



# **Undergraduates' Utilization of Social Networking Media and Sexual Behaviours in Higher Education: A Case Study**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Social media technology has provided platforms for enhanced human communication and expanded opportunities for self-expression. Despite the numerous gains, this social networking media, come with myriads of limitations; one being the tendency to be abused and/or misused, especially by young people or the young at heart. This study examined how social networking media influence the sexual behaviours of university undergraduates in Nigeria.

**Materials and Methods:** The survey research method was adopted. A sample size of 396 students was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula. The study was anchored on the Technological Determinism theory. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.99 through test-retest method. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics with the aid of SPSS v25 software.

**Results:** Findings showed, amongst others that, undergraduates in Nigerian universities are largely exposed to a substantial amount of sexual contents on various social media networks; and that this exposure negatively influences their psychology towards sex as manifested in the area of dating before marriage as a result of indulgence in interactive and romantic sites.

**Conclusion and Recommendations:** The study recommends the introduction of social media education in higher institutions to help enlighten students on the responsible use of these technologies to minimize the inherent weaknesses and maximize the intrinsic values of utilising these media platforms.

**Keywords:** undergraduates, utilisation, social networking, media, social media, sexual behaviours, Facebook, university

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Sexual risk behaviour among young people is a major public health concern all over the world. In third world countries like Nigeria, where poverty is endemic and corruption is systemic, it is even a more serious matter. In a report of United Nations cited in Odoemelam and Adibe (2012), nearly 800,000 young women aged 15-19 years get pregnant annually, with most of them happening unintentionally. It was further reported that half of over 19 million new Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are diagnosed each year among young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years. A great deal of research attention has been paid world over towards understanding what puts young people at risk for these outcomes, given the enormous social, economic, and public health consequences (Agbodo, 2017; Sonaike, 2004; Stacks & Hockings, 1999; Ulrich & Harris, 2003, Asekun-Olarinmoye, Asekun-Olarinmoye, Adebimpe, & Omisore, 2014; Arulogun, Ogbu, & Dipeolu, 2016; Williams, 2016; Collins, Martino, & Rand, 2011; Abdullahi & Abdulqaudri, 2018).

It becomes very necessary to have an in-depth understanding of and do more to address risky sexual behaviours among young people, especially undergraduates who are prematurely independent and the most vulnerable groups in the society (Arua, 2011; Magnus & Gbakeji, 2009). One route towards addressing this issue is to identify the contributing factors that predispose young people to those risks and identify preventive measures that can be used to ameliorate them (Adesemoye, 2010; Agbodo, 2017). Over the past decades, studies have identified social media as having the potential to serve both functional and dysfunctional roles (Owan & Robert, 2019; Arop, Agunwa, & Owan, 2019). Meanwhile, the media landscape is evolving at a startling pace, and a greater diversity of content, new types of media, and new social media platforms have been created which can be used to deliver messages across remote distances.

The coming of the internet in general, as well as the advent of newer and more interactive social media platforms in particular, has broadened the horizon of media access, consumption, and consequences. The variety of content available on the internet

today is practically limitless and includes what were previously considered as “mass media”, or “other media” such as music, newspaper, television games, films, cinema, and many others. All the services rendered by these traditional media are now replaced by modern, robust, sophisticated, and internet-driven devices such as computers, MP3 players, smartphones, cell phones, and so on (Bara, 2009). The portability characterised by these social networking media makes it possible to use them in a variety of settings and conceivably, throughout the day. Young people seem to have immersed themselves with the dynamics of these social networking media with social networking sites, cell phones, and instant messaging playing major roles in their everyday lives.

This makes it imperative that the researcher begins to systematically study social networking platforms to determine their influence on students’ sexual behaviours. This is important, given the emerging evidence from the works of Bavakutty and Salih (1999) and Becker (1995) which linked social networking media use with the initiation of various sexual activities and spread of sexual messages. In line with this direction, Fahmi (2005) observes that researchers may find that these media are also linked to developing sexual attitudes and behaviours that could result in sexual risk-taking with damning health consequences. This study was designed to address this issue by examining literature linking social networking media use to adolescents’ sexual behaviours.

