

**EXPOSURE TO SOCIAL MEDIA SEXUAL CONTENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE  
SEXUAL BEHAVIOR OF THE UNDERGRADUATES OF UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

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**BENIN CITY**

**MARCH, 2024**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
MASS COMMUNICATION, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF  
BENIN CITY, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ART (B.A) IN  
MASS COMMUNICATION.**

**MARCH, 2024**

## **DECLARATION**

This project work is based on a study undertaken by me, in the department of Mass Communication Faculty of Art, University of Benin, Benin City, under the supervision of Prof Ezekiel Asemah. All findings and analysis in the study are product of my personal research and where the views of others have been used and expressed, they were duly acknowledged.

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### **CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that this research work was duly carried out in the Department by Ebagua Sophia in the department of mass communication, Faculty of Art, University of Benin, Benin City in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Art in Mass Communication.

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Prof Ezekiel.S Asemah  
**Project Supervisor**

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**Date**

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Dr. Daniel Ekhareafor  
**(Head of Department)**

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**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to God Almighty who has given me the strength, grace and wisdom required for the successful completion of this project work. And to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Ebagua whom God has been using to sponsor my academic programme.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The main purpose of this study was to know the extent of exposure to social media sexual content and its influence on the sexual behavior of undergraduates of University of Benin. The study was to address four research objectives. The study was anchored on the Uses and gratification theory and Media dependency theory. In this study a survey research design was adopted. The population comprises all students from the four departments, Mass communication, Theatre Arts, Fine Arts, Early childhood education in University of Benin, Ekehuan Campus, Edo state. A seventeen item questionnaire was used in the survey design to collect data from 352 students of Ekehuan campus University of Benin. As a result of the field study and analysis of results. The findings revealed that social media exposure to sexual content can have a detrimental effect on the sexual and public health of undergraduates and can therefore elevate prevalence of STDs and Unwanted Pregnancy. Undergraduates should learn not to rely too much on social media platforms. The study also adds to the understanding of the economic and societal impact of the exposure to sexual content on social media.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

The act of communicating has been an essential core system of our lives, the world is understood and perceived through communication. In the early years, older methods of communication such as Cave paintings, smoke signals, symbols, telegraph, writing of letters has been the way to communicate with loved ones and other members of a society. As time pass, the latest and modern ways of communication was created which include Television, Cellphones, internet, Emails, text messages, Social media. This Evolution of communication has been able to make progress over thousands of years. The modern way of Communication that has grown rapidly over the years is the use of Internet and social media sites and platforms.

Social media refers to online platforms and tools that allow people to communicate, share content, messages and connect with others. Some examples of social media platforms include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Tiktok. Today, it has become a ubiquitous part of life for many people around the world. Asemah, Nwaboli & Nwoko (2022) have revealed that young people use the internet for socialisation purposes which often takes place on various types of social media platforms. Social media is a way for people, communities, and organizations to communicate, work together, and connect with each other online. It is made possible by technology. According to Haenlein (2010), cited in Asemah, Illah, and Edgoh (2015), social media refers to a group of internet based application that build on the ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0 and that allows the creation and exchange of users

generated content. In the past ten years, social media has become very popular and now has millions of users all over the world. The most popular social media platforms are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp. Statista, (2019). Social media has made it easier for people to connect and interact with each other, even when they are far apart.

Social media helps people connect with many people and make their brand more well-known. They can share important information or things they create with their audience through social media platforms. This can help promote their business or product and make more people buy it. You can use social media to stay connected with what's happening around the world and discover new ideas and information. It has made education better by improving the students' skills and encouraging them to learn more and be more creative. Many college students use social media to do school work, talk to friends, and meet new people. On social media, people are sharing their creative stuff with millions of others around the world. Social media has made it easy to communicate with others, and communication is an important part of being human. To further buttress this analogy, Asemah (2021) states that communication is about sharing ideas between two or more people. This shows that talking and exchanging thoughts with others is very important, even if they are far away. Social media has made it easy for people worldwide to communicate and share information by creating platforms for this purpose. Before social media existed, people's lives were different all around the world. But since the introduction of social media platforms, many new opportunities have been created and people have become more exposed. This exposure has caused big changes in people's lives, both good and bad.

Social media platforms are now made specifically for sharing and finding adult content, this has granted access to both the underage, aged and overage. In line with this Hustun, Wartella, and Donnerstein, highlighted that sexual content means talking or showing things related to sex. This is also in agreement with Korpershock, (2012, p.3) who stated that sexual content has become more common and clear in various types of media.

Social media is a fun place to find things to enjoy, but there is also content that young students or college students shouldn't see because it goes against what is right. There is inappropriate content available on these platforms that is easily accessed by students or undergraduates. Pornography is a big problem for young people because it can make them addicted to social media for the wrong reasons. They see sexual content on social media and it can affect them negatively. Using social media to view explicit content or visiting porn sites can harm the judgment and values of young people who want to fit in. It can become an addictive habit and cause problems if not dealt with properly. This will make them behave in a negative way when it comes to sex and they won't understand the risks of looking at inappropriate stuff online anymore.

Whether it happens on purpose or by accident, being exposed to sexual content is worrisome because it can lead to negative effects like emotional problems and changes in how we behave sexually (Arulogun, 2016).

Social media spreads sexual content with revealing or naked pictures and suggestive language or images that imply sexual activities. It also includes sending sexually explicit messages, photos,

or videos through social media or online porn sites, as well as indecent photos and videos with crude jokes.

According to *Business Day* in (2013), a study was conducted on how Nigerians use social media. The study found that people who use platforms like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram are more likely to see sexual content compared to those who don't use these platforms.

Social media has been found to have an effect on the way young people, especially how college students behave and engage in sexual activities because of their unique characteristics. The minimum age to get into Nigerian colleges is 16 to 17 years old. This means that many college students are young adults who are easily influenced by their friends. They often live away from their parents and don't have guidance or control. Being in a liberal university environment and using technology for education also increases their likelihood of engaging in risky online activities, which can affect their sexual behavior (Asekun, Olarinmoye, 2013)

Owan and Robert (2019), in line with Saleh (2010), are of the view that social media platforms often display harmful behaviors and activities that go against the norms of society. These include things like homosexuality (gay/lesbian relationships), inappropriate clothing, dating without commitment (promiscuity), explicit content, violence, and a negative attitude towards school work. Social media are websites or apps where young people can find and share sexual text, photos, and videos. Students, especially those in college, are spending a lot of time using social media. It has become a big part of their daily routine. They are using their online

profiles to share information about their sexuality, who they are attracted to, and what they are interested in sexually. They do this by posting songs, videos, and blogs about their desires and experiences. They also share pictures and videos of themselves in revealing or naked poses on social media through their phones. They also talk about their sexual activities and experiences on social media. Using sexual content on social media makes students and undergraduates think its okay to be more open about sex (Brawn- Courvile and Roja 2000).

Kelleher and Sweetser (2012), speculates that sexual content creation is likely to form the foundation of the attitudes of adolescents toward sex and their subsequent sexual behaviours throughout their life. . Ochieng, Kakai, and Abok (2010) found out that more than half of young people in Nigeria are having sex before they turn 20. Engaging in unsafe sexual behaviors puts college students at risk of getting HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), as well as causing psychological and emotional issues. People think that social media can change how people think, see things, act, and behave. From the time of TV and radio until now with the internet, media has shown that it can strongly affect the people who consume its messages.

The media can help students learn more about their sexuality. Different types of media like TV, radio, newspapers, books, magazines, films, and the internet can either have a positive or negative effect on how young people understand and view sexuality. According to Gruber and Grube. (2000), teenagers see sexual things in movies, TV, etc. when they are growing up, and this can affect how they think about gender, sex, and how they act. Social media has helped young people learn about fashion trends, the ways people live their lives, the language they use, and their attitudes towards sexuality. Social media sometimes becomes the main way young people get information, especially when their parents and school don't talk about sexual topics.

This happens because sexual matters are considered taboo in many Nigerian societies, so students rely on social media and friends, who may give them wrong or unfitting information.

Toroitich and Ruto, (1997)

However, no academic research has been conducted to investigate the exposure to social media sexual content and its Influence on the sexual behavior of the undergraduates of University of Benin, therefore, this research aims to address all the gaps identified through understanding the level of exposure and influence of social media and its portrayal of sexual content on the student of the university of Benin.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Sexual content on social media has become more common in recent years. Even though there is proof that seeing sexual things on social media can make young people think about sex in a bad way and act differently, some people are using social media to advertise and do online prostitution. Students connect with each other on Facebook and other social platforms by sending friend requests. Sometimes, they meet in person and engage in sexual activities or continue dating each other.

Research has found that many young people are taking pictures of themselves and adding them to dating websites like o cupid.com and tinder com. An undergraduate student might start to think its okay to be more open about sex after seeing and using sexually suggestive content on social media. A research done by Plan International and the Cradle found that 30.62% of the children they talked to saw inappropriate content on Facebook at least once. In 2004, some

computer stores in Kwara state found out that children and students were downloading more pornography than any other kind of content. This clearly shows that students and children are still watching a lot of sexual content without their parents or older people supervising them. There is not much research on how this information affects young students of the University of Benin. These students may be more easily influenced by social media due to their age and stage of development.

Thus there is need to learn more about how college students get access to sexual content on social media and how it affects their thoughts and actions about sex. Additionally, it is important to examine potential solutions that can lessen the detrimental effects of this exposure. The goal of this research therefore, is to investigate how much students from the University of Benin use social media, if they view or create sexual content, and how these activities affect their discussions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and actions.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Determine the level of exposure of Uniben undergraduate to sexual content on social media platforms and its Influence on their sexual behavior.
2. Ascertain the influence of the exposure to sexual content on social media on the academic performance of the undergraduates of University of Benin.
3. Investigate the relationship between exposure to social media sexual content and changes in sexual behavior of Uniben undergraduates.

