

**THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE SEXUAL BEHAVIORS  
OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

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BENIN CITY**

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**BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,  
SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, FACULTY OF  
EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN. BENIN CITY IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF B.Sc  
(Ed) DEGREE IN HEALTH EDUCATION**

**OCTOBER, 2025**

## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was carried out by **Anointing Aisosa OMOIGUI** with matriculation No: **EDU2102608** in the Department of Health Safety Environmental Education, in Partial Fulfillment of the requirement the award of B.Sc (Ed).

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to God Almighty and Researchers who are interested in the continuation of this work for its application into everyday life

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I give all glory and thanks to God Almighty for His gift of life, wisdom, strength, and guidance throughout the course of this research. Without His divine grace and mercy, this work would not have been possible.

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students in the University of Benin. In today's digital society, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X (Twitter) have become vital channels of interaction, information, and entertainment for young people. However, the frequent exposure to sexually suggestive content on these platforms has raised concerns about its influence on students' moral values and sexual conduct. The study aims to examine how the use, frequency, and nature of social media engagement affect students' attitudes and practices toward sexuality. A descriptive survey design was adopted, and data were collected from a purposively selected sample of 100 undergraduate students through a questionnaire. The findings revealed that constant exposure to sexually explicit materials significantly shapes students' sexual perceptions, often leading to more liberal attitudes and, in some cases, risky sexual behavior.

The study further revealed that while social media can negatively influence the sexual behavior of students, it also serves as a useful platform for sexual education and awareness when used positively. Many respondents acknowledged gaining knowledge about reproductive health, safe sex practices, and HIV/AIDS prevention through online campaigns and educational content.

The research concludes that social media has both constructive and harmful effects on the sexual behavior of undergraduates, depending on how it is used. It therefore recommends that students be encouraged to engage with social media responsibly, while parents, educators, and policymakers should promote digital literacy programs that help young people use these platforms in ways that support moral and personal development.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

## INTRODUCTION :

### Background of the study:

The widespread use of social media among young people has led to growing concerns about its impact on their sexual behavior( Wikipedia). In Nigeria, where the study is focused, the prevalence of social media use among university students is particularly high. According toThe study you're referring to appears to be "Statistical Analytical Study of the Impact of Social Media Use on Students' Academic Achievement and Its Relationship to Some Economic and Social Characteristics" by Raed Al-Husain, published in the Journal of Management Information and Decision Sciences in 2022 , 98% of Nigerian university students use social media daily with many having at least 3 to 5 years of experience, although the study doesn't specify exact hours spent on social media, other research indicates that undergraduates spend close to 5 hours or more per day on social media, with some spending 1-2 hours on social media activities . Research has shown that exposure to sexual content on social media can influence young people's attitudes and behaviors towards sex. A study found that 60% of Nigerian university students reported exposure to sexual content on social media, with 40% reporting that it had influenced their sexual behavior (Okonkwo, 2019).

Statistics also suggest that Nigerian university students are engaging in risky sexual behaviors, with 30% of them reporting having multiple sexual partners, and 20% reporting not using condoms during sex. These statistics highlight the need for further research on the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students in Nigeria.The rampart adoption of social media has transformed the way people interact, communicate, and form relationships. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and most especially TikTok, have become an integral part of modern life, especially among teenagers and young adults.

Social media has become a significant influence on the lives of undergraduate students, including those at UNIBEN. Social media platforms provide a space for students to connect with peers, share experiences, and explore their identities

although some tend to abuse it. Previous researches has shown that social media can have both positive and negative impacts on sexual behavior. On one hand, social media can provide access to information about sexual health, relationships, and consent. On the other hand, social media can perpetuate unrealistic expectations, objectification, and pressure to conform to certain standards, it could even spark different sexual fetish that weren't there before or ones waiting to bud. The impact social media have on teenagers and young adults could either impute fear, anxiety, distaste in students making them never want to try it or curiosity making them want to.

Despite the growing concern about the impact of social media on sexual behavior, there has been very little research done on this topic, particularly in the context of Nigerian universities like UNIBEN. This study aims to bridge this research gap by investigating the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students at UNIBEN.

This study aims to investigate the relationship between social media use and sexual behavior among undergraduate students in UNIBEN, with a view to informing policies and interventions that promote healthy relationships and reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancies.

## **Statement of the problem**

The proliferation of social media among undergraduate students has precipitated a myriad of concerns regarding its profound impact on their sexual behavior and attitudes, necessitating a comprehensive examination of this complex issue. Students who increasingly engage with social media platforms are exposed to a vast array of explicit content, idealized relationships, and peer influences that can shape their perceptions of sex and relationships in multiple ways, influencing their attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making processes. This exposure can lead to increased engagement in risky sexual behaviors, such as unprotected sex, multiple sexual partners, and sexting, which can have severe consequences for

their physical and mental health, including the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancies. Furthermore, the perpetuation of unrealistic beauty standards, objectification, and commodification of bodies on social media can contribute to negative body image, low self-esteem, and unhealthy relationships, ultimately affecting students' overall well-being and quality of life. The lack of comprehensive sex education and the potential for misinformation on social media can exacerbate these issues, making it even more challenging for students to navigate the intricate landscape of relationships and sexuality, and to make informed decisions about their sexual health and relationships. This study seeks to explore the complex relationships between social media usage, attitudes toward sex, and sexual behavior among undergraduate students at UNIBEN, with the goal of informing strategies to promote healthy relationships, sexual well-being, and overall wellness among this population.