Social networking media refers to special kinds of content created and delivered through the internet, including social networks and other specialised websites, as well as content delivered on other digital devices such as cell phones and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). Ekweasi (1991) describes social networking media as forms of communicating in the digital world, which includes publishing on CDs, DVDs, and most significantly, over the internet, virtually everyone in the developed world are getting involved in the utilization of social networking media especially as the world has become a global village. Social media platforms, to Saleh (2010); Owan and Robert (2019), are heavy carriers of deviant behaviours and anti-socio-cultural activities like homosexuality (lesbianism/gay), indecent dressing, dating before marriage (social promiscuity), pornography, violence, and poor attitudes towards academic activities. They provide many powerful fora for youths to engage in interactive and observational learning since issues like sports, romance, politics, drugs, fashion, violence, alcohol, vulgar language pervade social media.

A study conducted by Kalunta-Crumpton (2017) shows that an average Nigerian youth had watched or has been exposed to thousands of sexual contents and countless other acts of deviant behaviours. A countless number of experiments either inside or outside the laboratory have found evidence that viewing television is related to increased aggression or increased sexual risk behaviours among young people (Okafor & Obi, 2005). It is no doubt that traditional media also expose young people too to violence and other illicit contents, what is, however, a source of worry here is the rate at which Nigerian youths especially undergraduate students are addicted to new social media platforms despite their damning consequences.

This study examines what may be largely unintended effects of this exposure to sexual contents in these media and reviews new-media interventions designed to improve adolescent health. The goal is both to clarify what is already known and to identify where there is the strongest need for further study in this rapidly changing area of adolescent sexual health in Africa and Nigeria in particular. It discusses some of the more prominent theories of media effects on youths, including those that are a particularly good fit with the characteristics of newer media, such as content creation, sharing, and portability. It also presents empirical evidence regarding the relationship between traditional media and adolescent sexual attitudes and behaviours. Thus, the aim of this study is to identify what is known about the use of social networking media among youths and where there are particularly important gaps in knowledge that suggest priorities for future efforts in this area with a greater focus on university undergraduates in Nigeria.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study derives theoretical underpinnings from the Technological Determinism theory. The Technological Determinism Theory maintains that “at some quarters, machines and their aftermath development would drive economic, political, historical and socio-cultural transformation cum change” (Baran, 2004:22). One of the assumptions of this theory states that change in communication technology inevitably would produce profound developmental changes in both culture and social media of a system (Mackenzie, 1998). This, according to Baran (2004:26) is one perspective of the theory. Another assumption of the theory suggests that technology by nature is neutral.

The import is that its significance is embedded in the way people apply or use it. The implication of this is that technology’s influence is ultimately determined by how much power it receives from the audience or people and culture that accept it. Strict adherence to technological determinism does not believe that the influence of technology differs based on how much technology is or can be used. Instead of considering technology as part of a larger spectrum of human activity, technological determinism sees technology as the basis for all human activity.

The implication of this theory to this study is that many young people do not really have a clear-cut objective of visiting the internet but they believed a friend is hooked on the internet, it becomes a misnomer for them to be online. As youths surf the net, they join some social networks and consequently participate in watching or reading about their heroes or heronries who are mostly alien to their culture. This informs the researcher’s reason for anchoring this study on the technological determinism theory because technology rapidly influencing the cultural values of Nigerian youths, especially university undergraduates in Nigeria.

## EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Social networking sites are places where youths can encounter sexual text, photos, and videos and can also create and/or post materials themselves. Few studies have attempted to determine the effect of such materials on young people's sexual attitudes and behaviour (Asekum-Olarin et al, 2014; Arelogun et al, 2016; Williams, 2016; Collins et al, 2011; Abdullahi & Abdulaudri, 2018). In a study, Agbodo (2017) revealed that social networking sites allow users to mark some information as private, and what is hidden is probably more personal in nature. Of course, adolescents surfing through profiles will not encounter this private information, but if it was posted publicly or on the profile of an online "friend", they will and this is the more typical way of using social networking services.

Patchin and Hinduja (2010) analysed the contents of a random sample of 1,475 public Myspace profiles posted in June through August 2006 by individuals describing their ages as 16 or 17 years. It was found that 5.4% had posted a picture of themselves in a swimsuit or underwear, and 15.5% included a picture of a family member or friend in a swimsuit or underwear. There are some difficulties interpreting these results; for example, it is unclear whether these photos were sexual in nature. But the authors noted that the pictures are sexual, exposure to these photos on others' profiles may also influence normative perceptions regarding sexuality.