4. To explore the factors that Influence the way undergraduate of University of Benin perceive and process sexual content on social media.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of exposure of Uniben undergraduates to sexual content on social media platforms and its Influence on their sexual behavior?
2. Does the exposure to sexual content on social media Influence the academic performance of the undergraduates of University of Benin?
3. What is the relationship between exposure to social media sexual content and changes in sexual behavior of Uniben undergraduates?
4. What are the factors that Influence the way undergraduate of University of Benin perceive and process sexual content on social media?

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study will look at how being exposed to social media can affect the sexual behavior of students at the University of Benin. We will do a study by asking a group of undergraduate's students from University of Benin who use social media. We will gather information from

undergraduates at the University of Benin by asking them questions on a survey. This survey will help us understand how much social media sexual content they see and how it affects their behavior. Using a survey method with a sample size of undergraduate's students from the University of Benin to find out how much they see and are affected by sexual content on social media. The results of this study will help us understand how much sexual content people see on social media and how it affects the behavior of undergraduate's students at the University of Benin. This information will be helpful for other researchers in the future.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The research study "Exposure to social media sexual content and its Influence on the sexual behavior of the undergraduates of University of Benin" is an important contribution to understanding social media and how it is used. This study is important because it can help us learn more about how sexual content on social media affects the attitudes and sexual behaviour of the undergraduates of University of Benin. If we learn more about this problem, we can create better ways to help vulnerable undergraduates. Social media can have a big effect on how undergraduate's students feel, think, and make choices.

This study is important because it shows how much sexual content undergraduates see on social media and also helps to highlight the level of exposure to sexual content on social media and how it can Influence the sexual behavior of undergraduates students of the University of Benin. The study is specifically focusing on students at the University of Benin. Additionally, the results of this research can help policy makers and social media companies understand the importance of having stricter rules and guidelines for sharing sexual content on social media platforms.

## 1.7 Definition of Terms

In order to avoid misrepresentation and misinterpretation, some terms frequently used in this study are operationally defined in the context of this study.

**Exposure:** refers to when you go through something or it affects you because you are in a certain situation or location.

**Influence:** refers to how one thing can affect or change another thing, either in a good or bad way.

**Sexual behaviour:** means any actions, thoughts, desires, or feelings that are related to human sexuality.

**Sexual content:** refers to pictures, videos, or information that shows people engaging in sexual behavior. The actions related to sex that are being talked about can be very direct and obvious, or they may be more subtle, such as flirting. These actions can also involve talking about sex in a way that uses polite or indirect language.

**Social media:** Social media is a website or app where you can send messages and get quick responses from the person you are sending them to.

**Undergraduate:** An undergraduate is a student who is working towards a bachelor's degree. They are not a graduate student who is pursuing a master's or doctoral degree. This phrase is used to talk about students who are working towards getting their first degree from a university.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter presents a conceptual review of necessary literature beginning from historical review, past works on this discourse, and the communication theories that support this work with a view to providing modern knowledge and insightful findings. It is explained under the following subheadings:

- History of social media
- Concept of social media
- Concept of sexual content
- Role of social media in the society
- Influence of social media on social behavior
- Social media and undergraduates

- Empirical Review
- Theoretical framework
- Summary

## **2.1 Historical Review**

### **2.1.1 History of Social Media**

The first social network site that people could easily recognize started in 1997. It was called six degrees.com and it let users create profiles and list their friends. By early 1998, the feature of seeing a person's friends list became available. Each of these things existed in some form before the six degree was created. Profiles were also found on most popular dating websites and many community sites. There was a website called classmate.com where people could join, but they couldn't make profiles or have friends until many years later. Six degrees was the first to bring together these characteristics. Six degrees was a tool that helped people connect with others and easily send messages to them. Six Degree was a popular website, but it couldn't make enough money and had to shut down in 2000. The person who started six degree thought that it was just too early for its time.

Although some individuals were already using the internet, many of them did not have a lot of online friends. People who adopted the internet early said they were bored after accepting friend requests. They also said that most people didn't want to meet people they didn't know online. From 1997 to 2001, several websites started offering options for creating profiles and sharing information about yourself. Websites like articulate friends, Asian Avenue, black planet, and miGente allowed users to create profiles for personal, professional, and dating purposes. Users could also add their funding information to their profiles without needing approval.

The next group of social media sites started when Ryze.com was created in 2001 to assist individuals in making the most of their professional connections. Basically, the creators of Ryze, Tribe net, LinkedIn, and Friendster had some personal and professional connections. They thought they could help each other without trying to be better than each other. But ultimately, Ryze did not become widely popular. LinkedIn is a strong business service and can be compared to Friendster. However, some people consider it to be one of the biggest disappointment in internet history.

Technology began to change rapidly in the 20th century, and social media also started to evolve. After the first very powerful computers were made in the 1940s, scientists and engineers started creating connections between these computers, and this eventually resulted in the creation of the internet. The first version of the internet, like CompuServe, was created in the 1960s. Simple versions of electronic communication were also created during this time. In the 1970s, technology for connecting computers got better. In 1979, the internet was created and people could use it to talk to each other through a digital newsletter and bulletin board system. In the

1980s, more and better home computers were being used by people. Internet relay chats, also known as IRCs, were created in 1988 and became widely liked during the 1990s.

The first social media site was called six degree and it was created in 1997. It allowed people to create a profile and connect with others by making friends. According to Andy Schmidt, who is in charge of communication at viral, blogging sites started to become popular in 1999. This led to the rise of social media, which is still popular today.

After blogging was created, social media became very popular. Websites such as Myspace and LinkedIn became important in the early 2000s and sites like photo bucket made it easy to share photos online. YouTube was created in 2005 and it allowed people to communicate and share information with each other from distant locations.

In 2006, Facebook and Twitter became accessible to people all over the world. These websites are still very popular social platforms on the internet. After a while, websites like Tumblr, Spotify, Pinterest, and Foursquare started to appear, catering to specific interests in social networking.

Today, there are a lot of different social networking websites where people can talk to their friends and family from all over the world. We can only guess what social media will be like in the next 10 or 50 to 100 years, but it is clear that it will still exist in some way as long as people are around.

## **2.2 Conceptual Review**

### **2.2.1 Concept of Social Media**

Asemah (2013), describes social media as a network of people or organizations who are connected through different kinds of relationships like friendship, family, disagreement, romantic involvement, information, or reputation. Social media is a strong tool that allows us to connect with others, share information and opinions, and learn new things. It is a way for people to talk and share things using computers and the internet. Social media is always changing and requires you to keep learning and adapting. Whether you use social media or work in marketing, it's important to understand the basic ideas behind it. Popular websites like Facebook and Instagram have different things one can do on them. You can see what other people have posted, videos or images that you like and have your own online page where you can post words, pictures, and videos. These platforms can only be used on personal computers, laptops, smartphones, and other devices.

Social media has many advantages for both individuals and groups. These advantages include:

- Creating strong connections with others
- Making customers happier and more loyal to the company
- Providing feedbacks and insights.
- Making and sharing things that people have created
- Enhancing brand awareness
- Teaching and providing fun experiences to people all around the world.

This means that social media is important for people who want to connect with others, learn, and have an impact on their desired audience.

Social networking is one of the main activities that people do on social media. It involves connecting with other users. Social networking can help find new Friends and customers.

Some popular example of social media networking sites includes: Facebookm ,WhatSapp, Twitter, Instagram, Tiktok, Snapchat, YouTube, LinkedIn, Reddit, Quoral

**Facebook:** According to Asemah and Edegoh (2010) is a social networking sites which allows participant to create a profile search and receive friends request. It also gives participant the ability to upload profile pictures, tag pictures and comments on pictures of friends. Facebook is one of the most known and widely used social media platform in the world. Facebook has been able to develop a range of features and tools to enhance the user's experiences such as messenger, which allows people to chat with each other, video call anytime they wish to. Facebook is one of the fast developing social networking site, it is a way for people to keep in touch with each other. Young people tend to prefer Facebook as a source of news and information rather than listening to radio or watching television (Asemah and Edegoh, 2013).

**WhatsApp:** Whatsapp is a mobile messaging application permitting users to receive and send messages, make voice calls and upload videos with iPhones, BlackBerry, Android, Windows Phone and Nokia (Hindu, 2011; Barhoumi, 2015).WhatSapp network is not only used for social interaction, but also it is used as an instructional and educational material or as a platform (Roblyer et al, 2010)

**Twitter:** Twitter is a website where people send messages called tweets. These tweets can contain words, videos, pictures, or web addresses. To use Twitter, you must have internet and a

smartphone to get on the app or website. Twitter has a special tool that allows you to look for and track specific topics and people from anywhere in the world.

**Instagram:** Instagram is a website that lets people share and change pictures with others. The app started in 2010 and it allows people take pictures, improve them, and show them to other people. We can think of this as a different type of social media, where people communicate with each other using pictures (Jin et al., 2015). This app is all about sharing photos and videos with the people who follow you. It also has various methods to make videos and photos better. Because of this, many people who enjoy taking photos have become interested in using Instagram.

**TikTok:** TikTok is a new website where people can share videos and it has become really famous. It's a website or app where you can watch very short videos that are only 60 seconds or less. TikTok is well-known for its widespread dance challenges and entertaining videos. You can mostly use it on mobile phones, but you can still watch TikTok videos on the web app. The platform allows users to have fun with their content by adding filters, stickers, voice recordings, sound effects, and background music.

**Snapchat:** Snapchat is a well-known app that lots of people use. According to Ingram (2015) Snapchat has reached around 6 billion video views a day that is too close to the Facebook. Snapchat is extremely famous and has become one of the largest social media platforms globally. "It's an application where you can share pictures and videos with your friends. "Snapchat makes it simple to talk with your loved ones and friends. It also has a feature called Live Stories where you can look at and learn about different places in the world. Life becomes much more fun when you use Snapchat. The app also has a "story" feature that allows users to

easily share pictures. You can tell stories to your friends on Snapchat, but they will go away after one day. That is the greatest part about Snapchat. People tell each other about fun things they do, games they play, and good times they have. Snapchat lets you send private messages to your loved ones. It feels more like sharing with a close friend than just sending a normal message. It also lets users chat with their friends and family.

