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### "I think it's biblically wrong, but temptation gets the better of me": A survey on out-of-control sexual behavior in a Christian cohort of men in the UK

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# "I think it's biblically wrong, but temptation gets the better of me": A survey on out-of-control sexual behavior in a Christian cohort of men in the UK

## Abstract

The current study aims to better understand influences on men within the UK Christian community on their engagement with pornography and prostitution. The authors utilized the Carnes (2012) survey to examine the landscape of sexual knowledge and behaviours, and to identify symptoms, and the propensity towards, "out-of-control sexual behavior" among participants. Data from a survey sent to the Christian community through church networks and word of mouth was used for this study. Of the 491 men who participated, the majority (94%, 460) described their personal Christian faith as "strong." Despite the Christian faith community's moral code of conduct, the survey results showed a gap in self-awareness and understanding of members' thoughts, beliefs, and conduct. Although almost three-quarters (74%, 361) of participants viewed pornography negatively, nearly half (45%, 220) admitted to using pornography at least occasionally. Many participants (31%, 152) indicated that they learned about sex through watching pornography. The survey also revealed that 10% (51) of participants had engaged with a prostitute for sex. Additionally, 21% (105) of participants believed that erotic massage was not prostitution. Using the Carnes (2012) framework, the survey found that over half of the survey participants (53%, 258) had a propensity towards "out-of-control sexual behavior". In relation to the church, more than half (55%, 268) of participants knew other Christian men who used pornography, and 25% (125) feared church discipline if they shared their use of pornography and prostitution. These results suggest that more programs and information are needed within the Christian community to build a culture of trust and accountability among members regarding sexual issues.

## Keywords

UK, pornography, sexual behaviour, PATHOS, church engagement

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## **“I THINK IT'S BIBLICALLY WRONG, BUT TEMPTATION GETS THE BETTER OF ME”: A SURVEY ON OUT-OF-CONTROL SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN A CHRISTIAN COHORT OF MEN IN THE UK**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The current study aims to better understand influences on men within the UK Christian community on their engagement with pornography and prostitution. The authors utilized the Carnes (2012) survey to examine the landscape of sexual knowledge and behaviours, and to identify symptoms, and the propensity towards, “out-of-control sexual behavior” among participants. Data from a survey sent to the Christian community through church networks and word of mouth was used for this study. Of the 491 men who participated, the majority (94%, 460) described their personal Christian faith as “strong.” Despite the Christian faith community's moral code of conduct, the survey results showed a gap in self-awareness and understanding of members' thoughts, beliefs, and conduct. Although almost three-quarters (74%, 361) of participants viewed pornography negatively, nearly half (45%, 220) admitted to using pornography at least occasionally. Many participants (31%, 152) indicated that they learned about sex through watching pornography. The survey also revealed that 10% (51) of participants had engaged with a prostitute for sex. Additionally, 21% (105) of participants believed that erotic massage was not prostitution. Using the Carnes (2012) framework, the survey found that over half of the survey participants (53%, 258) had a propensity towards “out-of-control sexual behavior”. In relation to the church, more than half (55%, 268) of participants knew other Christian men who used pornography, and 25% (125) feared church discipline if they shared their use of pornography and prostitution. These results suggest that more programs and information are needed within the Christian community to build a culture of trust and accountability among members regarding sexual issues.

### **KEYWORDS**

UK, Christian, men, pornography, prostitution, community

**T**HE CHRISTIAN FAITH COMMUNITY presents itself as a group that adheres to a moral code of conduct based on the teachings and principles found in the Christian Bible. Many biblical teachings centre around a person's relational behaviour, first toward God and then towards others.

Jesus is quoted in the Bible as saying: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest

commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself." (Matthew 22: 37-39, New International Version-NIV)

Moral conduct and behavior are central themes within the Christian faith, with sexual purity in both action and thought being emphasized. The Bible states: "Flee from sexual immorality..." (1 Corinthians 6:18, NIV) and "But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28, NIV).

Despite most Christian denominations' emphasis on upholding biblical teachings, there seems to be a discrepancy in the Christian community's self-awareness and understanding of its members' thinking, beliefs, and conduct, particularly in relation to prostitution and pornography.

This discrepancy can be described in the church as a "sanctification gap" between what Christian men aspire or believe Christian behaviour should be, and how individuals live out their daily lives, and is similar to the theory of cognitive dissonance in psychology (i.e. a mismatch between who we think/wish ourselves to be and our actions; Harmon-Jones & Mills 2019). To close this gap, a foundational step is for Christian men to be aware of the link between pornography, sexual exploitation, and trafficking. It is important to challenge men to understand that pornography can involve exploited people (Thompson, 2012).

The current study aims to better understand the influences on men within the UK Christian community on their engagement with pornography and prostitution. Using survey results gathered from Christian communities across the UK, This paper outlines key findings from the survey results and their implications.

## UK LAW AND PROSTITUTION

Despite sections of UK law aimed at reducing prostitution (such as The Sexual Offences Act 1956), the use of prostituted people between "consenting adults" for money remains legal in the UK. Even before the sweeping 2016/17 House of Commons inquiry into prostitution, various NGOs and campaign groups had published reports and research on prostitution about those, who were buying sex and the impact of prostitution within the UK. One of the first of these reports, titled *Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls* (H. M. Government, 2010), was published by Her Majesty's Government in response to the first violence against women and girls strategy introduced by the office in 2009. The strategy was put in place in response to over 1 million female victims of abuse reported in England and Wales that year. Their vision was "...a society in which no woman or girl has to live in fear of violence" (H. M. Government, 2010, p5). To achieve this vision, they outlined a strategy to:

- prevent such violence from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it;
- provide adequate levels of support where violence does occur;
- work in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families; and
- take action to reduce the risk to women and girls who are victims of these crimes and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice. (H. M. Government, 2010).

In 2014, the "End Violence Against Women Coalition" published a response to and review of the 2010 report, stating that:

The Call to End VAWG provides a much-needed and welcome framework for Westminster policy and action on VAWG. However...it does not include trafficking, and there is little reference to prostitution or to sexual harassment. (EVAWG, 2014, p. 3)

In 2017, the Home Affairs Committee completed its first inquiry on people in the sex trade, titled the "Prostitution, House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, Third Report of Session, 2016-2017." The report stated that upon starting the inquiry, officials quickly realized that a far more comprehensive spectrum of work was required than initially suggested.