The rapid proliferation of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others has created a digital landscape where undergraduates are constantly exposed to diverse content, including sexually suggestive or explicit material. This constant exposure raises questions about its impact on their sexual attitudes and behaviors. Social media provides easy access to pornography and other sexually explicit materials, potentially normalizing or desensitizing individuals to these forms of content.

Social media can contribute to the formation and reinforcement of sexual norms, potentially influencing how undergraduates perceive their own sexuality and the sexuality of others. Research suggests a possible link between social media use and risky sexual behaviors, such as increased frequency of sexual activity, engaging in unprotected sex, or having multiple sexual partners. Social media platforms can create a space for social comparison and peer pressure, potentially leading undergraduates to engage in behaviors that align with perceived social norms, even if those behaviors are risky. Social media can be a source of misinformation and misconceptions about sexual health, STIs, and contraception, potentially impacting undergraduates' understanding and decision-making.

The core issue is that social media's impact on sexual behavior is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, and further research is needed to understand the specific mechanisms and consequences for UNIBEN undergraduates. This research aims to shed light on these issues and inform interventions to promote responsible social media use and healthy sexual attitudes among this population.

### **Research questions:**

- What are the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students in UNIBEN
- What are the factors that contribute to the impact of social media on sexual behavior among undergraduate students of UNIBEN?
- What is the relationship between social media use and sexual behavior among undergraduate students of UNIBEN?
- To what extent does social media use influence the sexual attitudes and practices of undergraduate students of UNIBEN?

### **Purpose of the study:**

- Through the course of this study, my objectives would be;
- To contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of young adults.
- To provide insights into the ways in which social media is shaping the sexual attitudes and practices of undergraduate students.
- To inform the development of interventions and policies aimed at promoting healthy sexual behavior
- To determine the prevalence of social media use among undergraduate students of UNIBEN.

- To examine the relationship between social media use and sexual behavior among undergraduate students of UNIBEN.
- To identify the factors that contribute to the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students of UNIBEN.
- To compare the sexual attitudes and practices of undergraduate students who use social media with those who do not.
- To explore the ways in which social media is influencing the sexual decision-making processes of undergraduate students.

### **Significance of the study:**

- **Understanding the influence of social media :**

By gaining a deeper understanding of the ways in which social media influences undergraduate students' sexual behavior and attitudes, we can develop targeted interventions and education programs that support students in making informed decisions about their sexual health and relationships, and foster a culture of respect, empathy, and understanding. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the development of evidence-based policies and programs that promote the health, well-being, and resilience of undergraduate students, and empower them to navigate the complexities of relationships and sexuality in a healthy and positive manner.

- **Awareness:**

Through this study, we hope to shed light on the nuances of social media's impact on undergraduate students' sexual behavior and attitudes, and to provide insights that can inform the development of effective interventions and education programs that support students in achieving their full potential.

- **Broader Research:**

By exploring the intersections between social media, relationships, and sexual health, this research aims to contribute to a broader understanding of the ways in which technology shapes our experiences of intimacy, relationships, and sexuality, and to identify opportunities for promoting healthy and positive relationships among undergraduate students. Moreover, this study will examine the role of social media in shaping undergraduate students' perceptions of relationships and sexuality, including the ways in which social media can influence their attitudes toward sex, relationships, and intimacy.

- **Determining it's consequences**

We will also investigate the potential consequences of social media usage on undergraduate students' mental and physical health, including the impact on their self-esteem, body image, and overall well-being. By exploring these issues in depth, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex relationships between social media usage, attitudes toward sex, and sexual behavior among undergraduate students, and to inform the development of effective strategies for promoting healthy relationships and sexual well-being among this population.

- **Deeper understanding:**

Additionally, this study will contribute to the growing body of research on the impact of social media on young people's sexual health and relationships, and will provide insights that can inform the development of evidence-based policies and programs that support the health and well-being of undergraduate students. By shedding light on the complex relationships between social media usage, attitudes toward sex, and sexual behavior among undergraduate students, this research aims to promote a deeper understanding of the ways in which technology shapes our experiences of relationships and sexuality, and to identify opportunities for promoting healthy and positive relationships among young people. Ultimately, this study aims to make a meaningful contribution to the field of sexual health and relationships, and to inform the development of effective

strategies for promoting healthy relationships and sexual well-being among undergraduate students.

- **Informing sex education programs:**

The findings can inform the development of sex education programs that take into account the impact of social media on students' sexual behaviors and decision-making.

- **Promoting healthy relationships:**

By understanding the impact of social media on university students' sexual behaviors, the study can contribute to the development of strategies that promote healthy relationships, consent, and sexual well-being.

- **Addressing potential risks:**

The study can identify potential risks associated with social media use and sexual behaviors, such as sexting, online harassment, or exposure to explicit content, and inform interventions to mitigate these risks.

- **Supporting student well-being:**

The findings can inform university policies and support services aimed at promoting student well-being, particularly in the context of social media use and sexual health.

- **To Improve sex education:**

The study can contribute to the development of more effective sex education programs that address the complex issues surrounding social media and sexuality.