**YouTube:** YouTube is a website where you can watch videos that are live or videos that have already been recorded. Lots of people who make videos on YouTube get paid by putting ads in their videos. The platform has many different channels that talk about specific things like music, games, and comedy. YouTube was created in 2005 as a website that allows users to upload, watch, and share videos for free. Right now, YouTube is the third most popular website, and many people from around the world use it. Each day, more than 2 billion people watch YouTube videos and every minute, 35 hours of video are uploaded. People can create their own channels on this website. They can upload and share videos, leave comments, rate videos, and discover more videos to watch. This website is a space where people come together and have conversations with each other. According to Downes (2008), YouTube has made the Internet more fun and engaging. It is well-liked because it has lots of different videos to watch and a wide range of content to choose from. YouTube lets individuals share their own personal or amateur videos, along with advertisements and high-quality professional videos.

**LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is a website where people who work in the same field can make connections with each other. It's a useful website where you can create and promote your personal brand, showcase your talents and achievements, and look for job opportunities. LinkedIn is currently a very popular and profitable social media platform on the internet these

days. It was created in 2003 as a website for experts to communicate online, even if they are not at the same location. After becoming a public company in May 2011, LinkedIn includes some new things like a newsfeed, user content, and the ability to follow professionals. These changes made it easier for people to participate and stay longer on the website. The network has over 260 million people using it in 200 different countries. LinkedIn is a useful tool for undergraduate students to find work experiences, employment opportunities, and build relationships with professionals in their field of study. Users make a profile on the website, like a resume, where they can show their different abilities. The website uses numbers and studying information to help people find and make friends or join groups that are important to them.

**Reddit:** Reddit is a great website to discover goods you like, discourse with others, and hear their studies or opinions. Ovadia & Anderson (2015) agreed that Reddit can be helpful for academic disquisition, but multitudinous people don't use it effectively. They refer to Reddit as a place where people can get better at chancing and understanding information. It's truly important for librarians to understand how people perceive authority and talk about it on Reddit.

**Quora:** Quora is a point where you can ask questions, get answers, and express your studies by leaving commentary or advancing on answers. Quora is a special website where people can connect with each other and follow each other, just like a social network. It's not like other websites that are similar to it. This tool assists you in gaining knowledge, switching ideas, and displaying your chops and moxie. It also shows that you have a good understanding of the subject.

According to Asemah, Nwaoboli & Beli, (2022), Instagram and Facebook are two of the most popular social media platform in Nigeria with millions of users who actively engaged in

discussion on various topics. Constantly, people use the terms social media and social networking interchangeably. Social media refers to online communication channels, sharing of content and interacting in many ways while social networking is one of the functions or purposes of social media which involves connecting with other users with similar interest. Social networking means using social media to find and communicate with people who like the same goods as you. It helps people meet new people and find new buyers.

According to Carlson (2006), Young people use social media because they can engage with it, unlike traditional media. Buehner, Pilencher, and Veil (2011) believe that it's largely precious to communicate with others on social media. Social marketing is a way for companies and people to advertise and promote their products and services using social media. This means trying to get certain people interested in buying commodity by showing them announcements and using marketing ways. The thing is to reach implicit guests and move them to make a purchase. There are different goods being advertised on social media platforms like WhatsApp and YouTube to get people interested in buying a specific product or service. Social media can also be a way to partake in information with people and make them more alive. Adverts are created to attract people's attention and make a product appear fascinating, so that the target audience will take notice of it. Social knowledge is a different idea when it comes to social media. This means knowledge and getting better at purchasing goods while using social media. This means we can learn from other people's exploits and partake our knowledge with others. Social influence is when someone uses social media to make other people change their studies or conduct. This means that there are multitudinous ways to make someone feel happy or sad.

The generality of good influence refers to inspiring others to develop positive habits, sharing and training about one's culture. On the other hand, bad influence includes conduct like cyberbullying, sharing unambiguous content, and pretending to be someone else. The Cyberbullying Institute's 2019 survey of U.S. middle and high school students found that over 36 percent report having been cyberbullied at some point in their life, with 30 percent having been victimized twice or more. It was discovered that about 15 of individuals admitted to bullying someone on the internet at least formerly, and nearly 11 admitted to doing it two or multiple times. Young people can sometimes use social media in a bad way by lying, sharing videos that hurt someone's character, and obliging others to do goods they don't want to do through risks. We need to Know about how social media impacts us. Social media can affect society in both good and bad ways. Social media makes it easy for people to talk to each other and stay in touch with buddies who live far down.

Social media helps people learn further about important motifs and contributes to creating a better society. Using social media can make people feel worried and upset, and this can be dangerous for their mental health. This can also lead to their particular information being used in ways they didn't agree to. It has also been criticized for the spread of misinformation and hate speech. Use of social media to stay connected can backfire, allowing blocking, ignoring, and defriending features along with the ability to take information out of context causing anxiety and stress (Sokol, 2013; Strickland, 2017) when information is not presented in the correct way, people can get the wrong understanding of it and misinterpret it. So, it's important to understand social media so that we can make wise opinions about how we use it.

### **2.2.2 Concept of Sexual Content**

Sexual content is controversial and complex topic, it covers a wide range of media and content ranging from explicit videos and images to subtle innuendos in advertisement. Talking or writing about sexual content can be very complicating as different people have their different opinions and ideas that has been shaped overtime by the environment in which they were socialized. Different media platforms in one way or the other project sexual content which can either be very clear or more secret, like messages that are hidden in advertisements. Sexual content refers to anything that is intended to arouse someone's sexual interest or attract their sexual desires. These sexual things are videos, pictures, or texts that show sexual activities, which can make people feel aroused or interested in sex. Camilleri et al. (2021). A lot of people accidentally see explicit content when they go on websites for adults.

A recent report published by Common sense Media (2022) found that 58% of the people they asked came across pornography accidentally. Even though people often talk about sex, there are many different types of sexual content. Research indicates that some kinds of sexual content are more common than others. The findings indicate that people frequently discuss sex but don't necessarily engage in sexual activities as frequently. Sexual content can have a big effect on individuals and society in general. It influences how we think about sexual content and how we behave in our relationships. Sexual content can affects us greatly in our daily lives. It is necessary to know about sex to have good relationships and avoid sexual violence. Our behavior is influenced by what we observe and our surroundings from the moment we are born. This impact is most powerful when we are young and becomes less strong as we grow older, but it never completely goes away. In our society, sex is often used to sell products and entertain people. This means that youth begin learning about sex when they are young. But what can occur

if young individuals are exposed to sexual content at a young age. When young people see sexual things a lot, it can make them more likely to have sex themselves.

The media often shows sexual content in a good way, and the government doesn't control sexual content properly. This can make people unsure about why safe sexual activities is important and what love truly is. In the past, the media has always influenced how people act and view the world. The media has changed how people think they should look, act, and speak by showing them popular clothes and physical standards. In modern times, using sexual content on TV has become an effective way to get more people to watch and buy things. Therefore, TV shows display more sexual content regularly. Teenagers are exposed to a lot of sexual content in movies, TV shows, and other media, and it is impacting them. This can be seen from the large amount of teenagers who are getting pregnant and the growing number of young people who are starting to have sex at the age of 12.

Research has discovered that when a child watches TV for more than an hour a day, there is usually a sexual scene about every 10 minutes (Landau E, 2008). Sexual content has effects on our society that can be either positive or negative. The great thing about sexual content is that it can help us learn about sex. Watching sexual content can teach you about sex and influence how you think and feel about it. It also helps students in schools or colleges become more aware and well-informed. In some school classes, they teach about sex, why it matters, and the good and bad things about it. This helps students learn more about how their romantic and close relationships should be. During the teenage years (between 13 and 17), some people may begin to discover their sexuality and do things like touching themselves for pleasure and having relationships with others who are also going through the same changes. This is seen as regular

and anticipated. Sexual behaviors become a problem when someone hurts or takes advantage of someone else, is forceful without permission, or involves much younger children (Hackett, 2014).

Sexual content on social media or any kind of media can make people feel good and relaxed. The study suggests that a lot of people who view porn on the internet do so to unwind and experience sexual pleasure. Young people today like to watch sexual content whenever they get the opportunity. Sexual content can sometimes make people believe that there is only one way to be attractive, which can make them feel unhappy about themselves and lead to unhealthy eating behaviors. Many people believe that watching sexual content at a young age can lead to starting sex earlier and becoming a teenage parent. As per the social learning theory proposed by Bandura (1971), children learn how to act by watching and imitating other children and adults. So, if kids watch grown-ups having sex, they might feel curious and want to try it as well. There is evidence that sexual content in media can encourage risky sexual behaviors because it presents sex in a way that is not true to real life. In 2019,

Perry et al. (2019) conducted a study to understand how watching sexual content might impact the sexual conduct of men who have sex with other men. Watching sexual content in movies, TV shows, or other media can make people more likely to do bad things like hurting others, not treating them as equals, and getting sick with diseases like HIV/AIDS, STIs, and STDs. It can also cause unintended pregnancies. Many young people are now doing risky sexual things, and some people wonder if social media is to blame because of the sexual things they see online (Ajagurra & Oladeji, 2017)

Sexual content has been shown in the entertainment industry for a long time, since ancient times when sexual acts were portrayed on pottery and artwork. As the media evolved and

expanded, it began to show more pictures and messages about sex in books, pictures, movies, and other ways of communicating. Today, the internet makes it easy for people to find and see sexual materials. This information is on online platforms like social media sites and adult websites, and can be seen by anyone who uses these platforms. In the past, research has believed that when people see sexual content in the media, it makes them more likely to have sex. Brown & Collins, (2006).

