beliefs Scale (ECVS) (Martins et al., 2012), is a vital tool for assessing individuals' attitudes and beliefs related to sexual violence. Comprising 30 items, this scale draws from diverse sources, including clinical observations of rape victims, rapists, and relevant literature on sexual violence myths and cultural beliefs. Participants rate their agreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert-type scale, with higher scores indicating greater tolerance of sexual violence.

The ECVS explores five dimensions of beliefs: Stereotyped Representations of Rape, the factor that delves into stereotypes and preconceived notions about rape; Victim Provocation, assesses beliefs regarding victim-blaming and the perception that victims may provoke or share responsibility for the violence they endure. Victim Consent, which evaluates beliefs about the victim's consent and reflects perceptions that may justify or excuse sexual violence; False Invulnerability, items within this dimension relate to false notions of invulnerability or a sense of safety from sexual violence, contributing to a tolerance of such behavior; False Allegations, the final factor, which explores beliefs about false allegations of sexual violence, potentially undermining the credibility of survivors. This scale provides quantitative insights into individuals' acceptance of sexual violence and specific belief dimensions contributing to their tolerance. Researchers utilize the ECVS to understand attitudes toward sexual violence, pinpointing cultural and social factors perpetuating it. It also aids in evaluating interventions promoting a respectful and non-violent view of sexuality (Martins et al., 2012). See appendix B.

3. Statistical approach

In order to test the relationship between the rape myths endorsement and the frequency of hentai pornography consumption within the past year, a logistic regression analysis was conducted. Five distinct models were created, one for each category within the ECVS. The dependent variable in each model was the frequency of hentai pornography consumption, which we transformed into a dummy variable indicating "High" or "Low" frequency.

Each of the five models examined a different predictor variable, corresponding to one of the ECVS categories: Stereotyped Representations of Rape, Victim Provocation, Victim Consent, Personal Invulnerability, and False Allegations. This approach allowed to assess the individual influence of these categories on the participants' hentai pornography consumption while considering the impact of rape myth endorsement.

Results

In this study exploring the link between the endorsement of rape myths across five dimensions and the frequency of hentai pornography consumption over the past year, significant associations were observed. The dimension "Stereotyped statistically Representations of Rape" exhibited a substantial effect on hental frequency (B = 0.82, SE = 0.15, Wald = 29.99, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .06$, p < .001), indicating that the odds of hentai frequency increased by a factor of 2.27 (95% CI [1.695, 3.051]) for each unit change in this dimension. Victim Provocation similarly displayed a statistically significant impact (B = 0.56, SE = 0.09, Wald = 37.83, Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.06$, p < 0.001), indicating that for each unit change in this dimension, the likelihood of hentai frequency increased by a factor of 1.75 (95% CI [1.463, 2.090]). The dimension of "Victim Consent" revealed a noteworthy connection with hentai frequency (B = 0.50, SE = 0.08, Wald = 44.53, Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.07$, p < 0.001), signifying that, for every unit change in this dimension, the likelihood of hentai frequency increased by a factor of 1.65 (95% CI [1.426, 1.916]). "False Invulnerability" displayed a substantial association with hentai frequency (B = 0.85, SE = 0.15, Wald = 31.23, Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.06$, p < 0.001), revealing that the odds of hentai frequency increased by a factor of 2.34 (95% CI [1.735, 3.147]) for each unit change in this dimension. Finally, a significant impact of "False Allegations" on hentai frequency was observed (B = 0.34, SE = 0.08, Wald = 19.56, Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.03$, p < 0.001), indicating that for each unit increase in this dimension, the odds of Hentai Frequency increased by a factor of 1.41 (95% CI [1.209, 1.636]). See table 1.

 Table 1.