The challenge of making a rational assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the range of models is compounded by the lack of robust evidence, which arises at least in part from the covert nature of prostitution and the understandable unwillingness of those involved to identify themselves as sellers or buyers of sex. (House of Commons, 2016, p. 6)

The report concluded that further research and consideration were necessary to weigh the pros and cons of legislative steps, such as a sex buyers law, which several European countries have implemented to make it illegal for people to buy sex, rather than unlawful to sell sex. The report recommended that no recommendations be submitted to the UK government until after the necessary research was completed.

The "Prostitution" report found that approximately 11% of British men aged 16-74 had paid for sex on at least one occasion (House of Commons, 2016). This represents an increase in the rate of sex buyers in the UK from 2000 to 2016 when the figure was 4% (Ward et al., 2005).

In 2018, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Prostitution and the global sex trade launched an inquiry called "Behind Closed Doors" (APPG, 2018) in response to concerns about "pop-up" brothels (temporary brothels in residential properties) and the scale and nature of organized sexual exploitation in the UK. The inquiry sought to establish the scale and nature of the problem, who is involved, and what actions are required to combat it (APPG, 2018). The report presented arguments that suggested that escort and adult services websites represent the most significant enabler of sexual exploitation in the UK (APPG, 2018, p.2, quoting Joint Slavery and Trafficking Analysis Centre, 2017). When presenting findings regarding the perception of those who used prostituted people, the report stated:

In the vast majority of cases, males paying for sex will give no thought to where the woman has come from or what circumstances have led her into prostitution. (APPG, 2018, p.3, quoting Detective Constable Julie Currie, Modern Slavery and Kidnap Unit, Metropolitan Police Service)

With regards to the responsibility of online website hosts to provide safeguarding features, the current "Online Safety Bill" (His Majesty's Government United Kingdom, 2022) introduces new rules for firms which:

Host user-generated content, i.e. those which allow users to post their own content online or interact with each other, and for search engines, which focus on minimizing the presentation of harmful search results to users, especially children. Those platforms which fail to protect people will need to answer to the regulator and could face fines of up to ten per cent of their

revenues or, in the most serious cases, being blocked. (His Majesty's Government United Kingdom, 2022)

The reports above suggest that the scale of prostitution use in the UK, the means by which sex is advertised and purchased in the UK, and the level of organized criminal activity within prostitution in the UK, is still largely unknown. Furthermore, opinion seems to be divided on how to legislate prostitution to better support people who have suffered abuse due to prostitution or have been sexually exploited.

## RESEARCH ON MEN WHO BUY SEX

Reviewing the research on who buys sex in the UK, in a 2005 article titled "Who pays for Sex? An analysis of the increasing prevalence of female commercial sex contacts among men in Britain," the authors used probability analysis on data from the National Surveys of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (NATSAL) in the UK to explore the relationship between paying for sex and several sociodemographic, sexual, and health behaviour factors. Results showed that the purchase of heterosexual sex doubled among the UK population from 2% in 1990 to 4% in 2000 (Ward et al., 2005).

Later, in 2009, a report titled "Men who buy sex: Who they buy and what they know" (Farley et al., 2009) was published, presenting findings from research conducted on 103 men in London who described their use of trafficked and non-trafficked women in prostitution and their awareness of coercion and violence. In addition to descriptive information about the sample's responses, the report found a significant correlation between sex buying among men and an acceptance of myths regarding rape and prostitution (Farley et al., 2009).

A recent article, "Expatriate Christians in Cambodia Face Sexual Challenges: Potential Strategies to Help" (Miles et al. 2021), reported research findings on the use of pornography, erotic massage, and sex buying among Christian men. The article also reported on the experiences of sexual harassment among expatriate Christian men and women involved in the overseas mission field in Cambodia. The authors presented three key reasons for undertaking this project:

- The need for the church to serve as a good role model.
- The need for church member care in this area.
- The need to address the demand for sexual exploitation by starting with ourselves (Miles et al., 2021).

The global literature has consistently described pornography as problematic and/or "addictive" (Duffy et al., 2016; Gola et al., 2016; Harkness et al., 2015; Twohig et al., 2009). Further research has shown a positive relationship between religiousness and pornography-viewing behaviour (Sniewski et al., 2017). Studies focused on Christian men have found similar results (Bradley et al., 2016), with some showing a disproportionate number of Christian men feeling compulsive in their use of pornography compared to their non-Christian counterparts (Levert, 2007). However, the men's usual support systems do not see the use of porn as a problem, and many men do not seek help despite an awareness of the potential harm (White & Kimball, 2009).

The role of Christianity has been seen as both a challenge and a benefit in combating out-of-control sexual behaviour. The out-of-control behaviour counters the identities and teachings of the Christian faith, causing distress and isolation in men's lives (Chisholm & Gall, 2015; Twohig et al., 2009). In their 2009 study, Twohig and colleagues found that 66% of young adult men in their sample reported concerns

about their pornography-viewing behaviour being inconsistent with their religious beliefs. However, the community and care of the faith can also serve as a refuge for Christian men (Chisholm & Gall, 2015). Despite calls for a more standardized diagnostic approach, limited information exists on the views of Christian men with out-of-control sexual behaviour and/or problematic pornography use (Sniewski et al., 2017).

Regarding the development of language that could be more helpful in supporting people who struggle with out-of-control sexual behaviour, Douglas Braun-Harvey and Michael Vigorito (2015) argue that speaking about out-of-control sexual behaviour is a more useful term than terms like sexual addiction or psychosexual disorder. Jay Stringer (2023), the author of the popular book *Unwanted: How Sexual Brokenness Reveals Our Way to Healing*, suggests that:

Most clinicians are moving away from an addiction/pathology-based model for working with sexual problems....one [sexual addiction model] seems to pathologize nearly everything, and the other [out-of-control behaviour model] rarely invites individuals to the process of growth.

One of the authors' primary aims is to promote growth through restorative support for those who face such behavioural challenges; therefore, this paper will adopt the term out-of-control sexual behaviour throughout its presentation of findings.

## **METHODS**

This section presents the methods, as well as the challenges and limitations, of the survey undertaken.

The survey questions aimed to provide insight into participants' sexual education, use and thoughts around pornography, sexual behaviour, and use of prostitution. As the survey was aimed at the Christian community, participants were also asked how leadership within their Christian communities provided suitable sex education and supported those with out-of-control sexual behaviour in the community.

One goal of this research was to gain insight into the sexual thoughts and practices of the participants. To identify possible out-of-control sexual behaviour, the authors used a set of six questions developed by Dr Patrick Carnes and colleagues called the P.A.T.H.O.S questions, designed to be a brief screening application for assessing propensity towards out-of-control sexual behaviour. The questionnaire is named after the acronym created from the themes of the six questions: Preoccupied, Ashamed, Treatment, Hurt Others, Out-of-control, and Sad. These questions were extracted from the original 25-item measure developed by Carnes. After further study and testing, Carnes (2012) found a significant correlation between candidates who answered "yes" to three or more questions and those identified by clinical interview as having a propensity towards out-of-control sexual behaviour. The questions were integrated into the current study to understand the potential towards out-of-control sexual behaviour in the following forms.