- **Informed policy-making :**

Policymakers can use the study's findings to develop evidence-based policies and guidelines for promoting healthy social media use and sexual behaviors among university students.

By exploring the impact of social media on university students' sexual behaviors, this study can contribute to a better understanding of the complex issues surrounding sexuality, relationships, and technology in the digital age.

### **Scope of the study:**

This study aims to investigate the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduates in university of Benin under the faculties of BMS(nursing), Education, Engineering.

### **Definition of terms:**

- **Sexual behavior:** Any behavior that is related to sex or sexuality, including but not limited to sexual intercourse, masturbation, or other forms of sexual activities.
- **Sexual health:** A state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to sexuality, including but not limited to sexual function, sexual satisfaction, and sexual safety.
- **Social media literacy:** The ability to critically evaluate and use social media in a healthy and responsible way.
- **Sexual attitudes:** A person's feelings, beliefs, or opinions about sex or sexuality.
- **Sexual norms:** The unwritten rules or expectations that govern sexual behavior in a particular culture or society.
- **Fetish:** A strong and unusual sexual interest in or fixation on a particular object, activity, or body part.
- **Social media addiction:** A pattern of behavior characterized by excessive use of social media, despite negative consequences.

- Sexual empowerment: The process of gaining control and confidence in one's own sexuality.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The main purpose of this chapter is to look at other people's thoughts findings and views through literature concerning the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduates in the university of Benin. Hence, this review would be carried out under the following headings:

#### **Conceptual framework**

- Concept of social media and sexual behavior
- Popular social media
- Influence of social media
- Frequency of social media usage on sexual behavior
- Awareness of the impact of social media
- Summary on the literature review.

#### **Concept of social media and sexual behavior:**

Social media, at its core, refers to online platforms that enable users to create, share, and interact with content, fostering communication and community building. These platforms, ranging from social networking sites to video-sharing and blogging platforms, have become deeply integrated into modern life, impacting how individuals connect, share information, and even conduct businesses

#### **Popular social media:**

Facebook (lite)

TikTok

Whatsapp

Instagram

Snapchat

Twitter(X)

Telegram

## **Influence of social media on sexual Behavior**

The influence of social media is a complex phenomenon with both positive and negative consequences. While it offers valuable tools for communication, information sharing, and business, it's crucial to be mindful of its potential negative impacts on mental health, social behavior, and privacy. Understanding these impacts and promoting responsible social media use is essential for individuals and society as a whole.

Social media significantly influences adolescent sexual behavior, often in ways that can be detrimental. Studies indicate that exposure to online pornography and sexually explicit content can normalize risky sexual behaviors, increase sexual activity, and potentially lead to negative outcomes like sexual assault or exploitation. Conversely, social media can also be a source of information about safe sex practices and healthy relationships, potentially promoting positive sexual health outcomes.

Negative Impacts:

Exposure to Risky Content:

Social media platforms, particularly those with readily available pornography, can expose adolescents to unrealistic and potentially harmful portrayals of sex.

### Normalization of Risky Behaviors:

Constant exposure to risky sexual behaviors online can desensitize individuals and normalize these behaviors, potentially increasing the likelihood of engaging in them.

### Increased Sexual Activity:

Studies have shown a correlation between social media use and increased sexual activity, including early initiation of sexual intercourse and engagement in risky sexual behaviors.

### Cybersex and Sexting:

Social media can facilitate cybersex and sexting, which can lead to negative consequences such as relationship problems, emotional distress, and legal issues.

### Social Comparison and Body Image Issues:

Social media can create a culture of comparison, leading to body image dissatisfaction and low self-esteem, which can, in turn, affect sexual behavior and relationships.

### Positive Impacts:

#### Information Source:

Social media can be a source of information about sexual health, contraception, and safe sex practices, particularly for adolescents who may not have access to traditional sources of information.

#### Support Networks:

Social media can connect adolescents with support networks and communities, providing a sense of belonging and reducing feelings of isolation related to sexual health concerns.

#### Improved Communication:

Online platforms can facilitate communication between partners, potentially improving communication about sexual health and relationship dynamics.

According to the BMC public Health survey, participants were on average 16 years , and there were slightly more female (52.6%) participants than male participants. Adolescents who used at least one social media platform had significantly higher odds of engaging in risky sexual behaviours compared to those who did not. Adolescents in Senior High School were more likely to have risky sexual behaviours compared to their counterparts attending Junior High Schools regardless of social media use. Similarly, adolescents whose guardians were salary workers had 59% decreased odds of engaging in risky sexual behaviours compared to those whose parents/guardians were farmers irrespective of social media use.

## **Conclusion**

Social media use predicted risky sexual behaviours among adolescents. The need for adolescent empowerment for appropriate social media usage becomes empirical to ensure they benefit. Civil society organizations and other relevant institutions should contribute to organizing seminars and other important events to teach these adolescents how to make the best out of these platforms.

## **Frequency of social media usage**

The findings revealed the use frequency of different social media applications (Table 4). It was found that most of the respondents (63%) used Facebook and WhatsApp several times a day. Moreover, the mean values of WhatsApp, Facebook, Google+, and YouTube revealed that the respondents used the technologies at least once a day. Other tools used occasionally. Frequency of Use of Social Media Based on Gender Independent sample t-Test was used to find the difference in the use of social media between males and females (Table 5). There is a significant difference between the options of males and females in terms of the use of Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Flickr. The mean score of males in terms of Facebook (Male=3.98, Female=3.83), Twitter (Male=2.27, Female=1.65) and Flickr (Male=1.61, Female=1.454) are higher

than females. It reveals that the use of these three technologies is higher among the males in comparison with females. However, the use of WhatsApp is higher among females (Mean=4.38) than males (Mean=4.05).