A national survey conducted by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned pregnancy in 2008 as cited in Agbodo (2017) indicates that 20 per cent of teens aged 13-19 years have sent or posted nude or semi-nude pictures or video of themselves. The number of youths that are posting or sending messages that are sexually suggestive but do not necessarily include is approximately double these rates (39%). In a study conducted by Heiberger and Harper (2008), it was discovered that more than 90% of teens are currently online, a greater percentage than any age group. Sixty per cent of teens have a desktop or laptop computer. Eighty-four per cent of young people report that have home internet access and the majority of teens (59%) have high-speed lines. Very few teens (8 per cent of those with internet access) use the internet to access "virtual worlds," such as the second city. Importantly, 3 per cent of online teens use the internet to get health information, and 17 per cent of online teens use it to get information about sexual health and/or the health consequences of substance use. The study also showed that girls spend more time than boys and less time game-playing and watching or posting videos.

Kereke and Lucky (2014) adopted the causal-comparative research design to show from a study, that many students did not use social media for academic purposes and 40.81%, 20.40%, and 14.28% of the students were using Facebook, WhatsApp, and 2go/Skype respectively, while Myspace, Twitter, Badoo, and others were not often used by undergraduates. The study of Arop et al (2018) did not find any significant relationship between students' management of Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram to their academic performance in tertiary institutions. However, the results from the study of Owan and Robert (2019), using a sample of 2,200 university students, discovered that an average of 626 respondents uses social media platforms always. It was also indicated by the same study that an average of 345, 195, and 401 students utilise social media often, sometimes, and rarely. It was also found that the utilization of social media platforms in Cross River State is very high with about 1,567 of the respondents either using social media platforms always, often, sometimes or rarely. It was further discovered that Facebook is the most widely used social media site, followed by YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, Telegram, Eskimi, Snapchat, WeChat, and Skype in that order.

Evidently, some studies showed that there is a link between the exposure of young individuals (adolescents) to sexual media content and their sexual activities (Hoff, Greene, & Davies, 2003; Collins, Elliott, Berry, Kanouse, Kunkel, Hunter & Mill 2004; Hennessey, Bleakly, & Fishbein, 2009). There is also a strong evidence that increased sexual activity among individuals (adolescents most especially), is predicted by the viewing of sexual contents in media (Pardun, L'Engle, & Brown, 2005; Brown, Engle, Pardun, Guo, Kenneavy, & Jackson, 2006; Bleakly, Hennessey, Fishbein, & Jordan, 2018).

The research of Young and Rice (2010) elicited data from 201 homeless youths accessing home care services. It was unfolded that online discussions on social media can potentially increase or decrease sexual risk behaviours depending on the usage of these networks. This aligns with the results of Chan and Ghose (2014) which discovered that there is a relationship between online information access and HIV transmission. In a Nigerian study, Williams (2016) showed through the finding of a study that sex and age exerted sufficient influence on the sexual behaviour of youths but the identity variables seemed only to increase the tendency of younger males to form intimate relationships with partners. It was conducted specifically, that young males who maintain a high level of social relationship with partners.

## METHODS

### Research Design

The study adopted the survey research method. The choice of survey method in this study was informed by the need to generate data from respondents on the utilisation of social networking media and sexual behaviour among undergraduates of universities in Nigeria. The study was carried out using seven universities distributed across five states in the South-East of Nigeria.

### Population and Sampling Techniques

The population of this study covered 217,667 undergraduates distributed across different Federal, States and privately-owned universities in South-Eastern Nigeria. Taro Yamane's formula for determining sample size was employed. After computations, it was discovered that the required sample size is approximately 400 respondents given the population of 217,667 respondents and 95% confidence level.

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of the respondents of this study

| <b>Sex distribution</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Male                    | 204              | 52%               |
| Female                  | 192              | 48%               |
| Total                   | 396              | 100%              |
| <b>Age</b>              | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| 17 – 20 years           | 50               | 13%               |
| 21 – 25 years           | 180              | 45%               |
| 26 – 30 years           | 120              | 30%               |
| 31 years and above      | 46               | 12%               |
| Total                   | 396              | 100%              |
| <b>Marital status</b>   | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| Married                 | 20               | 5%                |
| Single                  | 376              | 95%               |
| Divorced                | 0                | 0%                |
| Total                   | 396              | 100%              |

Multistage sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample of 400 respondents. In achieving this, seven universities were selected from 16 universities available; from each of the universities selected, a random selection of one faculty was done for the administration of instrument; while the convenient sampling technique was used in administering questionnaires to members of only the selected faculties.