There are various types of sexual content, such as very explicit pornography or attractive advertisements. Another form of sexual content that has become more popular in recent times is known as "Sexting . " This refers to sending sexually explicit text messages or photos through text messages or social media. (Van Ouytsel et al., 2015) Sexting is when people send sexual content using a phone or computer. However, the meaning of sexting can vary depending on what exactly someone is doing, what kind of things they are sharing, and whether it is only about sexual things or also includes things that are meant to be sexually exciting. It can also be used to harm or exploit others. This usually happens on websites like Facebook, WhatSapp, and Instagram, where people often talk about being harassed sexually.

Another type of sexual content that has caused disagreement is when sexual violence is shown in movies, TV shows, or other forms of media. Sexual violence happens when someone does a sexual act to another person without their permission. This might involve making someone do something sexual or putting pressure on them to do it. The World Health Organization (WHO) says that sexual violence can happen in various situations, such as when someone is forced to have sex by someone they know, or by someone they don't know. It can also happen to people who are disabled or children. Sexual violence can also mean being forced

to marry someone, not being allowed to use birth control or protection against diseases, or being made to have an abortion without wanting it. Sexual violence happens a lot and is common.

Over 20% of women report that they have been sexually attacked by someone they were very close to, and around 33% of girls say that their first sexual encounter was not agreed upon. (Jewkes et al., 2002) This is a major issue that affects both the well-being of the general population and the rights of individuals. It makes the victims unhealthy and not able to do well. Violence in society can make people comprehend and discuss important subjects. These explicit materials on social media can also be distressing and damaging to people who have experienced sexual violence. Other types of explicit sexual content include pictures or videos showing people engaged in sexual activity, people without clothes on, or using explicit language, such as pornography. Implicit sexual content means content that does not directly show sexual images or activities, but still suggests or implies sexual things. This means discussing about sex, displaying sexual pictures, or depicting situations that involve sexual acts. Then there is nudity, which refers to images or drawings of people without any clothes on. It shows the human body. Sexual things people see and hear can have a big influence on society because it shapes their thoughts about sex and how they behave and build relationships. Sexual content can influence people to pursue casual relationships, but it can also be used to share harmful messages.

Nowadays, it is easier for young people to find sexual content on social media and the Internet. This is concerning because young people may not be prepared to deal with the difficult parts of sexual relationships. Technology has a significant impact on sexual content. When technology advances, the way people make and view sexual content also changes. This is particularly accurate for young people. Social media platforms let people easily view and

exchange sexual content. Social media can affect how teenagers think about and understand sex and sexuality as they grow up and become more social. (Ward 2003).

One of the most significant impact of technology most especially on social media is the rise of pornography. Technology has made pornography even more addictive. Pornography addiction is when someone gets psychologically independent with watching, reading, and thinking about sexually explicit content. (Goodman, 1990). This excessive focus has a negative impact on different areas of their life. Pornography addiction occurs when individuals excessively engage in activities like frequently reading of explicit books or watching graphic movies. This behavior starts to interfere with the things they do every day. It is believed that through pornography addiction, youngsters get a twisted view of what constitutes normal sexual relationship (Carnes,1991). If the youth are growing up in a culture where porn is widespread, it's probable that many of these young people in college are participating in watching or creating porn. Some people believe that watching excessive pornography can give young people a distorted view of what a normal sexual relationship should be like.

Because the Internet and smartphones are getting faster and more popular, there is now more easily accessible pornography. This can create trouble for people and communities. It can lead to addiction and violence. More and more people are using videos and pictures to learn about sexual health. Paul (2005) believe that teenagers are generally too young to handle pornography and fully comprehend the distinction between fantasy and reality. People are concerned that the information shared online may not always be true or suitable. In the future, how sexual content is made and watched will depend on the combination of technology and the rules set by society. It is up to every individual to handle these changes carefully.

## **2.3 Opinion Review**

### **2.3.1 Role of Social Media in the Society**

Social media plays a major role in our modern society. It helps people stay connected and share ideas with others in a secure place. Using social media makes it very easy to send messages and share information with people all around the world. Asemah & Ezeji (2020) notes that the media has the power to make people think more positively about things. Before social media, it was hard for people to stay in touch with friends and family who lived far away. Now, people are unable to share information about their lives or spend joyful moments with their loved ones. Many parts of human life, including things like money, how we live, school, what is normal, and how we act, have gone through these changes. (Mangi et al., 2018). It has been noted that it is critical to understand how attitudes are formed and what influences them due to this influence and the media's dissemination of unrealistic pictures and ideas. Many facets of social behaviour, including aggression, social stereotyping, pro-social behavior and social views, have been found to be impacted by the media. Nowadays, the majority of social scientists concur that being exposed to violent contents online has a direct correlation with aggressive behaviour. Asemah (2011)

Social media is really important in our society because it has helped us improve how we communicate, do business, enjoy entertainment, find good food, and live better lives. It has also made changes in how societies work in the last ten years. Akashraj & Pushpa, ( 2014)

In 2019, the World Health Organization found that many adults and teenagers aren't exercising enough and are spending too much time on social media. The Pew Research Center studied how young people use technology. They found out that 92% of young people go on the internet every day. Only 89% of people use social networking sites. 24% of people say they are constantly using the internet. (Lenhart, 2015). Using social media can be useful for businesses. Social media makes it simple for people to buy things online, such as food, clothing, and other stuff. It has helped companies expand by offering a way to sell things on the internet.

Many online companies are making a large amount of money by using this method. People can easily buy things they want by ordering them online. After that, the things are sent directly to their houses. People are very occupied with their lives and don't have much time to go shopping and spend a long time shopping for things. Companies and brands have created websites and apps that allow you to buy things on the internet. Small local restaurants can use social media to connect with their community and make people aware of their business. Using social media helps businesses to talk to customers, make more people aware of their brand, and sell more products. Lots of people use social media every day for different reasons, and it is very popular all around the world. These websites have taken away many obstacles to communication and created a platform where it is simple to talk and exchange ideas.(Romero, 2015).

Social media has become more important in people's lives, not only for personal reasons. This has caused a significant difference in how companies choose employees. Managers of an

organization or company now check social media to find out what people did in their past jobs before employment. Some companies check someone's Facebook page to find out what they like, don't like, and where they have traveled. Social media has also made it easier to plan and have video calls, conferences, and meetings. Companies can now use video calls for their meetings. They no longer need to search for a location or go far away. They use the internet to organize their meeting. They also waste time by checking their social media posts. This is a new thing that people are doing today. When people wake up in the morning, they usually find their mobile phones to see the news. Then they like to sit on a flat sofa and enjoy the things posted on social media. Social media is currently a popular source of entertainment for people. Whether they are not enjoying their work, traveling on a bus, or simply lacking interest, they can open their social media application and check out videos and posts from their friends and other people to keep themselves entertained. Social media is an important part of our daily lives and a fun way to spend time.

Social media lets people earn money by entertaining others. They can make money by posting videos and other things on these websites. If someone has something interesting to share that impacts people and if people enjoy it, they will pass it on to others. This helps to get more people who follow and subscribe. In easier words, when people brag about what they can do and make others happy, they can begin getting paid.

The Covid-19 pandemic messed up the education system, so we had to take classes online. Social media helped students and teachers talk to each other on the internet. In school, when students talked about their ideas and asked questions, it had an impact on their performance. Scientists have found out that the way we learn has changed because the world has

become more technologically advanced. Traditional classroom methods have been swapped with online learning. . (Bashir et al., 2021).

Social media is a platform where people can share different types of information and news with others. Social media has allowed people to share their experiences of being treated unfairly or badly with others. It helps everyone to freely express their rights and publicly speak out against violence. Asemah (2015) states that the behavioural aspects of sexuality are included and the limits of sexual activity are becoming more relaxed. The only thing that seems to have changed over time are the circumstances, not perceptions.

According to Nwaboli & Asemah (2021) social media platforms Allow users to connect with one another and build virtual communities based on shared interest experience or goals. These are all the positive things that social media brings to society.

On the negative side, social media has been criticized and blamed for sharing untrue information and made-up news. Because social media is used to share lots of things and those things can spread fast, content that is shocking or causes arguments gets shown more than other content. This could cause wrong or deceptive information to spread a lot. There is a lot of false information being spread on social media recently. Nowadays, people no longer concern themselves with the consequences of sharing or posting false information and news on social media. They are only concerned with getting likes and views to improve their social media accounts. But this can be really harmful for individuals and the community. Using social media too much can mean that someone is not taking care of their health and may have problems with their behavior. Faber & Kuo (2004). People say that social media sites are not doing a good job of protecting their users from mean comments, hurtful words, cyberbullying, and other types of

online mistreatment. These issues are very important and can harm the individuals who are targeted. Using social media can also impact how we feel mentally. Spending too much time on social media can make young people feel more worried, sad, and have difficulty falling asleep.

According to world health organization (2019), Over 20% of adults and 30% of teenagers don't exercise enough and spend too much time on social media. Social media can make someone feel the need to constantly use it. The term FOMO, which stands for fear of missing out, has been around since before social media like Facebook and Instagram came into existence. But these websites can often make you feel even worse because they make you believe that other people are having more fun or living better lives than you are. The idea of not being able to do certain things can make someone feel unhappy with themselves. This might make people feel stressed and spend even more time on social media, which can have some bad effects on society. It can be useful, if we make the right plans and rules. Social media helps connect people, share information, and enable positive actions. People and groups need to use social media carefully and make sure that they are accountable for what they share on these platforms.

### **2.3.2 Influence of Social Media on Social Behaviour**

Social media has changed how people communicate and act towards one another. The fast and easy way to communicate and exchange information, whether it is true or not, has caused people to have a different perspective of themselves and the world. Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010); Macnamara & Zerfass, (2012). Social media is a tool that helps people make friends and affects how people behave in social situations. Social media has caused people to change their behavior because they want to be accepted by different groups. Using websites and apps like Instagram and Facebook is causing people to feel worried and pushed to do things. This is making their

mental well-being worse. More and more people are feeling alone because they like spending time on the internet rather than being with their loved ones. Using social media can make people act in ways that are not good or safe. This might include motivating people to do very hard workouts and promoting unrealistic standards of beauty. It centers on the attitude, perception, reaction, and disposition of an individual to others around him (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Social behavior is how people act and it is not acceptable to do things that are wrong. Using social media too often can make it difficult for someone to have less face to face conversations with people. Everyone knows that you can talk to people on social media, but it's still not the same as being in the same room with them. This can be harmful for people's ability to communicate, particularly for undergraduate students who wish to talk to their course mates, friends, or peers. Social media has a powerful influence and can grab people's attention easily, making it difficult for them to stop using it. . It centers on the attitude, perception, reaction, and disposition of an individual to others around him (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).Next, there is the actual content that individuals create and share, such as thoughts, messages, information, and news.