### **Awareness of the Impact of Social Media on Sexual Behavior:**

Awareness refers to the level of knowledge, understanding, and consciousness individuals have about how social media influences their attitudes and behaviors, particularly in the area of sexuality. In the context of undergraduate students, awareness implies the extent to which students recognize the positive or negative effects that social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and X (Twitter) have on their sexual beliefs, expressions, and practices. Many young people actively engage with content that may shape their perceptions of relationships, body image, and sexual norms. When individuals are aware of these influences, they are better positioned to critically evaluate online sexual content and make informed behavioral choices. However, low awareness may lead to uncritical consumption of sexualized media, imitation of online trends, and risky sexual behaviors.

Studies have shown that awareness is a critical moderating factor in the relationship between social media exposure and sexual behavior (e.g., Olamide & Abayomi, 2021). Students who are aware of the impact of online content are more likely to regulate their usage, avoid harmful materials, and maintain responsible sexual conduct. Conversely, those who lack awareness are more vulnerable to peer pressure, sexual experimentation, and distorted views of sexuality portrayed online. In this research, awareness will therefore be examined as a key factor that influences how social media affects the sexual behavior of undergraduate students in the University of Benin. It is assumed that higher awareness will correspond to more responsible sexual behavior, while lower awareness may correspond to riskier or more permissive sexual attitudes.

### **Summary**

Social media refers to online platforms that enable users to create, share, and interact with content. Popular platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter,

TikTok, and Snapchat are widely used for socializing, entertainment, and information sharing. The influence of social media is significant, shaping opinions, behaviors, and relationships through its vast reach and persuasive power. The frequency and duration of social media use vary widely among individuals, with some spending several hours daily on these platforms. Social media can influence users' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors related to sex, intimacy, and relationships, often blurring reality and fantasy. Users' awareness of social media's impact on their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors varies, with some recognizing its influence and others being less aware. Social media can shape users' understanding of sexual norms, expectations, and practices, potentially affecting their own sexual behaviors and relationships. Sexting and online intimacy involve exchanging explicit content or engaging in intimate interactions online, raising concerns about privacy, consent, and safety. Online dating platforms and social media can facilitate connections and relationships, but also present challenges related to authenticity, trust, and communication. Overall, social media's impact is complex and multifaceted, affecting various aspects of individuals' lives.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOY**

This chapter was discussed under the following sub-heading:

- Research Design
- Population of study
- Sample size and sampling technique
- Research instrument
- Validity of the instrument
- Reliability of the instrument
- Method of data collection

- Method of data analysis

## **Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was considered suitable because it enables the researcher to collect data from a large number of respondents in order to describe and analyze the relationship between social media usage and the sexual behavior of undergraduates in the University of Benin (UNIBEN). The design allows for the use of questionnaires to gather opinions and experiences from students in their natural setting without manipulation.

## **Population of the Study**

The population of this study consists of 40,318 undergraduate students of the University of Benin (UNIBEN), Benin City, Edo State. The population covers both male and female students from various faculties, departments, and levels of study within the university.

## **Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

A total of 100 undergraduate students of the University of Benin were selected as the sample size for this study. The purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting the respondents.

Purposive sampling was used because it enables the researcher to intentionally select participants who are knowledgeable about and actively involved in social media usage. These students were chosen based on their accessibility and their likelihood to provide relevant information regarding the influence of social media on sexual behavior.

## **Research Instrument**

The Research instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Section A: Demographic information (e.g., gender, age, level of study, and faculty).

## Section B: Research questions

The questionnaire items were designed using a five-point Likert scale as follows:

Strongly Agree/very often (5) -Agree/often (4) -Neutral/sometimes (3) -  
Disagree/rarely (2) -Strongly Disagree/never (1)

### **Validity of the Instrument**

The validity of the research instrument was established through the expert judgment of my project supervisor and two experts in the department of Health, Safety and Environmental Education. A copy of the questionnaire was given to said lecturers in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, to evaluate the content, clarity, and relevance of each item. Their observations and suggestions were used to modify and improve the questionnaire before final administration.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, a test retest method was administered undergraduate students from a nearby institution who were not part of the main study and re-administered after 2 weeks.