### Instruments for Data Collection

Two instruments, namely, a questionnaire and interview schedule were used for data collection. Both instruments were designed by the researchers. The questionnaire was structured into two sections: the demographic and psychographic section. The demographic section was used to elicit information about the bio-data of respondents, while the psychographic section was used to gather data on the variables of the study. The questionnaire was drafted in simple sentences consisting of close and open-enough room to fill in their responses. The use of in-depth interview was to provide a deeper understanding of the utilization of social networking media and sexual behaviour of university undergraduates.

The face and content validity of the instruments was ensured by three psychometric experts. These experts ensured that the items were related to the topic under consideration and if such items can measure intended constructs effectively. The test-rested method of reliability was used to ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument. A trial test was conducted in one of the universities using 20 students drawn randomly from Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. After two weeks, copies of the same instruments were re-administered to the same respondents. Data gotten from both sets of administration were subjected to analysis using Pearson's r Correlational statistical technique, with a coefficient of 0.83 providing sufficient evidence that the instrument was reliable.

### Procedure for Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected over a given period with the help of six research assistants for that purpose. Quantitative data were collected by administering copies of the questionnaire to the undergraduates across the seven selected universities in South-Eastern Nigeria. The researcher and the assistants distributed copies of the questionnaire to the respondents and retrieved them back after completion, with efforts made to ensure a 100 per cent return rate. However, 396 out of 400 copies were successfully retrieved, representing a 99% return rate. Another phase of data collection involved interviewing some of the selected students across the universities and faculties selected. Four students were randomly selected from each of the selected faculties in the study, making a total of 28 interviewees. The recorded interviews were later transcribed and analysed. Collected data were prepared on a person-by-item matrix using a computer spreadsheet programme after scoring and sorting the responses. Frequencies, percentages, and other descriptive statistics such as mean, modes, and standard deviation were employed with the aid of SPSS v25. The interviews were analysed using the thematic method. This involved the transcription of interviews coding and thematic analysis of categories to extract meanings.

## RESULTS

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The results of the analysis of this study revealed that 50% of the respondents were males while 48% were females showing that majority of the respondents were male undergraduates. It was also shown that 18% of the respondents were between 17-20 years, 45% were between 21-25 years, 30% of the respondents were between 26-30 years, while 12% of the respondents were either 31 years or above. This suggests that the respondents are going and predominantly of the 21-25 years age bracket. For marital status, 5% of the respondents were married, 95% were single, and none (0%) was divorced. This does not come as a surprise since most of the undergraduates fall into the age category that normally would not be expected to be settling into marriages. These results are presented in **Table 1** for clarity.

**Table 2.** Number and percentage of undergraduates exposed to different social networking media

| Questions                                  | Response                | Percent |
|--|-------------------------|---------|
| Are you using social media?                | Yes = 376               | 95%     |
|  | No = 20                 | 5%      |
| Which social media account(s) do you have? | Facebook = 150          | 38%     |
|  | WhatsApp = 80           | 20%     |
| How much time do you spend on social media | Instagram = 20          | 5%      |
|  | Twitter = 67            | 17%     |
|  | BBM = 59                | 15%     |
|  | Others = 20             | 5%      |
|  | 1 hour = 95             | 24%     |
|  | 2 – 3 hours = 139       | 35%     |
|  | 4 hours and above = 162 | 41%     |

### Research question one

What is the level of exposure of university undergraduates to social networking media platforms? It was also shown that 95% of the respondents are familiar with social networking media while 5% are not. Also, 95% of the respondents have knowledge of social media platforms while only 5% do not. It was indicated by 38% of the respondents that they have a Facebook account, 20% have WhatsApp accounts, 5% of the respondents operate an Instagram account, 17% own Twitter accounts, while 15% have BBM accounts, and 5% operated other accounts. It was shown 24% spend an hour on different social platforms, 35% spend two to three hours on different social platforms, while 41% spend four hours or above. This shows that a great number of undergraduates spend quality time on social media platforms (see **Table 2**).