Lastly, there are the people who use and like this material. Different types of groups and individuals, Using social media every day is starting to affect people's work, making them less productive. Social media is a place where people can spread things that are not true or correct. This can lead people to do risky or harmful actions because they want to imitate what they see on social media. Sometimes, people have done risky challenges on apps like TikTok and gotten seriously hurt. In the past, scientists looked at how computers can assist with sexual health, but they didn't investigate how social media can be used for this purpose Bailey, R., et al. (2012).

However, Orozco-Olvera and Cluver (2019) said that the media doesn't have a big impact on promoting safe sexual content, because young people see a lot of inappropriate sexual content on the internet. Social media apps are made to make us want to use them all the time, and the things we see on them can make us less caring or understanding of others. This means we may not feel as bothered or upset by things that were once thought of as not allowed or bad. Looking at inappropriate pictures or videos on social media can change how young adults, especially students, behave socially. This could mean changing how people see love and friendships, and influencing their ideas and values about what is right or wrong. There is a connection between using social media and more instances of sexual violence and assault. It's risky to share sexual content on social media without getting permission or telling someone beforehand. This can affect how people decide what's acceptable for sexual activities and make them see more violent pictures, which can seriously hurt their well-being, both physically and mentally.

Social media has a big impact on how people behave and talk to each other. It can bring people closer and help them learn more about important things. However, it can also lead to the sharing of inappropriate sexual material that grabs people's interest. This text could make young people feel like acting mean and not showing respect. It's really important for people who use social media to understand the potential dangers and use it responsibly. If they do not, it can create big issues for both the individuals using it and society in general.

### **2.3.3 Social Media and Undergraduates**

The use of social media sites among undergraduates Students of tertiary institution in Nigeria is getting veritably intimidating and fashionable. Social media sites includes Yahoo runner, Facebook runner, Google talk, Google runner, iPhone, Android and so on. (Asemah,

Okpanachi and Edegoh, 2013). Undergraduate students in these tertiary institution don't want to be left out when it comes to using these social media platforms rather they get laboriously connected to social media websites and operations. Social media has handed undergraduates the occasion to connect with other people and foster a better relationship with musketeers and family worldwide. Undergraduates login to any of the several social media sites including but aren't limited to Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, YouTube, Wikipedia, Google, LinkedIn, Fickler and Reddit. Heartfield (2013); Odero (2003); Edegoh et al. (2013). The use of social media has also handed undergraduates a pathway to gaining further knowledge making their academic work veritably readily, undergraduates who are in need for information and knowledge could go in hunt of this social media spots like Google in order to enhance their academic literacy process. The question to be asked is whether Undergraduates scholars use social media considerably for only their academic work.

Asemah & Ashonisere (2017) notes that government and public institution attempt to protect the population from the consequences of unhealthy behaviour by way of social marketing campaigns is to positively affect the behaviour of the target audience. The extensive use of social media can actually beget dependence in the sense that they become exposed to several sexual contents which can be set up in these social media spots. Undergraduates aren't exempted from this fact, these sexual contents on social media can impact their sexual life negatively. It can inversely lead to insulation and also reduce the druggies position of mortal commerce. The study of kanagarathinam (2014), showed that scholars use more of Facebook, WhatSapp, YouTube and Skype. Still, Google and LinkedIn were the least used among the repliers. Online social networking sites similar as Facebook and Myspace are regularly used by millions of

undergraduates scholars of tertiary institution( Paul et al, 2012) A check of 3000 scholars conducted in 2011 in the United States revealed that 90 percent of the university scholars make use of Facebook while 37 percent use Twitter( Dahlstrom et al, 2011).

The adding dimension of the use of social media among undergraduates cannot be over emphasized. Undergraduate students explore the colorful types of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter. Instagram for example is a primarily visual platform which focuses on prints and videos, Due to the point of this platform it might lead to undergraduates communicating in a further visual way similar as posting pictures of themselves, using of emoji's. Facebook is a more textbook grounded platform which provides different style of communication, it enables undergraduate students to communicate with their friends, peers and family worldwide through exchanges, video calls. It has also created the opportunity of viewing several content that are posted by different individuals online. On the other hand it can lead to the spread of harmful sexual Content which are being portrayed in a punchy and catchy manner to attract the youths of nowadays into behaving in an Ill-mannered and indecent way. Undergraduates frequently use social media to produce an online identify for themselves, this is an interpretation of themselves that they present to the world through their colorful social media biographies. This involves choosing a profile picture, a username and participating certain type of content online. Scholars of tertiary institution tend to compare themselves to others on social media and this comparison can in one way or another affect their tone regard.

They tend to compare things like their physical appearance, relationship, life gist's and social status. Social comparison on social media has both positive and negative effect on scholars. Positivity it can motivate them and inspire them to see others succeeding they too would want to

succeed and achieve their pretensions. Negatively, it can lead to passions of covetousness, instability, wanting to measure up to others not minding about the consequences. It's important for undergraduates to be apprehensive of the implicit pitfalls and benefits of social media and how it can be used in a healthy and balanced way.

## **2.4 Empirical Review**

For the empirical review, studies that are related to this work have been carefully selected. Their similarities and differences have also been discussed. The works are discussed below:

Asemah (2015) carried out a study on the influence of social media sexual content on the sexual behaviour of the student of Kogi state university anyigba. The research found out that students at Kogi State University prefer using Facebook and 2go more than any other social media platforms. The study also found that students from Kogi State University who view sexual content on the internet and social media are more likely to behave in a promiscuous way.

A study was conducted by Nwaboli, Ezeji & Osife-kurex (2022) on the impact of social media on the engagement in promiscuity among students in selected tertiary institution located in Benin city Nigeria. The study wanted to find out how many undergraduate students in Benin use social media to encourage promiscuity. This study aimed to find out why University students are being sexually promiscuous on social media and what problems it could cause. A survey was conducted using a questionnaire as the main tool for gathering information.

The research showed that social media has made more students in Edo state engage in casual sexual behavior. This problem can be caused by different things like pressure from friends, being poor, and not enough rules about sexual things on social media. Because of this, there are

more people acting badly. Due to these findings, the researcher recommended that students in tertiary institution should exercise self-discipline and refrain from engaging in social media discussions that may encourage promiscuous activities and behaviours.

Kalunta - Crumpton (2017) conducted a study on attitude and solution toward intimate partner violence: immigrant Nigerian women speak. This study shows that a typical young person from Nigeria has witnessed or experienced numerous sexual things and other behaviors that are seen as strange or inappropriate. Some tests done in labs and real life have found that watching TV can make young people more aggressive or more likely to take part in risky sexual activities. (Okafor & Obi 2005).

Adegboyega (2019) conducted a study on the influence of social media on the sexual behaviour of youth in kwara state. The study showed used the descriptive research design for the study. A total of 395 young people took part in the study. During a project, researchers asked a question and looked at three statements to see if they were true. These tests were done without being sure. The scientists used a set of questions called the "Influence of Social Media Questionnaire" to collect information for this research. The research discovered that social media has a major impact on how young people in Kwara State behave when it comes to sex. Using social media can lead students to send messages that are not appropriate, watch adult films, and do risky sexual activities, such as masturbation. Social media has a similar impact on the sexual behavior of young people in Kwara State, regardless of their gender, age, or university. People believe that counselors should inform students about the negative consequences of using social media, as well as discuss its potential benefits if used responsibly. Counselors need to give students clear and simple instructions on how to use technology in a way that is safe and polite.

They should also explain the consequences of misusing social media. This rule is for all students, regardless of their gender, age, or university.

Ashiekpe and ugande (2017) conducted a study on the effect of Social media sexting on adolescent and Youth sexual behaviour in Nigeria, they discovered that sexting has flooded social media platforms with explicit content, such that everyone using social media, either knowingly or unknowingly, is at risk of being exposed to this increasing trend. This study also found out that young people in Nigeria are going through puberty sooner and starting to have sex at an earlier age than before.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

According to Asemah (2011, p.131), a theory is only an attempt to synthesis and integrate empirical evidence for maximum clarity and coherence. When conducting research, theories are crucial. They play a vital role in testing and analysing theories. The theoretical framework which aids in determining the relevance of any study to our general understanding of the communication process. Having stated the above this study is therefore anchored on two theories, which are; Uses and gratification theory and Media dependency theory.

### **2.5.1 Uses and Gratification Theory**

The Uses and Gratification theory was created by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch in 1974. This theory is also called Utility theory. This approach focuses on the choices of the audience when using a specific media compared to others, as well as the different gratifications they get from the media based on their social and psychological needs. Severin and Tankard published a study in 1997. The Uses and Gratification theory focuses on what people

use the media for, rather than how the media affects people. Edegoh, Asemah, and Nwammuo (2015).

This theory tries to answer certain questions, such as:

- What are the things that people want to get by using media.
- How do people use different forms of communication and entertainment to meet their personal requirements?
- How does using media affect individuals or their social life?
- How do people's characteristics and personal differences impact the way they use media.

When it comes to sexual material, young people who are sexually active may purposely search for sexual content in the things they watch or listen to. People have different reasons for looking at sexual content. Some want to learn more about it, while others want to feel accepted for their own behavior. Young people who are engaging in sexual activities may also be curious about sex depicted in the media because of reasons like talking to friends or family about sex or discussing sex scenes in movies or TV shows. The idea that young people are using sexual content on social media to fulfill their desires matches the behavioral patterns we have discussed.