 Logistic Regression Analysis Predicting Hentai Pornography Consumption

	В	SE	Wald	df	p	OR	Nagelkerke R ²
Stereotyped	0.82	0.10	29.99	1	<.001	2.27	.06
Representation of Rape							
Victim Provocation	0.56	0.09	37.83	1	<.001	1.75	.06
Victim Consent	0.50	0.08	44.53	1	<.001	1.65	.07
False Invulnerability	0.85	0.15	31.23	1	<.001	2.34	.06
False Allegations	0.34	0.08	19.56	1	<.001	1.41	.03

Note. $SE = standard\ error;\ df = degrees\ of\ freedom;\ Sig. = significance\ level.$

Discussion

Throughout history, rape myths have played a significant role in justifying and perpetuating sexual violence (Edwards et al., 2011). These myths encompass a range of false beliefs and stereotypes about sexual assault, victims, and perpetrators. They have been used to downplay or deny the existence of sexual violence, often by attributing blame to the victim. These myths create a distorted narrative that contributes to the persistence of sexual violence by shifting responsibility away from the perpetrators and onto the victims (Bohner et al., 2009; Frese et al., 2004).

Furthermore, extensive research, including meta-analyses and literature reviews, has consistently highlighted connections between pornography consumption, the acceptance of aggression, and violence towards women (Flood & Hamilton, 2003; Malamuth et al., 2000). In particular, the consumption of pornography has been associated with the reinforcement and perpetuation of rape myths, establishing a concerning link between pornography and attitudes toward sexual violence (Foubert et al., 2011). The explicit and often degrading nature of some pornography can contribute to the normalization of aggressive behaviors, reinforcing harmful stereotypes about gender and sexuality.

In the context of this analysis, which examines the relationship between the endorsement of rape myths across five dimensions and the frequency of hentai pornography consumption over the past year, several statistically significant associations were identified. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of each dimension on hentai frequency, it is useful to convert the odds ratios to percentages. This conversion provides insights into how each dimension influences the likelihood of frequent hentai pornography consumption among participants.

The dimension "Stereotyped Representations of Rape" is a critical component of a belief system that seeks to justify or downplay sexual violence. It does so by referring to a prior sexual relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, as well as the absence of physical violence during the sexual act (Martins et al., 2012) (e.g., "If sexual violence isn't used, you can't say the sexual act was forced."; "If a person who was raped has an «indecent?» sexual behavior, then the sexual aggression is less serious."). Individuals who endorse these stereotypes are more likely to consume hentai pornography frequently, as it aligns with their beliefs. This dimension had a substantial impact, with individuals endorsing these stereotypes being 127.4% more likely to consume hentai pornography frequently for each unit change in this dimension. This finding

highlights how distorted beliefs about the nature of sexual violence can influence media consumption choices.

The second dimension involves beliefs that downplay sexual violence by suggesting that both perpetrators and victims are different from the general population, leading to a sense of "false invulnerability" (Martins et al., 2012) (e.g., "If a person who was raped wasn't a virgin anymore, the rape is less serious"; "Only people that can't get a partner commit sexual aggression"). Those who hold these beliefs are more likely to engage in frequent hentai consumption, as hentai content may reinforce or gratify these beliefs. Individuals endorsing "False Invulnerability" beliefs were 133.7% more likely to be frequent consumers of hentai pornography for each unit change in this dimension. This dimension underscores how distorted perceptions of invulnerability can drive media consumption choices that align with these beliefs.

The dimension "Victim Provocation" suggests that violence can be justified based on the victim's behavior, such as their sexual history or exposure to risky situations (Martins et al., 2012) (e.g., "If a person gets raped while they're under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, then at least a part of the blame is theirs."; "If a person exposes themselves (for example, going out at night alone or going to places with a bad reputation), it's their fault if they're a victim of sexual aggression."). Beliefs in this dimension translate to a 74.9% higher likelihood of engaging in frequent hentai pornography consumption for each unit change. This dimension highlights how victim-blaming attitudes can influence media consumption choices.