- 1) Do you often find yourself preoccupied with sexual thoughts? (Preoccupied)
- 2) Do you hide some of your sexual behaviour from others? (Ashamed)
- 3) Have you ever sought counselling for an aspect of your sexual behaviour? (Treatment)
- 4) Has anyone else been hurt emotionally because of your sexual behaviour? (Hurt Others)



- 5) Do you feel controlled by your sexual desire? (Out-of-control)
- 6) Do you feel depressed or discouraged about some aspect of your sexual behaviour? (Sad).

The survey was designed so participants could complete it in about ten minutes, with 37 questions. The research outline and questions were submitted to and approved by the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS) for ethical review. Participants were given the option to skip any questions they were not comfortable answering and were able to contact the survey designer with any queries. After completing the survey, participants were provided with contacts for organizations, Azalea-Flint (2023) and Naked Truth (2023) to provide emotional support if necessary.

The anonymous survey was created and distributed on the Survey Monkey online platform and remained open for over two months in early 2021. The survey was distributed through the UK Christian church network by word of mouth. An introductory interview was also presented to Christian Vision for Men network members through a video podcast on their website.

## LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

Regarding limitations and challenges faced by the survey, although the survey was open to the public, most participants came from the Christian Vision for Men network. As a result, it is likely that the survey respondents identified with or agreed with the values specific to the Christian Vision for Men organization rather than those of the general UK population. The author also notes that, since participants were self-selected, it is possible that a higher percentage of those who responded to the survey were more self-aware about their out-of-control sexual behaviour and were, therefore, more readily prepared to identify with the issues presented.

It would have been preferable to attain more detail regarding when participants took on their Christian faith or when they got married/entered a long-term committed relationship. However, the author acknowledges that this was not feasible within the scope of this survey and recommends it for future research. It is also noted that most participants were aged 35 and above. A valuable future stage of research would be to engage different Christian organizations with a younger demographic to capture more responses from participants aged 18 to 35.

## RESULTS

The following section presents the results of the survey.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

The researchers began the survey by gathering basic demographic information from participants.

The majority of the 491 survey respondents were aged 35 to 64. Specifically, 28% (139) were between 45 and 54, 27% (130) were between 55 and 64, and 21% (103) were between 35 and 44. These age ranges were consistent with those of Christian Vision for Men members, who likely made up a large proportion of participants (see Table 1).

Regarding sexual identification, 93% (456) of participants identified as heterosexual, while 7% (35) identified as non-heterosexual. Of the non-heterosexual



participants, 16 identified as bisexual and 13 as homosexual (see Table 1). While non-heterosexual Christian males were not the focus of analysis or reporting, it is acknowledged that they have often felt marginalized and criticized by the Christian community. Of the 35 non-heterosexual participants, 89% (31) identified as “strong” Christians. Given that the survey aimed to explore views on the church's role in teaching and care, some analysis of the non-heterosexual demographic was also conducted.

At the time of the survey, 84% (414) of participants indicated they were married. A mere 6% (31) of participants were single and had never married (see Table 1). Only 2% (10) were widowed, 4% (19) were divorced, and 2% (8) were separated from their spouse.

**Table 1: Demographics of Respondents to the 2021 UK Survey (N=491)**

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Age</i>		
18 to 24	6	1%
25 to 34	29	6%
35 to 44	103	21%
45 to 54	139	28%
55 to 64	130	27%
65 to 74	69	14%
75 or older	15	3%
<b>Total</b>	491	100%
<i>Self-identification</i>		
Bisexual	16	3%
Heterosexual	456	93%
Homosexual	13	3%
Non-binary	2	1%
Other (please specify)	4	1%
<b>Total</b>	491	100%
<i>Current Relationship Status</i>		
Divorced	19	4%
In a domestic partnership or civil union	4	1%
Married	414	84%
Separated	8	2%
Single but cohabiting with a significant other	5	1%
Single, never married	31	6%
Widowed	10	2%
<b>Total</b>	491	100%

Participants were asked to describe their personal Christian faith as either “Strong Christians,” “Nominal Christians,” or “other.” Of the participants, 93% (460) self-reported as “Strong” Christians and 6% (31) identified as “Nominal.” Although the authors did not provide clear criteria for these classifications, they were interested in analysing differences between the thoughts and behaviours of “Strong” and “Nominal” Christians. Where significant differences were found, this report presents the data separately; otherwise, data is presented together for both “Strong” and “Nominal” Christians.

### THE CARNES (2012) FRAMEWORK QUESTIONS

As presented in the method section of this paper, the six Carnes (2012) questions were integrated into the wider pool of survey questions.

As suggested found by Carnes' research, participants who answered “yes” to three or more of the six Carnes (2012) framework questions (see questions above and referred to in the rest of this report as participants with a key questions count: 3-6) were more likely to display behaviour associated with out-of-control sexual behaviour (Carnes et al., 2012). Upon reviewing our survey findings, it was found that 53% (258) of all participants recorded a key questions count: 3-6.

When examining the data, it was discovered that 53% (242) of “Strong” Christians and 52% (16) of “Nominal” Christians recorded a key questions count: 3-6. Some survey results support that Christians with a higher key questions count are more willing to be honest about their behaviour. However, looking at the key questions individually, no significant differences existed between those who identified as “Strong” or “Nominal” Christians. Therefore, the participants’ responses to the six questions taken from the Carnes (2012) framework, shown in Table 2, combine “Strong” and “Nominal” participants together.

The question with the highest positive response was whether participants hid some of their sexual behaviour from others. 65% (321) of all participants answered yes. This was followed by 59% (292) of all participants saying they often found themselves preoccupied with sexual thoughts (see Table 2).