The theory has the following assumptions:

- Media use is purposeful and driven by people's motivations. They always have a reason for consuming media, either to get information or for entertainment.
- The choice of media depends on what the audience wants and needs.

- The media are in competition with other ways of satisfying our needs, but there are many different needs that can be fulfilled by consuming mass media.
- People use media because of their personal and mental reasons.
- Media messages do not have a powerful impact on individuals because they are active media users and choose to explore the media in their own way.

This theory is important to this work because it looks at how seeing sexual content on social media affects people's thoughts and feelings about the things they see online. Seeing sexual content in the media affects how young people think about sex, which can then lead them to start having sex. And when young people start having sex, it also affects how much they use the media

### **2.5.2 Media Dependency Theory**

Media dependency theory was created by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur in 1976. This theory is a way to study how mass media and social systems affect people, Yang (2021) cited by Omoteh, Liman, and Asemah (2021). The main idea of this theory is that people rely on the media to give them information that they want and need. Social institutions and media systems work together to make people interested and motivated to learn more. How much we rely on the media and what they say is really important in figuring out how media messages change what we think, how we feel, and what we do. Yaroson and Asemah (2008) cited in Asemah and Anatsin (2012).

This theory tries to answer some questions.

- Why do people start to depend on media?
- How does the media affect people's relationships, jobs, and free time?
- How do people and society use media in their everyday lives?

Sexual content on social media becomes a part of people's lives and can affect how they think and act. Young people who rely on social media for information about sex and relationships can end up having unrealistic ideas about them. They might also compare their own experiences with what they see on social media.

The theory has the following assumptions:

- People start wanting media because they think it gives them something important.
- If someone relies heavily on media, they might have problems if they can't use it anymore.
- Relying too much on media can cause people to do less face-to-face interaction.
- It can cause problems in people's social and mental well-being.

This theory is of the notion that people who rely on social media for making friends are more likely to use sexual stuff to feel good about themselves and fit in. This can cause them to feel more alone and sad and have less friends.

## **2.6 Summary**

The main aim of the literature study was to look at other people's work,, books and studies that are important, and related to this study. The literature review helps us understand the topic better

and gives us a strong base to conduct our study. It strengthens the foundation of our research. So this chapter talks about everything related to all of the aforementioned points

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter focuses and discuss the method and procedures that is used for the purpose of generating relevant and accurate data, which will be used to fulfill research objectives and to answer the study's research questions. To this end, this chapter is presented and discussed under the following subheading;

- Research design
- Population of the study
- Sample size

- Sampling Technique
- Instrument of data collection
- Validity of Study
- Reliability of instrument
- Methods of Data collection
- Method of data analysis

### **3.1 Research Design**

The purpose of this type of research design According to Asemah, Gujbawu , Ekharefo & Okpanachi (2017) is to gather both large and small samples from population in order to study the distribution and interactions of educational activities such as sociological and psychological variables. Surveys are frequently employed because they are thought to be the best tool for gathering data in the behavioural sciences. For this study a survey research design will be utilized. According to Asemah (2012 ) the term survey refers to the comprehensive examination of a subject. This research design is in form of survey through the administration of questionnaires. This approach is appropriate considering that the goal of the research which is to determine the level of exposure of social media Sexual content and its Influence on the sexual behaviour of undergraduates of University of Benin, Benin city. Consequently it is a practical way to acquire accurate information.

### **3.2 Population of the study**

The population of this study is male and female undergraduates of University of Benin Ekehuan campus drawn from 4 department namely: Mass communication, Early childhood education, Theatre Arts and Fine Arts respectively. The population of study is that group about whom we want to be able to draw conclusions. The population of this study consisted of undergraduate and postgraduate students of University of Benin, Ekehuan Campus. Which were gotten from official review and analysis from the departments within the campus, the number of students as at the 2021/2022 academic session arrived at: Early Childhood Education – 450, Fine and Applied Arts – 520, Mass Communication – 1260, Theatre Arts – 700, Total = 2930

### **3.3 Sample Size**

The sample size is the number of subjects taken to present the entire population. The sample size of this study was 352. Undergraduate and postgraduate students in Ekehuan Campus, University of Benin. The sample size was derived using the Cochran (1967) formula for sample size determination as shown below:

Formula:  $N=n / [1+(n/p)]$

N= Sample Size

N= Estimated Sample

P= Population of the study

The estimated sample for this study is 400

Therefore:

$N= 400[1+ (400/2930)]$

$$= N = 400 / (1 + 0.137)$$

$$= N = 400 / 1.137$$

$$N = 351.8$$

$$N = 352$$

Therefore, the sample size for this study is 352.

### **3.4 Sampling Technique**

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample size required for this study. Purposive sampling technique is a variation of cluster sampling in which the probability of selecting a cluster is proportional to its size and an equal number of elements is sampled with each cluster. (Adedeji, 2012). According to Asemah and Okpanachi (2012) sampling technique is a method in which the researcher uses his or her judgment to choose respondents and select those that best meet the purpose of the study.

### **3.5 Instrument of Data Collection**

The research instrument used for this study was questionnaire. The research instrument for this study is a 17-item well-structured questionnaire divided into two sections, (A and B). The questionnaire consisted of two sections, section A, covering the demographic of respondents and section B which is the main body of the questionnaire answering the research questions.

### **3.6 Validity of the Instrument**

The instrument (questionnaire) that was used in this research work is valid because, after it was constructed and carefully studied, it was given to the researcher's supervisor to undergo critical examination and total scrutiny of some aspect of the questionnaire. This ensured that the instrument (questionnaire) was accurate.

### **3.7 Reliability of the instrument**

According to (Asemah 2012), The reliability of a research instrument refers to the consistency of scores obtained by the same person when retested with identical text or with an equivalent form of the test in different occasions. Questionnaire, as the instrument of data collection, was tested to be highly reliable in fulfilling the objectives of this research study and answering the study's research questions, as the questionnaire was subjected to a pilot study. The research instrument was self-administered to the respondents with the help of a research assistant and the required number of questionnaires (352) for this study were efficiently administered and retrieved from the respondents. The 352 copies of the questionnaire, were distributed to undergraduate and postgraduate students within the four (4) departments in Ekehuan Campus, University of Benin. The researcher visited the four (4) departments in Ekehuan Campus and distributed the questionnaire accordingly. The researcher ensured that only those students who have knowledge of this topic, filled the questionnaire so as to reduce the level of errors from the respondents. To spread the distribution of the questionnaire, the researcher visited and divided them equally among the students in the four (4) departments in Ekehuan Campus.

### **3.8 Methods of Data Collection**

The questionnaire was the primary data gathering tool used in this investigation. The researcher collected data using the person-to-person technique with the help of one research assistant in order to get in touch with 352 respondents across all department and levels in Ekehuan campus. This was done in order to get a more accurate data. The researcher was able to collect all of the questionnaires that were admitted without losing any of them because the completed questionnaire was retrieved on the spot. This allowed the researcher to clarify issues that may have surfaced with the respondent within the context of the conflicting research ethics.

### **3.9 Method of Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistical tools such as tabulations, frequency, tables, bar chart and simple percentage in the analysis of all the data will be collected from the respondents with the aim of achieving the objectives of the study. The method employed was person to person approach. This ensured that all the copies of the questionnaire distributed were the same retrieved. Also, the research provided the opportunity for the researcher to clarify any issue within the confines of research ethics.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents and analysis the data that was collected through the questionnaire. They were collected and analysed by using the simple percentage method. A total of 352 questionnaire were distributed for the study. Therefore, it is logical for 352 respondents to represent 100% of the sample size being studied. The items in the questionnaire are analyzed below using frequencies, percentages and tables for the presentation of data.

#### 4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

Variable	No of Respondents	Percentage
Male.	111	68.5%
Female	241	31.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 1 reveals that both males and females were involved in the study. However, Female respondents were more available to participate in the study, as compared to their Male counter parts.

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age**

Variable	No of Respondents	Percentage
16 - 20 years	94	26.7%
21 - 30 years	244	69.3%
31 - 40 years.	9	2.6%
40 years and above	5	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of respondents by age. From the table, respondents from 16-20 had a count of 94(%) closely followed by respondents from 21-30 years which had the highest frequency count with 244(%), 31-40 with 9(%) and 40 years and above with 5(%). The implication of the result is that majority of respondents are between 21-30 years old.

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Educational qualification**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
First degree.	68	19.3%
Masters	7	2%
Phd	6	1.7%
Others	271	77 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 3 shows the distribution by educational qualification. The table shows that 68(%) of the respondents had a first degree, 7(%) had masters, 6(%) had PhD and 271(%) had other educational qualification. The implication is that majority of the respondents had other educational qualification apart from the aforementioned.

**Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Religion**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Christianity	304	86.4%
Islamic	45	12.8%
Traditional	3	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352 100%</b>	

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 4 shows the distribution by religion. The table shows that 304(%) of the respondents practice Christianity, 45(%) practice Islam and 3(%) practice Traditional Religion. The implication is that majority of the respondents practice Christianity.

**Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Single	340	96.6%
Married	6	1.7%
Divorced/Separated	4	1.1%
Widowed	2	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352 100%</b>	

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 5 depicts that the study involved respondents with various marital status. However, single respondents were more involved in the study than married respondents

**Table 6:Extent of exposure to sexual content on social media**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very high176	50%	
High86	24.4%	
Undecided20	5.7%	
Low32.	9.1%	
Very low 38	10.8%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 9 clearly reveal that a greater percentage of the sample size 176 respondents (50%) believe that the extent of exposure to sexual content is very high, while 86 respondents (24.4%) also believe the same is high. Hence, it is safe to conclude that the extent of exposure to sexual content is very high, as only a lesser percentage of the respondents (5.7%) were undecided and 5.7% believe it is very low.