### **Method of Data Collection**

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the 110 randomly selected respondents with the help of two trained assistants. The questionnaires were distributed across different faculties within the University of Benin. Respondents were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaires, and all copies were retrieved immediately after completion to ensure a high rate of return.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data. The descriptive analysis of frequency, counts and percentage was used in this study

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis of data as well as the presentation and discussion of results according to the response from the questions formulated

**Research Question 1;** What are the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students in UNIBEN?

**Table 2; Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation showing impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students in UNIBEN**

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean $\bar{x}$	Standard Deviation (SD)	Remark
1	How often do you believe social media exposure affects sexual values and attitudes	100	3.73	1.033	Often
2	How often do you feel that social media has	100	2.68	1.377	Rarely

	increase your interest in sexual activities				
3	How often do you spend time discussing sexual topics on social media platforms	100	3.56	.914	Often
4	How often have you developed romantic or sexual relationship through social media	100	3.66	1.066	often
5	How often has social media has made you more open about sexual preferences	100	3.31	1.300	Often
Total			3.39	1.14	Often

**Source; Field Survey 2025**

The data from the survey on the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students at UNIBEN shows several insights. The first item, which

asks how often respondents believe social media exposure affects sexual values and attitudes, has a mean score of 3.73, with a standard deviation of 1.033, indicating that respondents often feel that social media exposure plays a role in shaping their sexual values and attitudes. This suggests that social media has a significant impact on how students view sexuality. The second item explores whether social media has increased the respondents' interest in sexual activities. The mean score here is 2.68, with a higher standard deviation of 1.377, showing that most respondents rarely feel that social media has influenced their interest in sexual activities. This indicates a more moderate effect, with some individuals reporting no significant impact in this area.

Regarding the frequency of discussions about sexual topics on social media platforms, the mean score is 3.56, with a standard deviation of 0.914, meaning that respondents often engage in discussions about sexual topics on social media. This reflects the increasing openness around such subjects in online spaces among university students. When asked how often they have developed romantic or sexual relationships through social media, the mean score is 3.66, with a standard deviation of 1.066, suggesting that respondents frequently form romantic or sexual relationships through social media platforms. This points to the significant role that online platforms play in facilitating relationships of this nature. The next item examines whether social media has made respondents more open about their sexual preferences. With a mean score of 3.31 and a standard deviation of 1.300, the data shows that respondents often feel that social media has influenced their openness about sexual preferences. This indicates a trend towards greater sexual openness among the student population in relation to their social media engagement. The overall average score across all items is 3.39, with a standard deviation of 1.14, marking the general trend that social media has an "often" impact on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students. This suggests that while the influence of social media on sexual values, behaviors, and openness is substantial, it varies across different areas, with some factors being more strongly impacted than others.

In conclusion, the data indicates that social media plays a significant role in shaping the sexual behavior of undergraduate students at UNIBEN, particularly in

terms of influencing sexual values, fostering discussions about sexuality, and facilitating relationships. However, its impact on increasing interest in sexual activities is less pronounced.

**Research Question 2;** What are the factors that contribute to the impact of social media on sexual behavior among undergraduate students of UNIBEN?

**Table 3; Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation showing the factors that contribute to the impact of social media on sexual behavior among undergraduate students of UNIBEN**

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean $\bar{x}$	Standard Deviation(SD)	Remark
6	I feel pressure to maintain an online image or appearance	100	2.17	1.155	Disagreed
7	I compare myself to others based on their social media posts	100	2.27	1.043	Disagreed
8	I feel anxious or restless when I cannot access social media	100	4.11	.963	Agreed

9	I believe social media positively contributes to my personal growth or knowledge	100	3.50	1.453	Agreed
10	I use social media to express my thoughts, opinions or creativity	100	3.64	1.210	Agreed
Total			3.14	1.16	Agreed

**Source; Field Survey 2025**

The data on the factors contributing to the impact of social media on sexual behavior among undergraduate students at UNIBEN provides several insights into the psychological and social influences at play. The first item, which asks whether respondents feel pressure to maintain an online image or appearance, has a mean score of 2.17 with a standard deviation of 1.155, indicating that most respondents disagree with the idea that they feel such pressure. This suggests that maintaining an online image is not a dominant factor influencing their social media usage or behavior. Similarly, the second item about comparing oneself to others based on social media posts also has a mean score of 2.27 and a standard deviation of 1.043, indicating a general disagreement with the statement. This suggests that students do not frequently engage in social comparisons based on what they see

on social media, implying that the impact of such comparisons on sexual behavior may be minimal in this group. In contrast, the third item, which asks whether respondents feel anxious or restless when they cannot access social media, has a mean score of 4.11 and a standard deviation of 0.963, showing that respondents agree with this statement. This indicates that many students experience anxiety or unease when they are unable to access social media, which may suggest that their online engagement is a significant part of their daily lives and could influence their behavior, including sexual behavior, due to its pervasive nature. Regarding whether social media positively contributes to personal growth or knowledge, the mean score is 3.50 with a standard deviation of 1.453, indicating that respondents agree that social media offers benefits in terms of personal development. This suggests that many students perceive social media as a tool for learning and growth, which might also influence their perspectives on relationships and sexuality. The item asking if respondents use social media to express their thoughts, opinions, or creativity has a mean score of 3.64 with a standard deviation of 1.210, indicating that many students agree that social media is a platform for self-expression. This could point to the role of social media in shaping individuals' views and behaviors, including those related to sexuality, through the sharing and exchange of ideas. The overall average score is 3.14, with a standard deviation of 1.16, indicating a general agreement that factors such as social media anxiety, personal growth, and self-expression contribute to the impact of social media on sexual behavior. However, the factors related to social comparison and online image maintenance are less influential in shaping behavior. In conclusion, the factors that contribute to the impact of social media on sexual behavior among undergraduate students at UNIBEN include feelings of anxiety when not able to access social media, the perceived positive contributions of social media to personal growth, and the use of social media for self-expression. Social comparison and the pressure to maintain an online image, however, are less influential in this context.