Approximately half of all participants (56%, 273) felt depressed or discouraged about some aspect of their sexual behaviour. About 1 in 3 participants (32%, 159) reported that others had been emotionally hurt due to their sexual behaviour (see Table 2). The question with the lowest positive response was about whether participants had ever sought counselling for an aspect of their sexual behaviour, where only 19% (95) of all participants answered yes (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Participant's Responses to the Six Key Survey Questions Presenting Prevalence of Sexual Behaviour and Attitudes (N=491)**

<b>Sexual Behaviour/Attitude</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Preoccupied: Do you often find yourself preoccupied with sexual thoughts?</i>		
Yes	292	59%
No	196	40%
Chose not to Answer	3	1%
<i>Ashamed: Do you hide some of your sexual behaviour from others?</i>		
Yes	321	65%
No	148	30%
Chose not to Answer	22	5%
<i>Treatment: Have you ever sought counselling for an aspect of your sexual behaviour?</i>		
Yes	95	19%
No	374	76%
Chose not to Answer	22	5%
<i>Hurt Others: Has anyone else been hurt emotionally because of your sexual behaviour?</i>		
Yes	159	32%
No	308	63%
Chose not to Answer	24	5%
<i>Out-of-Control: Do you feel controlled by your sexual desire?</i>		
Yes	120	24%
No	349	71%
Chose not to Answer	22	5%
<i>Sad: Do you feel depressed or discouraged about some aspect of your sexual behaviour?</i>		
Yes	273	56%
No	198	40%
Chose not to Answer	20	4%

Regarding non-heterosexual participants, 51% (18) recorded a key questions count: 3-6. This aligns with the overall percentage of participants who recorded a key questions count: 3-6 (52%). The question that received the highest affirmative response was whether they felt they hid sexual behaviour. 74% (26) of non-heterosexual participants answered yes, compared to an overall positive response of 65% (321). This was followed by 51% (18) of non-heterosexual men saying they were preoccupied with sexual thoughts (compared to an overall positive response of 59%, 292). The question that received the least affirmative responses was whether they felt controlled by their sexual thoughts. Only 14% (5) answered yes, compared to an overall affirmative response of 24% (120) in the entire sample.

## PARTICIPANT'S RECEIPT OF SEX EDUCATION AND VIEWS ON SEX EDUCATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Following basic demographic information, the researchers were interested in the sex education of the participants.

When asked about their sources of sexual education, 53% (260) of participants indicated that they learned from school friends and peers. Approximately one in four participants (25%, 122) learned about sex from school teachers (See Table 3). A significant number of participants (30%, 139 "Strong" Christians; 42%, 13 "Nominal" Christians) reported learning from watching pornography, and 20% (7) of non-heterosexual participants said the same.

**Table 3: Sources of Sex Education and Preferred Sources of Sex Education for Children, by Religious Affiliation**

Sex Education Source	Strong Christian		Nominal Christian	
	n	%	n	%
<i>From whom did you learn the most about sex ?*</i>				
School teachers	116	25%	6	19%
Pornography	139	30%	13	42%
School friends/Peers	242	53%	18	58%
Parents/guardians	77	17%	5	16%
Youth leaders	19	4%	0	0%
Other (please specify)	91	20%	5	16%
<i>From whom do you think children should learn about sex*</i>				
School teachers	262	57%	18	58%
Pornography	2	0%	1	3%
School friends/Peers	60	13%	4	13%
Parents/guardians	425	92%	28	90%
Youth leaders	223	48%	13	42%
Other (please specify)	36	8%	1	3%
* Multiple responses were possible, so percentages may not add up to 100%.				

Despite the low percentage of participants (17%, 82) who reported learning about sex from parents or guardians, 92% (453) believed that parents and guardians should play a significant role in sex education, followed by 57% (280) who indicated school teachers. Both "Strong" Christians (48%, 223) and "Nominal" Christians (42%, 13) believed that youth leaders should also take a significant role. Still, only 4% (19) of "Strong" Christians reported that youth leaders significantly influenced their sexual education (See Table 3).

Non-heterosexual participants had similar preferences, with 91% (32) believing that parents should play a more significant role in sex education, followed by 51% (18) indicating teachers and 40% (14) indicating youth leaders.

In summary, more than a third of participants learned about sex from pornography, and more than half learned from school friends. However, nearly all participants believed parents and caregivers should be children's primary teachers about sex.

## VIEWS ON AND CONSUMPTION OF PORNOGRAPHY

After establishing an overview of the sex education of participants, the researchers turned their attention to the views and consumption of pornography (the purpose of using pornography was unspecified in this survey), starting with the participants' views.

Our survey indicates that almost three-quarters (74%, 361) of all participants negatively perceived pornography. Only 6% (29) believed that pornography could sometimes be helpful (see Table 4). This negative perception of pornography was higher (82%, 211) among participants with a key question count: 3-6. A lower percentage (64%, 150) of negative perceptions towards pornography was recorded from participants with a key question count: 0-2. However, we also found that 22% (50) of those scoring a key questions count: 0-2 chose not to answer this question.

As previously mentioned, the survey found a consistent percentage of participants with a key questions count: 0-2 who chose not to answer questions about their engagement with pornography. This must be considered when analysing the results of the key question count: 0-2 data. This could also support the observation that Christians who record a key questions count: 3-6 present a higher level of honesty regarding their behaviour and struggles.

To determine views on why pornography was wrong, participants were given a list of reasons and the option to select multiple choices. Over three-quarters (76%, 374) thought it could be "addictive" (see Table 4).

From a moral perspective, 62% (304) of all participants thought it was morally wrong, with more than half (55%, 272) believing it was abusive to actors who were made in God's image. From a behavioural perspective, more than half (56%, 294) of participants thought watching pornography could lead to other forms of negative sexual behaviour. Additionally, 58% (286) believed it could lead to a breakdown of relationships, including marriage. About a third (34%, 165) of all participants thought watching pornography could make viewers feel physically inadequate (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Attitudes Toward Pornography and Perceived Consequences of Frequent Pornography Use, Among Survey Respondents (N=491)**

Attitude/Perceived Consequence	n	%
What is your view on pornography? (n=491)		
Sometimes helpful	29	6%
Neutral - neither positive nor negative	41	8%
Negative	361	74%
Chose not to answer	60	12%
Grand Total	491	100%
If you consider pornography to be wrong, why?*		
Can be addictive	374	76%
Morally wrong	304	62%
This can lead to other forms of negative sexual behaviour for the viewer	294	60%
It can cause relationship breakdown, including in marriage	286	58%
Abusive to actors in porn who are made in the image of God	272	55%
It makes the viewer feel physically inadequate - body and performance	165	34%
Other (please specify)	35	7%
I don't consider it to be wrong	8	2%
Do you think that frequent use of pornography can lead to...? *		
Strained sexual relations within marriage	351	72%
Sex outside of marriage	226	46%
Sex buying	161	33%
Improved sex within marriage	51	10%
Neither positive nor negative impact on marriage	44	9%

\* Multiple responses were possible, so percentages may not add up to 100%.