The dimension "Victim Consent" forms a framework of beliefs that provide legitimacy to sexual violence by proposing that the victim willingly engages in or initiates sexual interactions, expressing desire for and deriving pleasure from them (Martins et al., 2012) (e.g., "When women say no (to sex), a lot of times, they want to say yes."; "Some people secretly want to be raped and would like for it to happen."). Individuals endorsing such beliefs are 65.3% more likely to consume hentai pornography frequently for every unit change in this dimension. This dimension underscores how distorted views of consent and desire can influence media consumption choices that align with these beliefs.

The dimension "False Allegations" fosters the idea that violence can be downplayed or diminished by disavowing the existence of sexual violence and interpreting complaints of rape or attempted rape as indications of post-event regret or a desire for retaliation (Martins et al., 2012) (e.g., "Most rape charges are false or exaggerated."; "A lot of rape charges are made up when people regret what they've done."). Participants endorsing in those beliefs were 40.6% more likely to consume hentai pornography frequently for each unit increase in this dimension.

This dimension highlights how skepticism and denial of sexual violence can influence media consumption choices.

While these last three dimensions exhibited a somewhat lesser impact on hentai consumption frequency, they remain significant. These findings indicate a significant relationship between the endorsement of rape myths and the frequency of hentai pornography consumption. Participants who hold beliefs aligned with rape myths are more likely to consume hentai pornography at a higher frequency. This suggests that individuals may seek out hentai pornography to fulfill and reinforce their pre-existing beliefs.

It's important to highlight that hentai pornography is a genre known for its relative lack of boundaries and constraints compared to other forms of adult content. It offers a platform for exploring a wide range of themes without being bound by concerns related to age representation, societal norms, or legal restrictions (Ortega-Brena, 2008). This characteristic may make hentai particularly appealing to individuals who harbor beliefs aligned with rape myths, as it allows them to freely indulge in their fantasies and further solidify their perspectives. This underscores the intricate interplay between media consumption, distorted beliefs, and attitudes toward sexual violence. This underscores the complex interplay between media consumption, distorted beliefs, and attitudes toward sexual violence. Moreover, it's worth noting that rape myths can be especially conducive to individuals with sexually aggressive tendencies. Research suggests that individuals who consume pornography may be more inclined toward sexual aggression, and the limitless nature of hentai can magnify this effect, where, usually, female characters are portrayed as sexual objects (Burnay et al., 2019; Lynch et al., 2016) shedding light to the way women are portrayed in the market (McVey et al., 2020), This contributes to the objectification of women and the hypersexualization of characters, including those with childlike appearances (Ortega-Brena, 2008).

Furthermore, it's crucial to acknowledge that hentai pornography often targets young audiences, exacerbating the potential for distortion in their belief systems. The harm this inflicts upon society is immeasurable, as noted by Spišák (2015) and Vangeel et al. (2020). It compounds the already alarming prevalence of rape myths and fosters harmful attitudes toward sexual violence among impressionable individuals. This underscores the urgent need to address the impact of hentai pornography on young people and society (Spišák, 2015, Vangeel et al., 2020).

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the alarming connection between the endorsement of rape myths and the consumption of hentai pornography. It highlights how distorted beliefs about sexual violence and victim-blaming attitudes can influence media

choices. By better understanding this relationship, we can work towards addressing the harmful impact of rape myths on individuals and society. Additionally, it emphasizes the need for media literacy and education to promote critical thinking and challenge harmful beliefs that perpetuate sexual violence.

Limitations

Nonetheless, it is essential to acknowledge the constraints inherent to any study. Firstly, the issue of social desirability warrants consideration. Despite efforts to mitigate this bias in survey responses, the sensitive nature of sexual aggression may still have influenced participants' answers. Future research might benefit from incorporating a dedicated social desirability measure to address this concern. Voluntary response sampling may introduce self-selection bias, attracting individuals with stronger opinions and potentially distorting representation. Additionally, the use of self-reported measures could make the data vulnerable to reporting bias (Gomes et al., 2019).