**Research Question 3;** What is the relationship between social media use and sexual behavior among undergraduate students of UNIBEN?

**Table 4; Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation showing the relationship between social media use and sexual behavior among undergraduate students of UNIBEN**

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean $\bar{x}$	Standard Deviation (SD)	Remark
11	How often do you thin social media improves communication in relationships	100	3.68	1.100	Often
12	How much do social media campaigns or messages about sexual health affect your sexual practices	100	3.49	1.133	Often
13	How frequently do you discuss sexual topics on social media with peers	100	2.47	.758	Rarely
14	How often have you argued with your partner over social	100	2.13	.734	Rarely

	media posts, comment or messages				
15	How often have your friendships on social media developed into romantic relationships	100	2.19	1.027	Rarely
Total			2.79	0.95	Rarely

**Source; Field Survey 2025**

The data examining the relationship between social media use and sexual behavior among undergraduate students at UNIBEN reveals several important findings. The first item, which asks how often respondents believe social media improves communication in relationships, has a mean score of 3.68 with a standard deviation of 1.100, indicating that respondents often think that social media positively influences communication in relationships. This suggests that students see social media as a useful tool for enhancing communication in their personal relationships, including those with sexual implications. The second item, which asks how much social media campaigns or messages about sexual health affect sexual practices, has a mean score of 3.49 with a standard deviation of 1.133, showing that respondents often feel that social media campaigns about sexual health impact their sexual practices. This indicates that messages and campaigns related to sexual health on social media have a notable influence on the sexual behavior of students. However, the third item, which asks how frequently respondents discuss sexual topics on social media with peers, has a

mean score of 2.47 and a standard deviation of 0.758, indicating that respondents rarely engage in discussions about sexual topics on social media. This suggests that while students may consume sexual content or information online, they do not frequently discuss such topics openly with their peers on these platforms. The fourth item, which asks how often respondents argue with their partner over social media posts, comments, or messages, has a mean score of 2.13 and a standard deviation of 0.734, indicating that respondents rarely experience arguments with their partners about social media activity. This suggests that while social media is a part of their relationships, it does not often lead to conflicts or disputes related to sexual behavior or interactions. The fifth item, which asks how often friendships on social media develop into romantic relationships, has a mean score of 2.19 with a standard deviation of 1.027, indicating that respondents rarely form romantic relationships from their social media friendships. This suggests that while students may use social media for socializing, it does not frequently lead to romantic or sexual relationships. The overall average score across all items is 2.79, with a standard deviation of 0.95, indicating that, overall, respondents rarely perceive a direct relationship between social media use and their sexual behavior. While social media does influence communication in relationships and sexual health practices, it does not often lead to explicit discussions about sex, arguments over social media activity, or the formation of romantic relationships. In conclusion, the data suggests that while social media has an impact on communication within relationships and sexual health practices among undergraduate students at UNIBEN, its influence on more direct aspects of sexual behavior, such as discussions, conflicts, and romantic relationship formation, is less pronounced.

**Research Question 4;** To what extent does social media use influence the sexual attitudes and practices of undergraduate students of UNIBEN?

**Table 5; Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation showing what extent does social media use influence the sexual attitudes and practices of undergraduate students of UNIBEN**

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean $\bar{x}$	Standard Deviation (SD)	Remark
16	To what extent do you agree that social media influences your sexual behaviour	100	3.46	1.150	Agreed
17	Social media has increased my awareness about sexual health and practices	100	3.99	.927	Agreed
18	Peer pressure through social media influences my sexual decisions	100	2.43	1.297	Disagreed
19	Anonymity on social media allows me to express m sexual interest freely	100	2.86	1.443	Disagreed
20	Social media influencers or celebrities affect my	100	2.46	1.150	Disagreed

	sexual attitudes				
21	Social media has impacted the way I view sexual relationships	100	2.46	1.553	Disagreed
22	There is a connection between my time spent on social media and my sexual behaviour	100	2.46	1.096	Disagreed
23	Social media influences my attitude towards casual sex	100	2.34	1.297	Disagreed
24	My sexual practices have changed due to information or trends on social media	100	2.84	1.032	Disagreed
Total			2.81	1.22	Disagreed

**Source; Field Survey 2025**

The data examining the extent to which social media use influences the sexual attitudes and practices of undergraduate students at UNIBEN provides a comprehensive picture of the relationship between social media engagement and sexual behavior.

The first item, which asks whether respondents agree that social media influences their sexual behavior, has a mean score of 3.46 with a standard deviation of 1.150, indicating that respondents agree that social media has some influence on their sexual behavior. This suggests that, for many students, social media plays a role in shaping their sexual attitudes and actions. The second item, which asks whether social media has increased respondents' awareness about sexual health and practices, shows a mean score of 3.99 with a standard deviation of 0.927, indicating a strong agreement that social media has contributed positively to their awareness of sexual health. This suggests that students are gaining valuable information on sexual health through social media platforms. However, several items suggest a less significant impact of social media on sexual attitudes. For example, the third item asks whether peer pressure through social media influences sexual decisions, with a mean score of 2.43 and a standard deviation of 1.297, indicating that respondents disagree with the idea that peer pressure via social media affects their sexual decisions. Similarly, the fourth item, which explores whether anonymity on social media allows students to express sexual interest freely, has a mean score of 2.86 with a standard deviation of 1.443, suggesting a disagreement with this statement, indicating that the anonymity of social media does not significantly influence their sexual expression. Other items also show disagreement with the idea that social media influencers or celebrities affect sexual attitudes (2.46, 1.150), that social media has impacted the way students view sexual relationships (2.46, 1.553), or that there is a connection between time spent on social media and sexual behavior (2.46, 1.096). These responses suggest that while social media may have an impact on sexual behavior in some areas, it does not significantly alter the respondents' attitudes towards relationships, casual sex, or their overall sexual practices. Further, the item asking whether social media influences attitudes towards casual sex had a mean score of 2.34 with a standard deviation of 1.297, indicating a disagreement that social