The survey presented participants with a list of possible impacts of frequent use of pornography and asked them to select all they thought could be true. Nearly three-quarters (72%, 351) of all participants believed that it could strain the sexual relationship within a marriage. Nearly half (46%, 226) also thought it could lead to extra-marital sex, with a third (33%, 161) saying it could lead people to buy sex. Only 9% (44) of all participants thought that it neither had a negative nor positive impact on marriage, and 10% (51) of all participants believed that it could improve sex within marriage (see Table 4).

Turning to participants' consumption of pornography, the vast majority (89%, 439) of participants acknowledged intentionally watching pornography in the past. Almost half (46%, 228) of all participants first encountered pornography before the age of

15, with 11% (53) indicating that they first encountered it before the age of 12 (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Prevalence and Frequency of Intentional Pornography Viewing, and Age of First Exposure, Among Survey Respondents (N=491)**

<b>Viewing Pornography</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Have you ever intentionally viewed pornography?</i>		
Yes	439	89%
No	49	10%
Chose not to answer	3	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>What age were you when you first saw pornography?</i>		
Under 12	53	11%
12-14	175	36%
15-17	114	23%
18-24	57	12%
25-34	15	3%
35-44	8	2%
45-54	4	1%
55-64	3	1%
65+	1	1%
Chose not to answer	61	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>How often do you view pornography?</i>		
Daily	10	2%
More than weekly	61	12%
More than monthly	50	10%
Occasionally	99	20%
Rarely	117	24%
Never	96	20%
Chose not to answer	58	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100%</b>

When examining participants who scored a key questions count: 3-6, we found that 55% (143) first saw pornography before the age of 15, and 16% (40) viewed pornography before the age of 12. Of the participants who scored a key questions count: 0-2, 37% (85) reported first encountering pornography before age 15, with 6% (13) indicating that they first encountered it before age 12. We also observed that 22% (50) of participants with a key questions count: 0-2 did not answer the question.

When asked about their current frequency of watching pornography, 20% (96) of all participants indicated that they never watch pornography. About one in four (24%, 121) participants watch pornography more than once a month (see Table 5).



When examining participants who scored a key questions count: 3-6, 38% (98) reported watching pornography more than monthly, with nearly one in five (20%, 51) indicating that they watch it weekly or more. Participants who scored a key questions count: 0-2 reported a much lower frequency of viewing pornography, with only 10% (23) indicating that they watched it at least once a month. However, we also note that 21% (49) of these participants did not answer this question.

In summary, more than three-quarters of participants acknowledged that pornography use could be “addictive”, and more than two-thirds believed that it could cause a strain in the marriage. Nearly half thought it could lead to extramarital sex, and just over half thought it was abusive to actors created in God’s image. Most participants reported first viewing pornography as a child, with the majority between the ages of 12-14. Only one in five reported never having viewed pornography. For most participants, pornography played a significant role in their lives.

## VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE

Following on from pornography, the researchers wanted to explore participants’ views of sex outside marriage, especially regarding the use of prostitutes.

When asked about their views on sex outside of marriage, nearly two-thirds (64%, 295) of “Strong” Christians felt it was always unacceptable. One-third (34%, 155) felt it was sometimes acceptable, and only 2% (7) thought it was always acceptable. Only 29% (9) of “Nominal” Christians felt that sex outside of marriage was unacceptable, with nearly half (48%, 15) believing it was sometimes acceptable and 23% (7) saying that it was always acceptable (see Table 6).

When asked the same question, 60% (154) of participants who scored a key questions count: 3-6, and 64% (150) scored a key questions count: 0-2 said that they thought sex outside of marriage was unacceptable. When non-heterosexual participants were asked their views on sex outside of marriage, 43% (15) thought it unacceptable.

Regarding views on why people use prostitutes, participants were given a list of reasons and the option to mark multiple choices. The majority of all participants (78%, 383, made up of 78%, 358 of “Strong” Christians and 81%, 25 of “Nominal” Christians) thought that loneliness was a key factor. This was followed by 65% (318) of participants saying that users were searching for intimacy (made up of 65%, 297 of “Strong” Christians and 68%, 21 of “Nominal” Christians), with 60% (294) of participants (made up of 59%, 273 of “Strong” Christians and 68%, 21 of “Nominal” Christians) believing that dissatisfaction with their partner was a factor (see Table 6).

**Table 6: Participants Views of Sexual Activity**

Views of Sexual Activity	Strong Christian		Nominal Christian	
	n	%	n	%
<i>Do you feel that sex outside of marriage is...?</i>				
Always acceptable	7	2%	7	23%
Sometimes acceptable/sometimes unacceptable	155	34%	15	48%
Always unacceptable	295	64%	9	29%
Chose not to answer	3	1%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%
<i>Why do you think people should use prostitutes?</i>				
Loneliness	358	78%	25	81%
Desire for power	131	29%	8	26%
Search for intimacy	297	65%	21	68%
Relieve Stress	234	51%	14	45%
Dissatisfaction with partner	273	59%	21	68%
Experimentation: trying what is seen in pornography	229	50%	13	42%
Other (please specify)	41	9%	3	10%
* Multiple responses were possible, so percentages may not add up to 100%.				
<i>Do you feel that erotic (sexualised) massage is the same as prostitution?</i>				
Yes	340	74%	22	71%
No	98	21%	7	23%
Chose not to answer	22	5%	2	6%
<b>Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%

About half of the participants believed that stress relief (51%, 248, comprising 51%, 234 of "Strong" Christians and 45%, 14 of "Nominal" Christians) was a factor in engaging with prostitutes. Similarly, roughly half (49%, 242) of all participants (made up of 50%, 229 of "Strong" Christians and 42%, 13 of "Nominal" Christians) believed that experimentation - trying what they saw in pornography - was another factor. Finally, 28% (139) of all participants (made up of 29%, 131 of "Strong" Christians and 26%, 8 of "Nominal" Christians) thought that the use of prostitutes could come from a desire for power (see Table 6).

When asked if they felt that erotic (sexualized) massage was the same as prostitution, almost three out of four participants (74%, 340 of "Strong" Christians and 71%, 22 of "Nominal" Christians) said yes (see Table 6).

## WATCHING LIVE SEXUAL ACTS ON WEBCAM, HAVING CASUAL SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS AND ENGAGING WITH PROSTITUTED PEOPLE

After reviewing participants' views regarding sex outside marriage and prostitution, the researchers proceeded to record participants' sexual activity.