### Research question two

To what extent does exposure to social networking media influence the sexual behaviours of university undergraduates in Nigeria? Regarding respondents' appraisal of their activities on social networking media platforms, 13% indicate that they seek for a date on social media, 25% indicated that they meet people on different social media platforms, 30% just chat with friends and relatives, 20% follow up celebrities, 5% of the respondents build up relationships, while 7% showed that they flirt on social media. This shows that the majority of undergraduates are on social media platforms to chat with family relatives and friends. In terms of respondents' appraisal, whether they have seen pornography on social media, 49% agreed to have seen pornography on social media, while 51% disagreed. However, 63% of the respondents agreed that they have been tagged with pornography on social networking media platforms while 37% disagreed. This suggests that a higher percentage of undergraduates are exposed to pornography on social media.

In terms of respondents appraised of their membership of any online dating group, 51% agreed that they belong to online dating group, 49% were of the view that they did not belong to any online dating group. Also, 5% of the respondents' dad been blocked over a post relating to pornography on social media while 76% indicated that they had not been blocked and 19% said they were not aware. The implication is that either undergraduate do not post pornographic contents online, hence they are not blocked, or the pornographic contents they upload are not noticed or overlooked by who should block them. in terms of dating someone they meet online, 38% indicated that they have dated someone they met online while 62% have not dated. It was also shown that 87% of the respondents agreed to have downloaded and transferred sex videos and photos on their phones and/or personal computer, while 13% have not. It was shown further that 88% of the respondents believed that exposure to social networking media platforms influences their sexual behaviour, while 12% held contrary positions.

It was also shown that 5% of the respondents believed that extra-marital affair is one of the practical ways social media influence their sexual behaviours. 51% believed that double-dating is one of the ways, 25% believed that high rate of masturbation is as a result of social media influence on their sexual behaviour, while 19% see prostitution as a clear practical way in which the utilization of social media influences their behaviours. The results indicated further, that 51% of the respondents use social media platforms to a great extent, 25% to a little extent, 24% said it has no influence on them.

The analysis also showed that 76% of the respondents believe that different social networking media platforms could serve as channels for enhancing positive values in campuses and society while 24% disagreed to this position. Furthermore, 51% of the respondents think that posting decent pictures on social media platforms will help to reinforce positive values, 25% think that shearing information with appropriate language would reinforce positive values, 12% believe that shearing information of accepted moral standards will contribute in reinforcing positive values, while 12% believed that government regulation will help in instilling positive values.

### Research question three

What are the specific social networking media that university undergraduates are exposed to? In-depth interviews were conducted among selected students that cut across selected institutions. In the end, 28 students were interviewed. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed for dominant themes. The responses assisted a great deal in adopting some preliminary conclusions. First, there was a consensus among the interviewees that they were aware of different social networking media platforms as they all answered in affirmative, and as well as listing some of the platforms to include Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, 2go, Baddoo, WhatsApp, BBM, to mention but a few.

Many of them were of the view that the different platforms help them to create and share. Content, access content others sheared, keep tab with friends and socially engage with people irrespective of their affinity, location, and other social differences. On the commonly used social networking media platforms, a large majority agreed to be using Facebook more than any other platforms followed by WhatsApp. A good number of them believed that sexual behaviour mostly in negative ways; such as exposing them to pornography, illicit pictures, and so on. These media, according to them, had a negative influence on them in terms of their sexual behaviours. Data from a good number of them also suggested that such individual negative influence, cut across the board, including friends and relatives who have been exposed to social networking media platforms. Also, the majority of the interviewees believed that the social networking media platforms influenced the sexual behaviour of undergraduates to a large extent.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding of this study led to a wide range of conclusions. Firstly, this has shown that undergraduates in Nigeria are highly exposed to social networking media platforms. This was statistically established through questionnaires and corroborated by the qualitative interview. This finding confirms the earlier position of Ulrich and Harris (2003) that undergraduates have largely embraced social networking media platforms abandoning the print media such as newspapers and magazines that used to be their source of information and enlightenment. This finding also agrees with the results of Owan and Robert (2019) which also showed that students' utilization of social media platforms is significantly high. This trend according to them has altered the authority structures and enthroned social disconnection and alienation, making it difficult to monitor and regulate what they are exposed to on different social platforms.