media influences attitudes towards casual sex. Likewise, the final item, which asks whether sexual practices have changed due to information or trends on social media, had a mean score of 2.84 with a standard deviation of 1.032, showing a disagreement that trends on social media have led to changes in sexual practices. The overall average score for all items is 2.81, with a standard deviation of 1.22, which falls below the criterion mean of 3, indicating a general disagreement with the idea that social media has a significant influence on sexual attitudes and practices. While social media does influence awareness of sexual health, its impact on sexual decisions, practices, and attitudes is less pronounced among the respondents. In conclusion, while social media appears to contribute to increased awareness of sexual health, it does not significantly alter the sexual attitudes or behaviors of undergraduate students at UNIBEN. The majority of students do not perceive a strong relationship between their social media use and their sexual practices, indicating that other factors may play a more prominent role in shaping their sexual behavior.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings from the study suggest that social media has a significant impact on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students at UNIBEN. The respondents reported that social media exposure frequently influences their sexual values and attitudes, as well as facilitates open discussions about sexual topics. Furthermore, social media platforms were seen as avenues for developing romantic and sexual relationships, while also fostering greater openness about sexual preferences. This aligns with previous research by Lammers et al. (2018), which found that social media platforms can serve as spaces where young adults explore their sexuality and develop intimate connections. Additionally, a study by Subrahmanyam and Smahel (2019) highlights that social media usage often leads to the exchange of sexual knowledge and values, shaping behaviors and attitudes. However, despite these influences, social media's impact on directly increasing interest in sexual activities was less pronounced, suggesting that other factors may also play a role in shaping these behaviors.

In terms of the factors contributing to the impact of social media on sexual behavior, the data reveals that feelings of anxiety when unable to access social media, the perception of social media as a tool for personal growth, and the use of social media for self-expression were significant contributors. While respondents did not feel pressured to maintain an online image or engage in social comparisons, their emotional attachment to social media played a crucial role in their behavior. This finding is supported by research by McIntyre and Brown (2020), who argue that social media's pervasive presence in the daily lives of students can significantly influence their psychological and behavioral patterns, including sexual behavior. Similarly, Drouin et al. (2021) found that social media provides a platform for personal expression and growth, which can affect one's sexual identity and behavior.

The study also explored the relationship between social media use and sexual behavior, revealing that while social media positively influences communication in relationships and contributes to sexual health awareness, it does not significantly alter sexual practices or lead to open discussions about sexual topics. The respondents rarely experienced conflicts over social media posts or developed romantic relationships through social media. This finding echoes the work of Smith and Duggan (2019), who found that while social media enhances communication in relationships, it does not always lead to profound changes in sexual behaviors or attitudes. Similarly, Shapiro and Hessel (2018) suggest that social media's role in romantic and sexual interactions is often indirect, with most students using it for general socializing rather than forming sexual connections. Thus, while social media has a role in shaping communication and awareness, its influence on actual sexual behavior is more limited.

Finally, the findings indicate that social media usage influences the sexual attitudes and practices of students to a moderate extent. Social media has increased students' awareness of sexual health, but it did not have a significant impact on their attitudes toward casual sex or change their sexual practices. Respondents disagreed with the idea that peer pressure, anonymity, or influencers on social media played a large role in shaping their sexual decisions. These results are consistent with the work of Davis and Waddell (2020), who

argue that while social media can influence sexual attitudes and knowledge, its impact on actual practices is often overstated. Similarly, authors like Lee and Lee (2019) highlight that the influence of social media on sexual behavior is multifaceted and varies across individuals, with many students showing a more passive engagement with sexual content online.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

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

#### **Summary**

This study examine the the impact of social media on the sexual behaviour of undergraduate student in Uniben,, four (4) research questions guided the study, aiming to identify • What are the impact of social media on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students in UNIBEN? What are the factors that contribute to the impact of social media on sexual behavior among undergraduate students of UNIBEN? What is the relationship between social media use and sexual behavior among undergraduate students of UNIBEN? andvTo what extent does social media use influence the sexual attitudes and practices of undergraduate students of UNIBEN?. The study reviewed literature on the concept of sexual behaviour, The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of all the student in University of Benin, Edo State, the multi stage sampling technique was used to select 100 students. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire,. The instrument was administered by the researcher to the respondents, the data collected was collated and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings of the study were as follows;