**Table 7a: Participant's Sexual Activity**

Sexual Activity	Strong Christian		Nominal Christian	
	n	%	n	%
<i>Have you ever viewed a live webcam of a person/people acting in a sexualised way</i>				
Yes	77	17%	7	23%
No	375	82%	22	71%
Chose not to Answer	8	2%	2	6%
<b>Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%
<i>How often do you look at a live webcam of a person/ people acting in a sexualised way?</i>				
More than weekly	2	0%	2	6%
More than monthly	3	1%	0	0%
Occasionally	11	2%	2	6%
Rarely	37	8%	3	10%
Never	32	7%	0	0%
Chose not to Answer	375	82%	24	77%
<b>Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%
<i>Have you ever experienced a hook-up/one-off sexual encounter?</i>				
Yes	107	23%	12	39%
No	342	74%	17	55%
Chose not to Answer	11	2%	2	6%
<b>Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%
<i>Have you used "hook-up" Apps to find someone to have sex with?</i>				
Yes	22	5%	4	13%
No	429	93%	25	81%
Chose not to Answer	9	2%	2	6%
<b>Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%

According to survey results, 17% (77) of "Strong" Christians and 23% (7) of "Nominal" Christians reported watching live sexual acts via webcam (See Table 7a). Of those who recorded a key questions count: 3-6, 23% (60) reported doing so, with 12% (7) indicating they continued to do so more than once a month, and 17% (10) saying "occasionally".

Regarding sexual encounters, nearly a quarter of “Strong” Christians (23%, 107) and 39% (12) of “Nominal” Christians reported having had a one-off sexual encounter in the past. Only 4% (17) of all participants reported occasionally or rarely seeking or being open to one-off sexual encounters (See Table 7a).

The survey also found that 28% (71) of participants who scored a key questions count: 3-6 reported having had a casual sexual encounter in the past, and 49% (17) of non-heterosexual participants had also engaged in a casual sexual encounter. Additionally, 5% (26) of all participants reported using a “hook up” app to find someone to have sex with in the past, with 8% (20) of participants who recorded key questions count: 3-6 reporting the same.

**Table 7b: Participant's Sexual Activity (continued)**

Sexual Activity	Strong Christian		Nominal Christian	
	n	%	n	%
<i>Have you ever had a traditional massage where the masseuse touched you sexually?</i>				
Yes	40	9%	1	3%
No	411	89%	28	90%
Chose not to Answer	9	2%	2	7%
<b>Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%
<i>If you have had a massage that became sexualised, how did you respond?</i>				
I told them to continue	23	5%	0	0%
I told them to stop	4	1%	0	0%
Ignored them	11	2%	1	3%
I never had sexualised massage	11	2%	0	0%
NA or Chose not to answer	411	89%	30	97%
<b>Grand Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%
<i>How often do you have an erotic/sexualised massage?</i>				
More than monthly	2	0%	0	0%
Occasionally	4	1%	0	0%
Rarely	20	4%	0	0%
Never	22	5%	1	3%
NA or chose not to answer	412	90%	30	97%
<b>Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%
<i>Have you ever had sexual intercourse with a prostitute?</i>				
Yes	47	10%	4	13%
No	404	88%	25	81%
Chose not to Answer	9	2%	2	6%
<b>Total</b>	460	100%	31	100%

When asked if they had experienced a traditional massage (not advertised as erotic or sexualized) where the masseuse touched them sexually, 8% (41) of all participants (made up of 9%, 40 of "Strong" Christians and 3%, 1 of "Nominal" Christians) said yes (see Table 7b). Of these participants, 10% (4) told the masseuse to stop, 29% (12) ignored the masseuse, and 56% (23) told the masseuse to continue (see Table 7b).

More than one in ten (10%, 51) of all participants (made up of 10%, 47 of "Strong" Christians and 13%, 4 of "Nominal" Christians) reported having sexual intercourse with a prostitute (see Table 7b). The survey recorded a slight increase to 13% (34) in having sexual intercourse with prostitutes among participants with a key question count: 3-6.

While nearly two-thirds of participants considered sex outside of marriage to be always unacceptable, a significant percentage had watched live sexual action on a webcam and had experienced a one-off hook-up sexual encounter. Additionally, a fifth of participants did not consider erotic (sexualized) massage to be the same as prostitution, and the majority of those who had a traditional massage that became eroticized requested that it continue. Finally, over one in ten participants reported having had sexual intercourse with a prostitute, with loneliness, the search for intimacy, dissatisfaction with partners, and the desire to relieve stress or try new things being the main reasons reported.

## VIEWS ABOUT CHURCH ENGAGEMENT REGARDING SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Understanding the way men interact with each other and the church on sexual issues is important if it is going to be addressed.

When asked about Christian men they knew, 40% (198) said they were not aware of any out-of-control sexual behaviour in others, 55% (268) of participants reported knowing men who used pornography, 3% (15) knew men who used "hook-up" apps, 2% (8) knew men who used prostitutes, and 1% (2) knew men who used erotic massages (see Table 8).

When asked if they were afraid of facing church discipline for being honest about their sexual behaviour (out-of-control or otherwise), about 26% (125) of all respondents answered "yes" (see Table 8). This percentage rose to 29% (10) when asking non-heterosexual men the same question.

It's important to note that while not all participants necessarily "feared" discipline, they did express negative feelings such as shame, embarrassment, disapproval, and stigma associated with these behaviours. Some participants stated they were even asked to leave their church due to their sexual behaviour.

**Table 8: Participants' Views on Out-of-Control Sexual Behaviour within the Church Community.**

<b>Views on Out-of-Control Sexual Behaviour within Church Community</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Are you aware of other Christian men who...?</i>		
Use erotic massage	2	1%
Use hook-up apps	15	3%
Use pornography	268	55%
Use prostitutes	8	2%
None	198	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>Are you fearful that if you are honest about some aspect of your sexual behaviour, then you might face church discipline?</i>		
Yes	125	26%
No	304	62%
Other (please specify)	36	7%
Chose not to Answer	26	5%
<b>Grande Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100%</b>

Most participants (91%, 450) believed that the church should address the challenges of unwanted sexual behaviour (out-of-control or otherwise) that people face (see Table 9).

To determine how the church could help address unwanted sexual behaviours (out-of-control or otherwise), participants were given a list of reasons and the option to mark multiple choices. The top three choices were: one-on-one, face-to-face accountability and support (334, 68%), marriage enrichment classes/weekends (63%, 309), and youth sex education (60%, 297). The lowest response (43%, 213) was recorded for online group accountability and support (see Table 9).

When asked if they would consider joining a support group for people seeking help for unwanted sexual behaviour, 60% (294) of all participants said "No," with 19% (92) saying they would consider joining a group online and 16% (80) saying they would consider joining a group in person (see Table 9).