Another limitation pertains to the inability to conclusively attribute the influence of the five dimensions of rape myths solely to the frequency of hentai consumption, as opposed to pornography consumption in general. Subsequent studies could aim to replicate these findings by examining the frequency of pornography consumption as a whole. Furthermore, potential gender-based differences that may exist have not been thoroughly explored in this study. Future investigations should take into account such variations.

Lastly, given the sample consisted exclusively of heterosexual individuals, it is imperative that future research on these impacts utilizes a validated scale within the LGBTQIA+ community to ensure comprehensive inclusivity and a broader understanding of the subject matter.

Conclusion

In summary, this study has illuminated the complex interplay between rape myths, pornography consumption, and sexual aggression. It offers valuable insights into the distinct dimensions of rape myths that wield a considerable impact on the frequency of hentai pornography consumption. These findings emphasize the critical role of confronting and dismantling rape myths as a crucial component in the ongoing struggle against sexual violence and in fostering more positive societal attitudes and behaviors.

Furthermore, the research underscores the pressing need for additional studies that delve deeper into the intricate connections among media consumption, belief structures, and behaviors associated with sexual aggression. This study represents a vital step toward comprehending these multifaceted dynamics, but it is just one piece of a larger puzzle. By acknowledging and confronting these issues head-on, we can strive for a society that is better informed, more empathetic, and ultimately safer for all its members.

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Appendixes

Appendix A $Participant \ Characteristics \ (n=906)$

Variable	n	%
Gender		
Male	533	58.8
Female	373	41.2
Age (M/SD)	22.15 (5.12)	
Marital Status		
Single	830	91.8
Married	26	2.9
Civil Union	40	4.4
Separated	2	0.2
Divorced	2	0.2
Other	4	0.4
Education		
Bachelor's Degree	588	65.2
Master's Degree	253	28.1
Doctorate Degree	31	3.4
Other	30	3.3

Appendix BDescriptive statistics for ECVS items;

Item	M	SD
Offenders are, almost always, acquaintances of the victim. [Os agressores são, quase sempre, desconhecidos da vítima.]	2.19	1.026
If a person has already had sexual relations with the other, then you can't talk about sexual violence. [Se uma pessoa já tiver mantido antes relações sexuais com a outra, então não se pode falar de violência sexual.]	1.16	0.596
Only «indecent» people are victims of sexual aggression. [Só são vítimas de agressões sexuais as pessoas «indecentes».]	1.17	0.647
Only people that can't get a partner commit sexual aggression. [Só as pessoas que não conseguem arranjar parceiros(as) é que cometem agressões sexuais.]	1.35	0.798
People say they were victims of sexual violence when they want to get revenge on someone. [As pessoas dizem que foram vítimas de violência sexual quando se querem vingar de alguém.]	2.02	1.044
Forcing your partner (husband/wife) to have sexual relations isn't rape. [Forçar o(a) cônjuge (marido/esposa) a ter relações sexuais não é violação.]	1.26	.825

Item	M	SD
There are people that deserve to be raped. [Há pessoas que merecem ser violadas.]	1.28	0.862
There comes a point where no man or woman is made of steel. [Há um certo ponto a partir do qual nenhum homem/nenhuma mulher é de ferro.]	2.59	1.651
If sexual violence isn't used, you can't say the sexual act was forced. [Se não for usada violência física, não se pode dizer que o acto sexual foi forçado.]	1.27	0.752
When women say no (to sex), a lot of times, they want to say yes. [Quando as mulheres dizem não (ao sexo), muitas vezes, querem dizer sim.]	1.44	0.895
If a person sexually provokes another, they can't complain after that they were raped. [Se uma pessoa provoca sexualmente outra, não se pode depois queixar de ter sido violada.]	1.40	0.879
Most rape charges are false or exaggerated. [A maioria das queixas de violação é falsa ou exagerada.]	1.64	0.919
If a person exposes themselves (for example, going out at night alone or going to places with a bad reputation), it's their fault if they're a victim of sexual aggression. [Se uma pessoa se expõe (por exemplo, saindo à noite sozinha ou frequentando locais com má reputação), a culpa é sua, se for vítima de uma agressão sexual.]	1.34	0.826