**Table 7:Perception of sexual content on social media**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very good	4	1.1%
Good	18	5.1%
Undecided29	8.2%	
Bad	119	33.8%
Very bad 182	51.7%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 7 reveals numerous variables to measure how respondents perceive sexual content on social media. 182(51.7%) respondents believe that sexual content on social media is very bad, while 119(33.8%) believe that it is bad. This implies that majority of the respondents in this study believe that Sexual content on social media is very bad.

**Table 8: Extent to which the seeing of sexual content on social media influence your Sexual behavior**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very high	147	41.8%
High	114	32.4%
Undecided	27	7.7%
Low	52	14.8%
Very low	12	3.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 8 reveals numerous variables used to determine the extent to which the seeing of sexual content on social media influences the respondents sexual behavior. Majority of the respondents believe that the extent to which it has influenced their sexual behavior is very high while a lesser percentage of the respondents believed it is very low, and only 27 (7.7%) were Undecided. This indicate that the the extent to which the seeing of sexual content on social media influences the respondents sexual behavior is very high 147 (41.8%).

**Table 9: Sexual content on social media influence the academic performance of undergraduates**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	143	40.6%
Agree	99	28.9%
Undecided	26	7.4%
Disagree	66	18.8%
Strongly disagree	18	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 9 indicates that 143(40.6%) respondents strongly agree that the seeing of sexual content on social media influences academic performance, while 99(28.9%) respondents also agree with the statement. Lesser percentage strongly disagree with this statement. This indicates that a higher number of respondent agree that the seeing of sexual content on social media influences academic performance.

**Table 10: Extent to which social media sexual content influences the academic performance of undergraduates**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very high	163	46.3%
High	130	36.9%
Undecided	29	8.2%
Low	26	7.4%
Very low	4	1.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 10 reveals numerous variables used to determine the extent to which social media sexual content influences the academic performance of respondents who are undergraduate Student. Majority of the respondents believe that the extent to which it has influenced their academic performance is very high 163 (46.3%), while a lesser percentage of the respondents believe it is low This indicate that the extent to which social media Influences the academic performance of undergraduate is very high 163(46.3%).

**Table 11:Sexual content on social media makes you less motivated to do well in your studies**

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<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Strongly</b>
agree	140	39.8%	
Agree	98	27.8%	
Undecided	26	7.4%	
Disagree	65	18.5%	
Strongly disagree	23	6.5%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 11 shows that 140(39.8%) of the respondents strongly agree that seeing sexual content on social media makes one less motivated to do well in their studies 98(27.8%) Agree with the statement, 26(7.4%) undecided, 65(18.5%) disagreed and 23(6.5%) strongly disagreed. This implies that majority of uniben undergraduates agree that seeing sexual content on social media makes one less motivated to do well in their studies

**Table 12: Social media changes sexual attitude or behavior**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Strongly</b>
agree	153	45.3%	
Agree	112	31.8%	
Undecided	21	6%	
Disagree	56	15.9%	
Strongly disagree	10	2.8%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 12 above shows that, 153(45.3%) of the respondents Strongly agree that their sexual attitude or behavior have changed since they started using social media 112(31.8%) Agreed, 21(6%) were undecided on the statement, While 56(15.9%)disagreed and 10(2.8%)strongly disagreed. The implication of this result is that majority of respondents agree with the statement that their sexual attitude or behavior changed since they started using social media.

**Table 13: Social media changes the expectations of individuals about sex social media**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Strongly</b>
agree	151	42.9%	
Agree	129	36.6%	
Undecided	21	6%	
Disagree	46	13.1%	
Strongly disagree	5	1.4%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 13 above shows that, 151(42.9%) of the respondents Strongly agree that their expectations about sex have changed as a result of using social media 129(36.6%) Agreed, 21(6%) were undecided on the statement, While 46(13.1%)disagreed and 5(1.4%)strongly disagreed. The implication of this result is that majority of respondents agree with the statement that their expectations about sex have changed as a result of using social media.

**Table 14: Age, gender, religion and relationship status influence the way you perceive sexual content on social media?**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	166	47.2%
Agree	134	38.1%
Undecided	17	4.8%
Disagree	28	8%
Strongly disagree	7	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 14 reveals that 166(47.2%) respondents Strongly agree that age, gender, religion and relationship status influence the way they perceive sexual content on social media,17(4.8%) were Undecided while the least number of respondents 7(2%) strongly disagree that it doesn't. This implies that majority of the respondents in this study believe that age, gender, religion and relationship status influence the way they perceive sexual content on social media.

**Table 15: Extent to which you compare yourself with people who post sexual content**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very often	91	25.9%
Often	95	27%
Undecided	28	8%
Never	138	39.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 15 above shows that, 91(25.9%) of the respondents Very often find themselves comparing people who post sexual content with themselves, 95(27%) Often find themselves comparing people who post sexual content with themselves, 28(8%) were undecided on the statement, While 138(39.2%) have Never find themselves comparing people who post sexual content with themselves. The implication of this result is that majority of respondents agree with the statement that they have Never find themselves comparing people who post sexual content with themselves.

**Table 16: Extent to which you trust the information that you see about sexual content on social media**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very high	40	11.4%
High	54	15.3%
Undecided	30	8.5%
Low	106	30.1%

Very low.	122	34.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 16 reveals numerous variables used to determine the extent to which respondents trust the information that they see about sexual content on social media. Majority of the respondents believe the extent to which respondents trust the information that they see about sexual content on social media is Very low 122 (34.7%), while a lesser percentage of the respondents 30 (8.5%) were Undecided. This indicate that the extent to which respondents trust the information that they see about sexual content on social media is very low 122 (34.7%).

**Table 17: Social media platforms should do more to monitor and remove any inappropriate sexual Content.**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No of Respondents.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	255	72.4%
Agree	67	19%
Undecided	11	3.1%
Disagree	17	4.8%
Strongly disagree	2	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2024**

Table 14 reveals that 255(72.4%) respondents Strongly agree that Social media platforms should do more to monitor and remove any inappropriate sexual Content,11(3.1%) were Undecided while the least number of respondents 2(0.6%) strongly disagree that it shouldn't. This implies

that majority of the respondents in this study believe that social media platforms should do more to monitor and remove any inappropriate sexual Content.

## **4.2 Discussion of Findings**

### **4.2.1 Research question one: What is the level of exposure of Uniben undergraduates to sexual content on social media platforms and it's Influence on their sexual behavior?**

In order to answer this research question, data presented by Table 6 and Table 8 will be used. In trying to ascertain the level of exposure of undergraduates to sexual content. In social media platforms and the influence it has on their sexual behavior. Table 6 revealed that a greater number of respondents 176(50%) agrees that the extent of exposure to sexual content on social media is very high, while 86 (24.4%) agrees that it is high. A lower percentage of the respondents were undecided 20(5.7%) and 32 (9.1%) says it is low. This shows that to a large extent the level of exposure of Uniben undergraduates to sexual content on social media platforms is very high.

In the same vein, Table 8 ascertain that the extent to which the seeing of Sexual content on social media influence the sexual behavior of undergraduates is very high 147 (41.8%). 114(32.4%) believed it is high while 27(7.7%) were undecided and 52 (14.8%) believed it is low.

Therefore it is clear that uniben undergraduates students are exposed to a very high level of Sexual content on social media platforms and this exposure has a significant influence on their sexual behavior.

#### **4.2.2: Research Question 2: Does the exposure to sexual Content on social media influence the academic performance of the Undergraduates of University of Benin.**

In answering this research question Table 9 and 10 will be used. According to Table 9, 143(40.6%) respondents strongly agree that seeing sexual content on Social media can influence their academic performance while 99 (28.9%) also agree with the same. However a few respondents 26(7.4%) were undecided and 66(18.8%) of the respondents disagree that the exposure to sexual Content on social media influence the academic performance of undergraduates. Table 10 also revealed that respondents 163(46.3%) believes that the extent to which social media sexual content influences the academic performance of undergraduates is very high while 130(36.9%) believed it is high, 29(8.2%) were undecided and 26(7.4%) believed that it is low. This implies that findings of this study agrees that truely the exposure of sexual Content on social media platforms has a significant impact on their academic performance, therefore influence their overall development and well being while social media can be a valuable tool for education and social connection it is important to recognize the risks and take steps to minimize it's negative impacts.

#### **4.2.3: Research Question 3: what is the relationship between exposure to social media sexual content and changes in sexual behavior of Uniben undergraduates.**

In ascertaining the relationship between exposure to social media Sexual content and changes in sexual behavior of Uniben undergraduates, the data gathered from table 12 and table 13 will be used.

The data gathered in table 12 shows that 153(45.3%) respondents strongly agree that their sexual attitude/behavior have changed since they started using social media, 112(31.8%) agree

with this statement while 21 (6%) were undecided and 36(15.9%) of the respondents disagree with the statement. Therefore it is imperative to note that the findings of this study agree that social media Sexual content has a significant way of influencing changes in sexual behavior of Uniben undergraduates.

Also table 13 shows that a greater percentage of the respondents 151(42.9%) strongly agree that their expectations about sex have changed as a result of using social media, 129(36.6%) agree with this while 21(6%) of the respondents were undecided and 46(13.1%) disagree.

The implication of this result is that exposure to Sexual content on social media can have a profound impact on the attitudes and behavior of young undergraduates and this relationship should be taken seriously. It is important for universities and societies as a whole to understand the potential risks of social media use and to take steps to address the impact it may have on the sexual behavior of undergraduates students.

#### **4.2.4: Research Question 4: What are the factors that influence the way Undergraduates of University of Benin perceive and process sexual content on social media.**

This research question was aimed at determining the factors that influence the way Undergraduates of Uniben perceive and process sexual content on Social media. Reference will be made to Table 14. The data gathered shows that most of the respondents 166(47.2%) strongly agree that age,gender, religion and relationship status are those factors that influence the way Undergraduates of Uniben perceive sexual content on Social media, 134(38.1%) respondents agree with this statement,while 17(4.8%) respondents were undecided and 28(8%) disagree with this.