**Table 9: Participants' Views on How the Church Could Support Those Struggling with Unwanted Sexual Behaviour.**

<b>Views on How the Church Could Support Those Struggling with Unwanted Sexual Behaviour</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Do you think the church should better address the sexual challenges men face?</i>		
Yes	450	91%
No	18	4%
Chose not to Answer	23	5%
<b>Grande Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>How do you think the church can help men to tackle sexual challenges?*</i>		
One on one face to face accountability and support	334	68%
Marriage enrichment classes/weekends	309	63%
Youth sex education	297	60%
Online Christian sex education and support	281	57%
Training by Christian organizations	264	54%
Sermons addressing sexual behaviour	244	50%
Group face-to-face accountability and support	223	45%
Online group accountability and support	213	43%
Other (please specify)	36	7%
* Multiple responses were possible, so percentages may not add up to 100%.		
<i>Would you consider joining a support group for people seeking help for unwanted sexual behaviour?</i>		
Yes in person	80	16%
Yes online	92	19%
No	293	60%
Chose not to Answer	26	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100%</b>

In summary, Christian men were generally unaware of the unwanted sexual behaviour (out-of-control or otherwise) of their Christian peers. About half knew about a Christian man who had used pornography, but the rest knew little—over a quarter feared church discipline if an aspect of their sexual behaviour was revealed. Over nine in ten men said they thought the church could help men in sexual matters. Over six in ten suggested this could be done through one-on-one accountability and support, marriage enrichment courses, and youth sex education. However, when asked if they would consider joining a support group, less than one in five said they would join online or in person.

## DISCUSSION

These findings presented in this paper confirm the discrepancy or “sanctification gap” in the self-awareness and understanding of the UK Christian community's thinking, beliefs, and conduct, particularly concerning prostitution and pornography.



## PARTICIPANTS AND PORNOGRAPHY

The sanctification gap can be identified between participants' usage and their views of pornography, where almost three-quarters (74%, 361) of participants saw the use of pornography as negative. Yet, nearly half (45%, 220) said they watched pornography at least occasionally. Given that the participants identified themselves as Christians, it was surprising that only 62% (304) of participants believed pornography to be morally wrong and that only 55% (272) of participants were concerned about the abuse of porn actors, whom they thought were made in the image of God.

Furthermore, the fact that the top three highest responses to why pornography was considered wrong were "addiction" (76%, 374), morally wrong (62%, 304), and leading to other negative behaviour (60%, 294) suggests an egocentric focus where the primary concerns are about how it impacts themselves. This would run against biblical teaching that focuses on placing other people's needs before the individuals.

## PARTICIPANTS' SEXUAL ACTIVITY AND USE OF PROSTITUTED PEOPLE

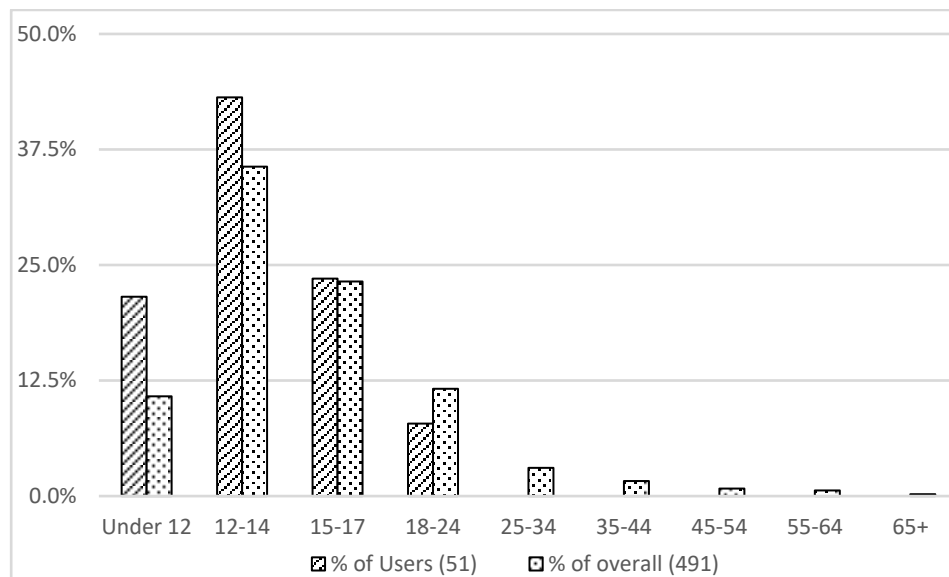
The sanctification gap is further highlighted when 17% (77) of "Strong" and 23% (7) of "Nominal" Christians had viewed live erotic webcam performances. Additionally, 21% (105) of all participants did not believe that erotic massage was the same as prostitution. This suggests that there should be more discussion within the Christian community about the distinction between online and offline use of prostituted people.

The survey also found that 10% (51) of participants admitted to engaging with a prostitute for sex. This is comparable to the national figure of 11% of British men aged 16-74 who have paid for sex at least once, as presented by the Home Affairs Committee Inquiry into Prostitution in 2017. Furthermore, other surveys reviewed in this paper indicated that Christian men also used prostituted people, with some surveys finding participation as high as one-third of Christian men (Farley et al., 2009, p. 13). This is concerning regarding the state of the current Christian community.

Regarding the 51 participants who admitted to engaging with a prostitute, 92% (47) identified as "Strong" Christians, and two-thirds (66%, 34) of these participants had a key questions count: 3-6, higher than all participants (53%)—over a third (19, 37%) of these participants reported watching a live webcam sexual performance, compared to 17% of all participants. A third (17) of these participants had received a sexual massage, which is much higher than the overall average of approximately 8% of all participants. Of these 17 participants, 77% (13) requested that the masseur continue touching them sexually.

Upon examining participants who admitted to engaging with a prostituted person and their interaction with pornography, we found they all had watched pornography by the age of 18, with 64% (33) of them first watching pornography before the age of 14, compared to 46% (228) of all participants (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Age Participants First Watched Pornography: Individuals Who Engaged with a Prostituted Person versus All Participants.**



These finds suggest that early use of pornography could be a determining factor in those who decide to engage with a prostituted person.

## OUT-OF-CONTROL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AND SUPPORT

With regards to Carnes (2012) Framework, the survey recorded that 38% (98) of participants who recorded a key questions count: 3-6 watched pornography more than monthly, in comparison to 24% (121) reported in all participants. Also, two-thirds (66%, 34) of participants who admitted having sexual intercourse with a prostituted person recorded a key question count: 3-6. This suggests that the six Carnes (2012) questions are useful in serving as a baseline indicator for a propensity towards out-of-control sexual behaviour.