It is symbolic to note that the basic tenet of the Technological Determinism shows that undergraduates are highly exposed to social media and such exposure has directly affected their sexual behaviour. This behavioural change according to Salen (2010) are attributed to the fact that the various social networking media platforms are heavy carriers of deviant and antisocial cultural activities, ranging from minor ones like indecent dressing and online dating to more grievous acts such as homosexuality, gay, lesbianism, sexual promiscuity, pornography violence and warning attitude to academic hard work and excellence.

This study also established that exposure to social media has influenced the social behaviour of undergraduates in Nigeria. This supports the suggestion of Ojih (2016) that Nigerian youths live a life of lost directions. The gradual moral decadence as a result of strong indulgence in Facebook and other social media platforms could be captured in the responses from the qualitative response like; "I personally can at least to the fact that the social networking media have influenced my sexual behaviour to a great extent ... I used to be shy discussing sexual related issues, but now, I can comfortably talk about what I want to discuss, I can now double-date, flirt without giving a fuck what people or society say." This goes on to show the magnitude of the influence of social media on the sexual orientation and behaviour of undergraduate students in Nigeria.

This study established that "Facebook" is the commonly used social media platform. the undergraduate students are exposed to. This finding supports the result of Owan and Robert (2019) who also determined through an earlier study that Facebook was the most widely used social media platforms followed by YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, Telegram, Eskimi, Snapchat, WeChat, and skype in that order. The findings of both qualitative and quantitative results also justified this position. For instance, the qualitative interview revealed through some of the respondents' comments as follows: "*I know of many social media platforms but the chief of all is Facebook.*" Another respondent indicated in pidgin English that "*Facebook na baba, if you be student and no dey for Facebook, you never sabi anything.*" Another indicated that "*Facebook is predominantly used by undergraduates including my friend, we use it to post pictures, watch videos and keep tabs on what is happening in the society whether good or bad.*" It was through the comment of another respondent that: "*Facebook is used so much, in fact, every day by me and my colleagues, even when I don't have internet access on my phone, Facebook is offered freely by my service provider, and I like that so much.*" Finally, another respondent indicated that "*Facebook is the most widely used social media platforms because it runs on all phones with internet access, such as Java, china, Symbian and Android phones, as well as other smartphones in addition to computers.*"

Other platforms such as Badoo, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, BBM, and others also reflected in the responses collected from the in-depth interview. This aligns further with the finding of Oche (2010) that the primary business of University of Abuja students is Facebooking. The result of this study extended to show that the exposure of undergraduates to Facebook has tremendously affected their sexual behaviour negatively. Furthermore, this study established that the posting of decent pictures, sharing of good and quality information or videos, including government regulations would help in curtailing the negative influence social media platforms are having on the sexual behaviour of undergraduates in Nigeria.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that young people are exposed to a substantial amount of sexual content on social media. This exposure affects their psychological thoughts and attitudes towards sex and predisposes them to sexual risk behaviours which have grave consequences. Facebook is predominantly used by many undergraduates of the selected universities in Nigeria. There is also a suggestion that the behaviour of these students was subject to the negative influence of social networking media, especially in the area of double-dating, flirting, lesbianism, and other sexual orientation as a result of exposure to pornographic videos, pictures and messages on social media platforms. Students attitudes towards academic activities are also declining owing to participation in social sites since the majority of them spend hours chatting and doing other irrelevant things online.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Having established that the different social media platforms have negative influence on the sexual behaviour of undergraduates in universities in Nigeria; that students predominantly use Facebook and other social media for chatting, double-dating, dating, and flirting; that the exposure to social media platforms influenced their sexual behaviours to a great extent; the following recommendations were made:

- (i) Enlightenment campaigns by the school management, government, and other Non-Governmental organizations should be conducted among undergraduate students to help them understand the advantages and disadvantages of constant exposure to social media sites.
- (ii) The government should adopt some regulatory measures to monitor and regulate the contents shared on social media platforms.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was not without limitations. First, the sample size used limited generalization to only undergraduate students of seven universities in South-Eastern, Nigeria. This necessitated the recommendation of further studies in other regions and zones of the country. Finally, the study was not holistic in all the subjects in the area studied. There is no study that can solve all issues around a research problem in one go, therefore, the study recommended that there should be further studies in subject areas like the effect of social media exposure on the academic performance of undergraduate students.

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