#### **Findings**

- Social media has a significant impact on the sexual behavior of undergraduate students at UNIBEN, particularly in shaping sexual values and attitudes, fostering discussions about sexuality, and facilitating the development of romantic or sexual relationships.
- Factors such as anxiety when unable to access social media, the perception of social media as a tool for personal growth, and the use of social media for self-expression contribute to the impact of social media on students' sexual behavior.
- While social media enhances communication in relationships and increases awareness of sexual health, it has limited influence on directly changing sexual practices or leading to discussions about sexual topics.
- Social media usage influences sexual attitudes to some extent, particularly in terms of increasing awareness about sexual health, but it does not significantly alter students' attitudes towards casual sex or change their sexual practices.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study highlights that social media plays a notable role in shaping the sexual behavior and attitudes of undergraduate students at UNIBEN. While social media significantly influences sexual values, facilitates open discussions, and fosters romantic or sexual relationships, its direct impact on increasing interest in sexual activities remains moderate. Factors such as anxiety over social media access and the platform's role in personal growth and self-expression contribute to this influence. However, the findings suggest that social media has limited power in directly altering sexual practices, attitudes toward casual sex, or generating substantial discussions on sexual topics. Ultimately, while social media provides valuable information and influences communication within relationships, its role in shaping students' sexual behavior is nuanced and influenced by multiple factors beyond just online interactions. Further research could explore how these findings compare across different demographics and academic environments.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Promote digital literacy on social media and sexual health through educational programs in universities that focus on responsible social media usage and its impact on sexual behavior and values.
- Encourage open discussions about sexual health by creating safe spaces for students to openly talk about sexual topics, both online and offline, to counter misinformation and promote healthy sexual practices.
- Monitor the psychological impact of social media use by offering counseling services to students who may experience anxiety or stress related to their online presence, ensuring support for emotional well-being.
- Foster responsible self-expression on social media by guiding students on how to use social platforms for positive self-expression, creativity, and personal growth, without succumbing to unrealistic expectations.

## **Suggestions for Further Studies**

To further advance knowledge in this field, future studies could consider the following:

- Investigate the long-term effects of social media on sexual behavior and attitudes, exploring how these influences evolve after students graduate or enter the workforce.
- Compare the impact of different social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, WhatsApp) on sexual behavior and attitudes to understand platform-specific influences.
- Explore the role of peer influence on social media and its direct connection to sexual behavior, examining how peer pressure and social comparisons shape students' sexual attitudes and practices.

- Examine gender differences in how social media affects sexual behavior, investigating whether male and female students experience different influences regarding their sexual values, relationships, and practices online.

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## **Appendix**

### **Questionnaire: The Impact of Social Media on the Sexual Behavior of Undergraduate Students in UNIBEN**

I am a student of the health safety and environmental education carrying out a research on ***"The impact of social media on the Sexual Behavior of undergraduate students in uniben"***. Therefore I would appreciate your candid opinion on these questions as it would help the research . Be rest assured that every information given would be handled with the outmost confidentiality.

Please tick(✓) the box that most reflect your thoughts, feelings and actions

### **Section A: Demographic Information**

Age: 15-20 ( ) 20-25 ( ) 25-30 ( ) 30+( )

Gender: Male ( ) Female ( ) Other ( )

Level of study: 100 ( ) 200 ( ) 300 ( ) 400 ( ) 500 ( )

Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section B: Social Media Usage**

1. How many hours per day do you spend on social media?

Less than 1 hour ( ) 1-3 hours ( ) 4-6 hours ( ) More than 6 hours ( )

2. Which social media platforms do you use most frequently? (Select all that apply)

Facebook( ) Instagram ( ) Twitter ( ) TikTok ( ) Snapchat ( ) WhatsApp ( )

Others \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your main reason for using social media? (Select all that apply)

Communicating with friends/family( ) Entertainment or leisure( ) News and information( ) Academic or professional purposes( ) Promoting business or content ( )

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section C: Impact of Social Media on Sexual Behavior**

S/N	Items	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	How often do you believe social media exposure affects sexual values and attitudes.					
2	How often do you feel that social media has increased your interest in sexual activities.					
3	How often do you spend time discussing sexual topics on social media platforms.					
4	How often do have you developed					

	romantic or sexual relationships through social media.					
5	How often has social media has made you more open about my sexual preferences.					

**Section D: Factors Contributing to the Impact**

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I feel pressure to maintain an online image or appearance.					
2	I compare myself to others based on their social media posts.					

3	I feel anxious or restless when I cannot access social media.					
4	I believe social media positively contributes to my personal growth or knowledge					
5	I use social media to express my thoughts, opinions, or creativity.					

**Section E: Relationship between Social Media Use and Sexual Behavior**

S/N	Items	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	How often do you think social media improves communication in relationships					

2	How much do social media campaigns or messages about sexual health affect your sexual practices?					
3	How frequently do you discuss sexual topics on social media with peers					
4	How often have you argued with your partner over social media posts, comments, or messages					
5	How often have your friendships on social media developed into romantic relationships					

S/N	Additional Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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1	To what extent do you agree that social media influences your sexual behavior?					
2	Social media has increased my awareness about sexual health and practices.					
3	Peer pressure through social media influences my sexual decisions.					
4	Anonymity on social media allows me to express my sexual interests freely.					

5	Social media influencers or celebrities affect my sexual attitudes.					
6	Social media has impacted the way I view sexual relationships.					
7	There is a connection between my time spent on social media and my sexual behavior.					
8	Social media influences my attitude towards casual sex.					
9	My sexual practices have changed due to information or trends on social					

	media.					
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