This implies that a number of factors can influence how undergraduates perceive and process sexual content on social media. These factors include age, gender, religion and so on. It is important to consider these factors when discussing the impact of social media on sexual attitude and behavior as they can have a significant impact on how people respond to and interpret the content they encounter online.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

This study was aimed at investigating the exposure of social media sexual content and the influence it has on undergraduates students sexual behavior by analysing the extent of exposure to social media and the sexual Content showcased on these social media platforms. The four

department of Uniben ekewan campus was covered. The selection for this study was drawn from both male and female student. For this investigation, the purposive sampling approach was utilized. Purposive sampling was used so that researchers could pick students based on their distinctiveness in connection to the study. The survey was the primary research tool. So, 352 questionnaires were issued randomly to both male and female students in the four departments at Uniben which are Mass communication, Theatre arts, Early childhood education. The questionnaires were distributed in this manner to ensure that the opinions of the majority of university students were represented in this study. Based on the extensive research conducted on the Exposure of social media sexual Content and its Influence on the sexual behavior of undergraduates of University of Benin, it can be concluded that Sexual content on social media platforms plays a critical role in influencing the sexual behavior of undergraduates student

Based on thorough investigation the research has shown that:

1. The exposure to sexual content on social media can have a negative impact on sexual attitudes and behaviors of young adults which undergraduate students are a part of.

2. The study also show that, Individual characteristics, such as age, gender, and personality features, may have varying effects on the exposure to sexual content on social media.
3. The exposure of undergraduate student to sexual content on social media can be long-lasting and difficult to reverse.
4. There are difficult moral and legal issues surrounding the control of sexual content on social media.
5. Undergraduates who are exposed to sexual content on social media may experience increased social isolation and a sense of disconnection from others.
6. Reducing the harmful impacts of being exposed to sexual information on social media requires self-regulation and personal responsibility, which are crucial components.
7. Self-regulation and personal responsibility are important factors in reducing the negative effects of exposure to sexual content on social media.
8. Both in terms of personal expenses and societal expenditures, social media exposure to sexual content can have a major financial impact.
9. The study also highlight that the distribution and consumption of sexual content may change as a result of the creation of new social media platforms and technology.
10. More research is needed to determine how social media exposure to sexual content affects undergraduates and youths.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The research on the exposure of social media sexual content and its influence on the sexual behavior of undergraduate of University of Benin reveals that undergraduates who are exposed to sexual content on social media may experience negative effects, including changes in brain activity, changes in behavior and decision-making feelings of guilt and shame, and issues with both physical and mental health. The study also discovered that relationships and society at large may suffer as a result of exposure to sexual content on social media. As a result, it's critical to inform individuals about the dangers of being exposed to sexual content on social media and to offer assistance and support to those who need it. By doing this, we may encourage good changes in attitudes and behavior while also assisting in lessening the negative consequences of these sexual content.

The study also urges increased public participation in these matters in order to guarantee that the opinions of all parties involved are heard. This would entail increased cooperation between social media companies, governments, and civil society organizations as well as additional study into the moral ramifications of regulating sexual content on social media. Overall the study's result indicate that the exposure to social media sexual content to a great extent has an influence on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for more knowledge and understanding of how social media affects sexual attitudes and behavior of undergraduates.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to curb the exposure of social media Sexual content on undergraduates thereby reducing the influence it will have on their sexual behavior.

1. Develop and implement comprehensive educational programs warning undergraduates about the dangers of interacting with sexually explicit information on social media.
2. Make design modifications to social media sites to lessen the possibility of coming across sexual content.
3. Define rules and regulations that restrict the quantity of sexual content available on social media.
4. Make more mental health supports available to individuals or undergraduates who have been impacted by social media exposure to sexual content.
5. Examine how individual characteristics such as age, gender, and personality traits play a part in the relationship between exposure to sexual content on social media and its effects.
6. Carry out additional studies to learn more about the neurological and psychological impacts of social media exposure to sexual content.

7. Encourage parents and guardians to monitor and restrict their children's exposure to sexual content on social media by using parental controls and other content filtering tools.
8. Encourage digital literacy initiatives that instruct undergraduates in social media usage that is both responsible and safe.
9. Launch initiatives to raise public awareness of the dangers of exposing people to sexually explicit content on social media.
10. Take into account the moral and legal ramifications of controlling sexual content on social media.

By implementing these recommendations, Undergraduates would be more aware of the risks associated with exposure to sexual content on social media, and would be better equipped to make informed decisions about their online activity.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

The findings of this study have shed light on the exposure of social media sexual content and its influence on the sexual behavior of undergraduates of Uniben. To build upon these findings, several suggestions for further studies can be made:

1. The study on the long-term effects of exposure to sexual content on social media and the potential correlation between it and risky sexual behavior: While this research focused on Undergraduates exposure to these sexual content on social media further research of this study may contribute to the body of knowledge regarding the long-term effects of social media exposure to sexual content and the potential correlation between it and risky sexual behavior.
2. The study examining how exposure to sexual content on social media affects people differently according to their age, gender, and sexual orientation The results of this study may be used to determine which particular groups or individual are more or less susceptible to the negative impacts of social media exposure to sexual content.
3. The study on the effect of different types of sexual content (e.g. images, videos, text) on sexual behavior: The results of this study may be used to determine the kinds of sexual content that are most likely to influence sexual behavior as well as any differences in the impact of different types of content.
4. The study on the role of parents and guardians in regulating sexual content on social media: Further research on this may contribute to our understanding of the opportunities and difficulties faced by parents and guardians in their role as regulators of sexual material, as well as the development of suggestions for how best to assist them.

5. The study on the role of technology in regulating sexual content on social media: further research on this may contribute to our understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of various technology strategies for controlling sexual content as well as the formulation of suggestions for enhancing their effectiveness.

By conducting further research in these areas, It might raise people's knowledge and comprehension of the problems, resulting in more responsible and informed use of social media platforms.

## **5.5 Contribution to Knowledge**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the exposure of social media sexual content and its Influence on the sexual behavior of undergraduates of Uniben. The findings of this study make a significant contribution to the the existing body of knowledge in a number of ways. Specifically the study provides insights into the relationship between exposure to sexual content on social media and changes in sexual attitudes and behaviors. The study highlights that , different age groups may experience distinct consequences from the effects of exposure to sexual content on social media. In order to address the detrimental impacts of exposure to sexual content on social media, the study helps design appropriate educational interventions.

Overall the study adds to the understanding of the economic and societal impact of exposure to sexual content on social media, Exposure to sexual content on social media can

raise expenses for people, organizations, and governments due to things like decreased productivity, higher medical expenses, and the requirement for new laws. In terms of society, the study reveals that social media exposure to sexual content can have detrimental effects on public health of individuals and undergraduates such as elevated prevalence of STDs and mental health issues.

#### **5.6 Limitations to the study**

The major limitation faced by the researcher in the course of this study was respondents reluctance to fill the questionnaire. The study was influenced by the combination of lectures, assignment, tests, class discussions and so on.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

Department of Mass Communication,

University of Benin,

Benin City, Nigeria

6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023

Dear Respondent,

#### **REQUEST FOR THE COMPLETION OF ITEMS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

I am EBAGUA SOPHIA, a final year student of the above named department/institution. I am  
conducting a research on the topic, **"EXPOSURE TO SOCIAL MEDIA SEXUAL**

**CONTENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR OF UNDERGRADUATES OF UNIVERSITY OF BENIN".**

This research study is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of a Bachelor of Arts degree in mass communication.

I will be very glad, if you assist me to provide relevant and useful answers by completing the questionnaire below. I assure you that your responses will be treated with confidentiality and the information given will be used strictly for the purpose of this academic work.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

**EBAGUA SOPHIA**

**Researcher**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**INSTRUCTION: Please tick (~) in the box the option that best explains your deposition**

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS**

1. What is your gender? (a) Male (b) female
2. What age bracket do you belong to? (a) 16years – 20years (b) 21years – 30years (c) 31years – 40years (d) 40years and above

3. What is your educational qualification? First degree ( ) Master ( ) Ph.D. ( ) others ( )
4. What religion do you belong to? Christianity ( ) Islamic ( ) Traditional ( )
5. What is your marital status (a) Single (b) Married (c) divorced/separated (d) Widowed

## **SECTION B: PSYCHOGRAPHICS**

6. Extent of exposure to sexual content on social media(a) Very high. (b) high (c) undecided  
(d) low (e) very low
7. Your perception of Sexual content on social media (a) Very good. (b) Good. (c) Undecided  
(d) Bad ( e) very bad
8. Extent to which the seeing of Sexual content on social media Influence your sexual  
behaviour (a) very high (b) high (c) undecided. (d) low (e) very low
9. Does seeing sexual content on social media Influence your academic performance (a)  
strongly agree (b) Agree (c) undecided (d) disagree (e) Strongly disagree
10. Extent to which social media sexual content Influences the academic performance of  
undergraduates. (a) very high (b) high (c) undecided. (d)low ( e) very low
11. Does seeing sexual content on social media make you less motivated to do well in your  
studies (a) strongly agree (b) Agree (c) undecided ( d) disagree (e) Strongly disagree
12. Has your sexual attitude or behaviour changed since you started using social media (a)  
strongly agree (b) Agree (c) undecided ( d) disagree (e) Strongly disagree

13. Do you feel that your expectations about sex have changed as a result of using social media?  
(a) Strongly agree (b) Agree (c) undecided (d) disagree (e) Strongly disagree
14. Does age, gender, religion and relationship status Influence the way you perceive sexual content on social media. (a) strongly agree (b) Agree (c) undecided (d) disagree (e) Strongly disagree
15. How often do you find yourself comparing people who post sexual content with yourself? (a) Very often (b) Often (c) Undecided (d) Never
16. Extent to which you trust the information that you see about sexual content on social media  
(a) very high (b) high (c) undecided. (d)low (e) very low
17. Social media platforms should do more to monitor and remove any inappropriate Sexual content (a) strongly agree (b) Agree (c) undecided (d) disagree (e) Strongly disagree