Concerning the participants, the survey showed that around half of Christian men in the cohort may have a propensity towards out-of-control sexual behaviour. As a supportive community, the church must address this issue. The church already recognizes that self-awareness and honesty are key hallmarks of discipleship growth and can support and encourage this recognition. Emphasizing the importance of confessing to one another for growth can also be beneficial. The 12-step program used by Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and adapted to men struggling with out-of-control sexual behaviour can also be used here. A non-judgmental approach, similar to that of AA leaders, is a good model for healing. However, a challenge facing leaders and organizers of such support groups is that the majority (60%, 293) of participants in the cohort seem unwilling to engage with these issues in a group setting.

When asked if respondents had ever sought counselling for an aspect of their sexual behaviour, only 16% (5) of “Nominal” Christians and 20% (90) of “Strong” Christians said yes. These numbers are low and may reflect the age of the participants (the majority being over 35 years old) and their possible reluctance to engage in counselling.

## CHALLENGES IN SUPPORTING MEMBERS WITH OUT-OF-CONTROL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR FROM WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Regarding the participants' views on how the church supported those with out-of-control sexual behaviour, the survey revealed that the vast majority (92%, 450) of participants believed that the church community could better support those with out-of-control sexual behaviour. The survey also found that a quarter of participants feared facing church discipline when sharing their issues. Over half of the participants (55%, 268) knew other Christian men who used pornography. These results indicate a need for more programs and information to support rebuilding trust within the community.

When asked how the church could help them, the top response from participants was one-to-one accountability (334, 68%). Less than half of the participants (45%, 223) believed that support in a group setting would be helpful, with even fewer willing to consider joining an in-person (16%, 80) or online (19%, 92) support group. These findings suggest embarrassment or fear of sharing in a group setting and highlight the challenges of providing safe spaces for men to share openly.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

With the survey results presented in the paper in mind. The following recommendations are made.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CHURCH

The authors suggest several recommendations for Christian leaders, pastors, and organizations to address the issues highlighted in the survey.

- Rebuild trust from within the Christian community by cultivating safe, meaningful spaces of support and accountability for Christian men. This could include small group settings or recovery groups.
- Develop the use of a language and terms that better enable the Christian community to address issues of out-of-control sexual behaviour robustly and directly while being mindful not to use unhelpful labels. An example of this that has been modelled in this paper is the use of the term out-of-control sexual behaviour rather than sexual addiction.
- Address the purchase of sex and other activities that may be considered morally “grey areas” by the Christian community. This could include partnering with organizations such as Azalea Flint to help Christian men deal with sex buying.
- Provide more support for those struggling with using pornography and compulsive behaviour. This could include education, counselling, and other resources.
- Provide more education on the harmful effects of pornography on individuals and society. This could include highlighting the link between pornography, sexual exploitation, and trafficking and promoting healthy sexual relationships within marriage.
- Provide more support for gay or bisexual men struggling with pornography or out-of-control sexual behaviours. This could include providing education, counselling, and support groups within the church.

- Engage with younger men and women within the Christian community to better understand their views on sexual issues and provide appropriate support and education.
- Conduct more surveys in different parts of Europe to compare and contrast the prevalence of out-of-control sexual behaviour in Christian communities across different cultural norms and perspectives.

The authors hope these recommendations will serve as a call to action for Christian leaders and organizations to address the issues highlighted in the survey and provide more support for their members surrounding sexual issues.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCHERS

- Survey questions should track a participant's Christian faith journey in relation to sexual activity.
- Survey questions should seek to identify the purpose of the “use” of pornography, live sex cams, etc. For example, “using pornography for sexual arousal and masturbation.”
- Engage with communities of younger ages to get more data on 18–35-year-olds.
- Explore a wider spectrum of avenues for engaging with sexual content and buying sex, such as social media.
- Undertake clinical interviews to see if there could be church teachings (e.g. the submission of wives within marriage) that may increase out-of-control or abusive sexual behaviour.
- Comparing surveys with other countries could also be useful in building a clearer picture of the out-of-control sexual behaviour prevalent in the Christian community, regardless of cultural norms and perspectives.
- The church needs to find ways better to support all community members, not just men. From a research perspective, this could involve widening a survey's participant scope or conducting specific surveys to capture different demographics, such as 18 to 30-year-olds and women.
- Repeat the survey in other parts of Europe to compare and contrast, such as Germany, Austria, Portugal, and the Netherlands.

## CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This survey aimed to understand better influences on men within the UK Christian community on their engagement with pornography and prostitution. In doing so, this survey confirmed the gap in the Christian community's self-awareness and understanding of its members' thinking, beliefs, and conduct, particularly in relation to prostitution and pornography. The majority of participants believed that the church should be more actively involved in helping men deal with their unwanted sexual behaviour (out-of-control or otherwise).

Therefore, the authors hope this report will serve as a call to action for pastors and Christian leaders. The high percentage of men with a key questions count: 3-6 indicates that out-of-control sexual behaviour is not just a problem for a minority of men but for many.

Some of the key issues identified by the survey are that finding better material and information is insufficient; there is a need to rebuild trust within the Christian

community. Shame only drives sin into hiding and fosters further isolation from community and accountability.

There is a need to cultivate safe and meaningful spaces of support and accountability for Christian men. The authors commend the work of Christian Vision for Men and their leaders and members for acting to candidly address issues like out-of-control sexual behaviour. Their example of producing two videos discussing the results between leaders and researchers to distribute to their constituents is vital for the Christian community to tackle these issues meaningfully.

While there is a need for safe and private environments for men to share their struggles with out-of-control sexual behaviour, the authors also recognize the need for churches and children's organizations to have robust child protection policies in place to be able to deal with situations where men might disclose sexual behaviour involving children.

The survey revealed an egocentric trend among concerns about the negative impact of pornography, with a focus on the effects on the viewer. The Christian community needs to be educated on the hurt and exploitation of those in the porno industry. For instance, the BBC (2022) reported that the parent company of the Pornhub website, MindGeek, faces ongoing lawsuits for hosting millions of videos of exploited individuals. Additionally, Josh McDowell Ministry (2016) reports that producers of pornographic material often promote violence, racism, and misogynistic attitudes and actions.

The survey findings suggest that the Christian community should address morally ambiguous areas. For example, 35% (162) of "Strong" Christian participants and over two-thirds (71%, 22) of "Nominal" Christian participants believed that sex outside of marriage is sometimes acceptable/sometimes unacceptable. What does the Christian marriage covenant mean in this context?

While some churches address pornography, very few address the purchase of sex. The authors know of only one organization - Azalea Flint - in the UK that helps Christian men as sex buyers. More action is needed nationally and globally to address this issue.

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