Item	M	SD
A lot of rape charges are made up when people's partners express that they want to end the relationship. [Muitas queixas de violação são inventadas quando os(as) companheiros(as) expressam o desejo de terminar a relação.]	1.86	1.062
Sexual offenders are, in their majority, people with an appearance different from others. [Os agressores sexuais, na sua maioria, são pessoas com um aspecto diferente das outras.]	1.50	0.903
If a person doesn't physically assault or hurt the other, then the sexual aggression is less serious. [Se uma pessoa não agredir fisicamente nem magoar a outra, então, a agressão sexual é pouco grave.]	1.36	0.836
Some people experience sexual pleasure when they get raped. [Algumas pessoas têm prazer sexual quando são violadas.]	2.41	1.316
Some people secretly want to be raped and would like for it to happen. [Algumas pessoas têm o desejo secreto de ser violadas e gostariam que tal acontecesse.]	2.67	1.297
There are women that like when men use a little force when convincing them to have sex. [Há mulheres que gostam que os homens usem um pouco de força para as convencer a ter sexo.]	2.79	1.259

Item	M	SD
A lot of rape charges are made up when people regret what they've done. [Muitas queixas de violação são inventadas quando as pessoas se arrependem do que fizeram.]	2.08	1.204
If a person who was raped has an «indecent?» sexual behavior, then the sexual aggression is less serious. [Se uma pessoa violada tiver um comportamento sexual «indecente», então, a agressão sexual é menos grave.]	1.26	0.727
Forcing your boyfriend/girlfriend to have sexual relations isn't rape. [Forçar o(a) namorado(a) a ter relações sexuais não é violação.]	1.18	0.688
A rape charge that is made days after the act probably isn't true. [Uma queixa de violação feita dias após o acto, provavelmente, não é verdadeira.]	1.23	0.688
A person pressuring another to have sexual relations can be a way to express love and involvement. [Uma pessoa pressionar a outra para ter relações sexuais pode ser uma forma de expressar amor e envolvimento.]	1.51	0.971
If a person doesn't physically resist, then you can't say they were a victim of sexual aggression. [Se uma pessoa não resistir fisicamente, então, não se pode dizer que foi vítima de agressão sexual.]	1.29	0.789

Item	M	SD
"Those who walk in the rain, get wet", those who don't want to be sexually assaulted should avoid exposing themselves to the risk. ["Quem anda à chuva molhase", quem não quiser ser agredido sexualmente deve evitar expor-se ao risco.]	1.76	1.268
If a person accepts an act with a sexual nature with another (i.e., cuddles, kisses) then that means they want to have sexual relations with that person. [Se uma pessoa aceita algum acto de natureza sexual com outra (e.g., carícias, beijos), então, isso quer dizer que ela aceita ter relações sexuais com essa pessoa.]	1.35	0.883
If a person accepts an act with a sexual nature with another (i.e., cuddles, kisses) then that means they want to have sexual relations with that person. [Se uma pessoa aceita algum acto de natureza sexual com outra (e.g., carícias, beijos), então, isso quer dizer que ela aceita ter relações sexuais com essa pessoa.]	1.29	0.759
If a person really doesn't want to get raped, they can defend themselves. [Se uma pessoa não quiser mesmo ser violada, ela consegue defender-se.]	1.26	0.768
If a person who was raped wasn't a virgin anymore, the rape is less serious. [Se uma pessoa violada já não era virgem, a violação é menos grave.]	1.14	0.622